



Detective Drama GEMS...

No Charge, and Still Arresting

Issue #19 August 2026

Radio and TV Episodes Analyzed ... for Writers & Academics

Year One began with [Issue Zero](#). Year Five ended with [Issue #17](#). Year Six commenced in May with [Issue #18](#). And *this* issue, which will take us back to *Night Heat* and *The Felony Squad*, starts with the *shortest* write-up so far...

Gem #58 — "[The Big Hate](#)" — July 10, 1952

From **DRAGNET** (NBC Radio, 1949 to '57)

During the theme music, a low-key narrator promises "an actual case transcribed from official Police files" in or near Los Angeles, taking us "from beginning to end, from crime to punishment." Then **Sergeant Joe Friday** walks the hallway briskly. And before any of that — remember, this is radio, where the scripts receive no help from visuals — the audience (in effect, blindfolded) was smoothly roped in:

You're a Detective Sergeant. You're assigned to Homicide Detail. A 25-year-old man was found hiding in a freight car in a deserted train yard. In his arms he holds the body of a dead woman. The victim's identity is unknown. The suspect refuses to talk. Your job: Investigate.

Sergeant Friday ([JACK WEBB](#)) renews our acquaintance: "We were working the Night Watch outta Homicide Detail. My partner's Frank Smith, the boss is Captain Borman, my name's Friday." This time, though, the pattern is being altered...

In "The Big Hate," no crime scene needs a visit from Joe and Frank. No boss tells them to go anywhere or find anyone. And the victim, assuming she *was* a victim, can't tell them anything. Her death might or might not be murder. If it was, who would stay there with the dead person? Is he simply grieving the loss of a friend or lover? The cops have all the questions; the answers start in the next room.

Friday: "Did he cop out to anything yet?" Smith: "Nothing; I keep asking him questions [but] might as well be talking to myself. He *might* be in a state of shock."

Friday doubts it. He already met the 25-year-old, and is about to return the man's driver's license. For now, Friday needs Smith and a guy named Stall to "go over to the Morgue [and] roll the dead woman's prints." Exit Webb's partner.

No crime scene to check and no one to interview, except this 25-year-old, who at least has been identified. It isn't that he's hostile, ready with cuss words, or even awaiting a lawyer. He's just MUM. Those factors help this episode stand out, and in a weird way "shine." They also open up a story hard to dismiss as implausible.

FRIDAY: Now look son, I don't think you're helping yourself much by keeping quiet. There's a lot of explaining to be done here, and I'm afraid you're the only one who can do it... You're gonna have to tell somebody sooner or later, why won't you tell us now?

The Sergeant isn't belligerent; any impatience is on hold. The stressed words are italicized (rather than ALL-CAPPED) because his emphases are *mild*, not loud...

FRIDAY: I don't get the *reasoning* behind all this. We know there's nothing *wrong* with you, we know you can talk all right; you talked to the officers in the radio car who brought you *in*... Look Gordon, if ya didn't kill the woman you haven't anything to worry about and if ya *did* we're gonna find out anyway...

We hear Friday give a slight sigh and stand up. He'll try for bits and pieces...

FRIDAY: Who *was* the woman, Gordon, will ya tell me that much? ... You know her very long? ... What *was* she to you, do ya wanna tell me that? ... She's a fairly middle-aged woman, in her early fifties I'd say — that about right? ... Was she your mother, Gordon? Older sister, maybe?

Several more minutes of this one-way play out before Friday receives vital info from a credible source. She'll become the light on Gordon's bleakness.

Every GEMS account floodlights (without spoiling the ending) the strong points of a script's design and dialogue. Strictly speaking, there's no *dialogue* during a big part of this episode's first half. We still need to stay in the Interrogation Room...

Friday takes the first of two calls. "I'll be back in about a half-hour," he tells a colleague: "Yeah, a half-hour" — conveying, in passing, a time-line to and for Gordon.

Does the young man have a headache? Drawer opens. Got some aspirin "if ya want some." Cigarette offered, too. Declined. Okay then, Friday will have a smoke...

He stays conversational without being repetitive, pleading or using the strong arm. He also reviews what the Police know, sharing the landscape of discovery with us listeners. We get a briefing, while he stays mild in manner, moderate in pace.

When Gordon glances at the window in this holding tank, Friday says: "Relax, Gordon; that window doesn't lead anywhere." His tone at this point is about as intense as someone reporting that there's no butter left in the fridge.

Friday pulls out the woman's ring. A useful prompt? Nope. What about the address book "we found in your pocket, Gordon?" Silence. The phone rings again...

Partner Frank Smith has vital info (and wow, did it turn up fast): The woman's fingerprints say she's **Elizabeth Hoffmann**, age 52, a music teacher. The cops also have her address. Joe Friday is getting facts from everywhere but the guy in front of him.

So he picks up Hoffmann's ring again, and reads the inscription. No response.

And no more restraint? Joe Friday alters the tone and pace. "Now get it through your head, you're in a bad spot... *What's it all about?*" Not a word from Gordon.

The fact of our having no way to see the young man's restlessness, if any, or his facial expression... Can we call these eight or so minutes a memorable "sound scene" from what will later become known as The Golden Age of Radio?

In the radio version of DRAGNET (1949-57), after the first year, each new episode had a title starting with "The Big _____." Some of the more memorable ones, and we're talking just *titles* here: "The Big Actor," "The Big Bop," "The Big Broad," "The Big In-Laws," "The Big Quack," "The Big Whiff" and "The Big Impossible."

This one's title is acidic: "The Big Hate." Even so, it has outstanding subtleties.

They Were "Gonna Be Married...on the Way to South America"

Most listeners, whether in 1952 or here in 2026, probably assume that Gordon at *some* point will pipe up. Then again, the script could serve up a credible ending... even if he stays silent. The best scripts serve up surprises while avoiding chaos.

Wanted: Somebody else who knows *something* about Gordon and Elizabeth...

"Yes, he's here. We're holding him... No he's not hurt, there's nothing wrong with him..." Friday has **Lily Miller** on the phone. "Wonder if you'd be kind enough to come down here to the City Hall... It's important. We'd like to talk to ya... Room 42 — *four-two* — on the Main Floor. Just ask for Friday; that's my name."

Lily Miller is Gordon's sister. She's a caring and clear-headed young woman whose voice conveys this family's tragic tangle. But not right away.

Right after Friday offers her a chair, their father shows up. He demands that Gordon's handcuffs be removed or else he'll throw his weight around with the Police Commission. Friday is unflappable. (That's his nature. No flapping.)

The cops simply let the exchange between Miller and his daughter Lily play out...

LILY MILLER: The Hoffman woman, Dad, Elizabeth Hoffman.

HENRY MILLER: What about her?

LILY: She's dead. Gordon says he killed her; Dad, we've gotta *do* something.

Henry quickly orders his son not to say anything until a lawyer shows up.

Your suspicions are correct! The son did finally talk, to Friday, in that dreary room. His first words affected me like a minor quake; and he said just enough to baffle the cops. At this point, though, piping up some more will be defiance, not compliance.

FRIDAY: Did you know Elizabeth Hoffmann, Mr. Miller?

MILLER: I knew her *slightly*. Can't see what this *fuss* is all about anyway. Woman wasn't any good to *begin* with. No good at all...

Father and Son then express contempt bordering on hatred for each another. And Friday and Smith, even with all three Millers on hand, still don't have the core truth behind the intense relationship between Gordon and his piano teacher.

The father isn't hiding much: "As far as I can remember, you've been nothing but *trouble*. Now either you snap out of it this time or you're on your *own*."

After he walks out in a huff, it'll be up to Lily. Henry had just called her "Lillian" (could've figured that). She is breaking down. Friday asks her to step outside.

He wants to know the how and why of Elizabeth Hoffmann and Gordon Miller. "What's the big attraction?" What she reveals is the core of "The Big Hate." This marvelous actress playing Gordon Miller's loyal sibling pulls it all together...

There's only one thing Gordon really wanted. He wasn't too interested in women [or] things like that. All he wanted was to be a musician, a great pianist... The sad part about it is he'll never make it. I think down deep he *knows* that. When he was a kid, Dad sent him to the finest *teachers*; after six months, they all said the same thing... He'd never *make* it. Oh, he could *play* well enough, but he certainly wasn't exceptional. He never improved, he just stayed the same.

Elizabeth promised a big leap. They needed each other. For all the wrong reasons.

This entire tangle in 25 minutes? Yes, and more, on the way to court judgments.

This episode is no freak show, nor does it take us near to what used to be called the "psych ward." It implies a moral about insisting someone has great potential when they really don't. And yes, the young man's father is harsh; but he DID try to help. During Gordon Miller's non-interrogation, listeners might sense time slowing down. Factor in the crumpled ambitions underlying "The Big Hate," and you *could* end up feeling this episode is ... expansive. It *does* cover a lot. And yet: No shortcuts. What's not to admire? It takes a form of genius to compress *that* much drama *this* compellingly. "Enjoy" isn't the right word. But you're not likely to forget...

https://www.olderadioworld.com/media/Dragnet_52-07-10_ep161_Big_Hate.mp3

Because the TV version of DRAGNET returned in 1966 and lasted 'til September 1970, most Americans over 55 can recall Sergeant Joe Friday. And Jack Webb was a reliable actor. *Too* reliable, according to comedians of his day. I grew up hearing him stereotyped as a "just the facts" machine, the sort of fellow who could make Lee Marvin in M SQUAD come across like the genial family doctor.

Regardless, back there in the Summer of '52, Webb being Joe Friday shows us modulation, empathy, and — critical in some jobs — how to run a tough interview.

And, if a radio or TV "case" could bring you close to tears — after absorbing a thousand or two of them, as some of us have — this one might do it.

During the middle '50s, Jack Webb & Company generated *Radio AND TV* episodes of DRAGNET: A double-duty not replicated before or since, at least not in the cops vs. crime realm. Because of that, we know that the writer of "The Big Hate" radio episode — [JAMES E. MOSER](#) — also contributed to [a TV version](#). I didn't need to see it, although you might want to. The power of all-sound in 1952...said plenty.

The URL for this document ([Issue #19, August 2026](#)) is www.ExactingEditor.com/Detective-Gems-19.pdf

[Issue #17](#) celebrated episodes from *The Mod Squad; Magnum, P.I.*; and *Hawaiian Eye* (finally on [DVD](#)). [Issue #20](#) arrives November 2026.

The previous 57 write-ups are listed on www.ExactingEditor.com/the-Gems-Catalog.htm. Coverage timeframe is late 1940s to early 1990s.

Gem #59 — "[Dark Memory](#)" — December 27, 1968

From **THE FELONY SQUAD** (ABC-TV, 1966 to '69)

[Issue #9](#) started coverage of this series in November 2022. The episode was "The Broken Badge" and an okay version is [still on-line](#). (Count your blessings.)

[DENNIS COLE](#) is Detective Sergeant **Jim Briggs**, [BEN ALEXANDER](#) is Detective Sergeant **Dan Briggs** — Dan is Jim's father — and Jim is partnered with HOWARD DUFF as Detective Sergeant **Sam Stone**. (An English 101 teacher would say to use "was" rather than "is," but I prefer to write as if these shows are with us today.)

This analysis can't do justice to the television and film achievements of Mr. Duff (1913-90). But the eye-catching "Drive-In Theater" Web commemoration shows his depth and reach — the man was a powerhouse...

<http://www.briansdriveintheater.com/howardduff.html>

And, for a lively account of FELONY SQUAD, turn to DIANA PETERSON. Make time and space for [what she published 13 months ago](#). Peterson is a prolific curator, freelance editor and characters chronicler. She's well-versed in the sit-coms and detective shows that influenced Baby Boomers and the first part of Generation X.

In evaluating a TV series, never neglect historical setting. In mid-1960s U.S.A., secret agents and especially fantasy sitcoms were surging in ways that spiked the Fad Meter. Conservative historians also faulted escapism and giddiness in that Era's *political* theories, which wished away the darker sides of human nature.

So? Being fairly brutal, and with no room for psychologists or "rehabilitation," THE FELONY SQUAD would actually have fit better in 1959, 1975 or 1986.

At the same time, the series is hard to dismiss as crude. For the most part, the guest actors were not caricatures. Also good: Creator [Richard Murphy](#) bent the rules on balance and pacing. A few FELONY SQUAD *openers* would consume a whopping six minutes: Almost 25% of the air time just to *start* the story.

The one we're about to examine is at the other extreme. Though not quite as shrill as a 1950 movie preview, the opening minute lays down its markers in blood.

A Sign Mildly Noticeable, for a Restaurant called The Normandy

- ❖ A man and woman have finished their meal and walk toward her car. No close-ups, but they look to be late twenties. It's already dark outside, but also warm — late December in southern California — and the

sidewalk isn't short. Oddly, no one else seems to be around.

- ❖ Except at Minute 0:20: A man is shown looking out from behind tree branches. He's wearing a stocking mask. Three seconds of ominous music accompany this visual. Something horrible is imminent.
- ❖ The scene then re-quiets. The woman gets into the driver's seat of her convertible. The man leans on the door after closing it. A brief but vaguely positive closure is heard about some sensitive matter that was discussed over dinner. "I think there's HOPE," Arnold tells Linda. "What do *you* think, hmm?" "There's always hope, Arnold."

Those words are warm, yet Linda is low-key, tentative, and somehow confined. Except for the rest of this opener, she'll be that way *in every scene*. It's a tone that signals by its consistency rather than clarifying by intensity or declaratives.

[KATHERINE CRAWFORD](#) is "Linda" and few actresses could *be* so consistent, given this episode's extremes. If this script *required* that kind of persona, it's strange distinction. And yet Crawford distinguishes it. Although it takes time to deduce how far she has traveled and why, her character seems to drift with events...

- ❖ She starts the car. As the foreboding music returns, Arnold walks briskly behind the vehicle and makes for the passenger seat. The masked man fires four shots (soon identified as a particular hit-man's pattern). Arnold made it to the door handle but no further.
- ❖ As the bullets find their mark, the word "shock" doesn't describe Linda's reaction. *Startled* by the first shot, she *winces* at the second, third *and fourth*. The violence + reaction co-ordination is pinpoint. We know this because the camera shows Linda, rather than the killer or his target. Next we see of Arnold, he's on the ground.
- ❖ The masked man used a handgun, which won't be hard to hide as he flees the scene. And Linda? She jams down the gas pedal, but doesn't get far. Seven seconds and one frantic turn later, her car knocks over a middle-aged maid who was crossing the street.

That woman will soon be in the hospital. But, for all Linda knows, she has just killed a complete stranger, right after seeing a friend and/or colleague murdered. *Only these events* will suspend her containment! She hits the brakes, stops, gasps into a sob, puts her face in her hands, and collapses into the steering wheel.

It won't be a hit & run. As the theme music plays, she awaits the cops and medics.

Tentative and Confined, like Someone Being Carried Along

At Headquarters, the dead man's dinner date is identified as **Linda Jo Benson**. The name strikes a chord with Dan Briggs, who seems to function as COO and Main Dispatcher. Like a slower-motion traffic cop who is based *inside* the building.

When he's near the main entrance, like right now, he operates from inside a cage. Sam Stone asks Briggs for the latest. "[T]he victim is Arnold Case, an Accountant. The girl companion is here, and the domestic she *hit* is in Park General."

Briggs pauses, and turns to his son: "Jim, this girl is familiar. Didn't you go with a girl once named Linda Jo?" Former flame, current cop, with not much more than a few years in between — doesn't that seem like a formula with age-old appeal? All the same, "Dark Memory" is the only the third use of it that comes to mind.

Another was Danny Williams during Season #11 of the original HAWAII FIVE-O. By far the most powerful: Captain Amos Burke in "[Who Killed My Girl?](#)", a Gem from near the end of BURKE'S LAW Season One. Both of these episodes had twice as much air-time to work with as "Dark Memory" does, which means extra pressure on scriptwriter [Mark Rodgers](#) and Director [George McCowan](#).

Speaking of pressure, his father's low-key question to Jim Briggs has power. He heads for the room where Linda Jo Benson is waiting to make a statement.

"Jim!," she says in a near-whisper. "But how did you KNOW, what are you doing..." "Easy now," he says. "I work here." In a suit and tie, at first glance, he MIGHT be a lawyer. "Jim — I hit a woman tonight, I didn't mean to, but a man was KILLED right in front of my eyes."

Do those words read intensely? They do. But she isn't. The volume is nowhere near the level that usually accompanies alarm. Even the words Linda stresses don't rise much above a semi-whisper. "And I was trying to do is get away, but I did *hit* her..." Briggs tells her that the domestic "seems to be in satisfactory condition."

It's not clear how soon, but Benson is released on her own recognizance, referred to by Jim Briggs as an "OR" Release. He'll drive Linda Jo back to her apartment.

Sam to Ben: "Pretty serious romance?" About a year in junior college. "Then she went east and got a job modeling, or in advertising, or something. They *wrote* for a while, but..." In any case, Stone and Briggs Jr. have taken on the Case...Case.

Halfway into Minute #5, and looking a bit lost, the murdered man's older brother appears. Paul Case is ably played by [RAY MONTGOMERY](#). Stone calls him over. He seeks to confirm that Arnold worked at **Reardon Industries**. That's right, says Case,

except his brother was fired four days ago. Why? The charge was "inefficiency." Specifically, "the smell of alcohol on his breath during working hours."

And what did *Arnold* tell Paul the cause was? "Something else; something big," says his disoriented brother. "Of course, that was Arnold," often talking about a "really big killing." The smile is a bitter one. "And he only GOT killed."

The brother is shaky. Stone takes him off to chat. Next morning, he'll be able to tell his junior partner: "Seems like a nice man."

These early events shape the keen viewer's curiosities: Who killed Arnold Case and why? Why *did* he leave Reardon Industries? What was the relationship between Arnold and Linda Jo, soon revealed to be personal assistant to their boss. What else might "nice man" Paul Case know that can help the cops?

And, of course, how much will his reawakened interest in Linda Jo Benson affect the *professional* behavior of Detective Jim Briggs.



The iconic black & white image of Messrs. Cole, Duff, and Alexander

Thanks to independent packagers interacting with collectors, and admirers doing random Web uploads, quite a few of the original 73 episode from this series are public-domain.

[Four-fifths of those episodes comprise the DVD package](#) from **The Film Collectors Society of America**. I bought their FELONY SQUAD collection in 2022. Picture/sound quality runs from fair to good, though colors have faded. No episode was unviewable.

"Billionaires, Holding Companies, and Interlocking Directorates"

Jim and Linda enter her apartment. We're halfway through Minute #6. Initial awkwardness, moments of warmth, gaps being filled in the bios, and Jim Briggs venturing beyond chit-chat: "From what I've heard," he says with no edge, "that boss of yours is supposed to be pretty ruthless: A *raider* in the market."

"Yes, he's ruthless," Linda replies, as calmly as if confirming that "yes, he jaywalks." Her *tone* is neither dismissive nor sarcastic. And her terms sound very 1980s, yet here they are, at the end of 1968: Mr. Reardon's hardball moves are reserved for "billionaires, and holding companies, and interlocking directorates."

Beside, she adds, her boss is a consistent backer of charities and humanitarian causes. "You sound very loyal," Jim says with a smile. "I am," she says without one. He recalls loyalty as one of her winning points. She's also *doing* well. This apartment has a full bar, and in other ways is well beyond a secretary's crash pad.

She fixes him a drink, walks out from behind the bar, and they drift away from the present. "I always thought you'd be a policeman," she says with a warm smile. "Or a soldier, or something like that." And *he* always thought she would "make it big."

When "Dark Memory" first aired, the actress carrying this role was a few months short of her 25th birthday. Freed of the fear of having killed someone, Linda Jo has regained a bit of poise. She asks that Jim drop by tomorrow.

Just before he exits, she volunteers that "making it big" — as a model, or a Reardon insider, it's not clear which — "is not everything it's cracked up to be." She's conveying mild regret, not cynicism. Quietly: "You pay a price." Still, no edge.

Without our hearing how she phrased it, Jim picked up something to tell his partner the next morning: "Linda came up with a pretty good motive." Yeah? The murdered man "evidently owed thousands in gambling debts."

Which brings an abrupt pivot from Stone: "Did she say anything about calling Case and asking him to take her to dinner last night?" Her making this invite isn't a fact, but it *is* a possibility that emerged from Stone's talk with Paul Case.

Right here opens a perception gap. Stone begins reading from the Case transcript. Jim is slightly defensive, as in: Well, that's her job, to place calls on behalf of the boss. Stone utters his assumption that Benson *fired* Case. "Hey I don't get it, Sam. She was lucky she didn't get killed herself." Stone lets it go.

The talk turns to Jerry Patterson, killer for hire. Police reports say he died in a car crash in Mexico. But last night's murder fits Patterson's m.o. quite well.

If Patterson is both alive and anywhere near L.A., Fifth-Street Al ([THOM CARNEY](#)) might confirm it. Without detracting from the major characters, "Dark Memory" makes space for this colorful informant, secure in his phone-booth backdrop. It's similar to how Paul Case was brought in to fill a different type of gap.

Stone isn't done: "Ehhh, Jim — seeing Linda in the near future?" Well yeah, why? "Well, you uh [slight pause] might clear up the question of, uh, who called who" to arrange this dinner date that ended with a professional killing.

Minute 8:47: The screen takes us right to Linda's answer. Sure, she called Arnold Case. Because *he* had been trying to get in touch with *her* for days. Aware of his unpopularity — even if she hadn't been the one to carry out a firing — it makes sense that she would try to steer clear of the mop-up.

When she finally did return a call, he suggested they meet for dinner. Jim asks: "Did he suggest dinner at The Normandy?" "Well yes, of course" — a rare moment, with her Police HQ jitters behind them, of showing a bit of intensity.

They are not in her apartment. She is sitting on a lawn recliner in a back yard. We don't see the front of the dwelling. Reardon's home? Most likely. Or maybe some kind of corporate property. "Mr. Reardon gives me the run of the place, when I come up here," so why not invite Jim? And the small talk returns.

He brings out a charm she gave him during their romance. She's impressed, to the point of positive excitement (rare), that he kept it: The words on the charm could signal loyalty, or love, or both. "That was a nice love story, Jim." They share a kiss.

Then, out into this spacious yard, comes the top guy at Reardon Industries, a girl on each arm. "Go in there and change into your suits, girls; I'll join you for a swim."



[JASON EVERS](#) is the confident, jut-jawed William Reardon. We don't see much of him, and we don't need to. He'll also turn up on *Cannon* and *Mannix* (from which this photo), and not as a good guy.

Unlike the others in this Gem, the Reardon character is one-dimensional. Could be because this series had little need to celebrate Big Business, a sector that was losing its luster from the mid-'60s on.

Reardon thanks Jim for helping Linda deal with "last night's tragedy" and suggests he join their party in the pool. No surprise that Jim opts to go back to work.

Fifth-Street AI calls for Sam, who's off somewhere. Jim is to relay this news: Jerry Patterson is at the Woodside Apartments, in XYZ room — "as of Noon today, anyway." But Jim heads there with no back-up. At Minute 12:50, he cons Patterson into opening the door. Gun drawn, Jim declares "a warrant for your arrest."

A terrific struggle ensues. It rages long enough for cut-aways to show Sam Stone driving up and then heading to Patterson's room. By the time he opens the door, Briggs has Patterson in a choke hold, *demanding* to know who paid for the hit. "Take your *hands* off him," Stone orders, "or your name's on a Brutality report if I have to *file it myself*." WOW — and also the perfect time for a commercial...

Back at the office, Stone tells Briggs: "You're pretty LUCKY." The reply is confident but lacks attitude: "Coulda had it all wrapped up for ya," almost sounding sad. "You went *way* out, Jim," Stone insists. "You coulda lost your *life*, or your BADGE."

And then he makes plain the underlying premise: "Is she that important to ya?" Jim admits to rash actions along with procedural mistakes. But: "Sooner or later, we're gonna come up with the RIGHT answer, and it won't involve Linda."

Stone reports that two of their colleagues "re-interviewed all of the employees at The Normandy, and a bartender they didn't have a chance to talk to before." And? Jim should ask Linda to explain the timing of one more phone call.

She handles that one, too. As for Jim's *personal* curiosity — it's the one he doesn't have to articulate. Linda answers it this way: Reardon "was very *good* to me — kind — and I've tried to do a *good* job in return. But that's all." Then comes a smile, with a trace of mischief: "A little jealous, Jim?" Another kiss.

Additional Factors Making "Dark Memory" Memorable

- Halfway thru Minute 19: The Jerry Patterson Interrogation. He's played by [PAUL MANTEE](#), a character actor from the '60s and '70s who excelled as an energetic and resourceful operative (usually on the wrong side).
- With one shot, from a distance of 150 feet, Sam Stone being able to shoot a hole in someone's tire and stop a key individual from escaping — someone who'd be too well-known to ever *actually* disappear.
- The seemingly fragile yet focused personality of this episode's only female. She seeks sympathy from an old flame, a straight-arrow type she always figured would become some sort of authority figure...
- Yet the ending isn't what you'd expect. How COULD it be? Something has to come out of left field. It also needs to be plausible, otherwise this

episode would not be a Gem. Part of the surprise is when Sam Stone, referring to William Reardon, tells Jim Briggs: "Well, he just passed out, and he [one more micro-pause] just took your girl off the *hook*."

➤ Lastly, but pervasively, the masterly music of PETE ROGULO...

Born as Pietro Rogulo, he lived from 1915 to 2011. He began with the baritone horn, added French Horn and piano, and moved skillfully between jazz and popular modes. TV credits include *Leave It to Beaver*, *Thriller*, *The Thin Man*, *Checkmate!*, *The Fugitive*, *Run for Your Life*, *Alias Smith and Jones*, and more.

"In 1962," Wikipedia notes, "he released...*TV's Top Themes*..." A clean copy of that LP is likely worth decent money today. For more about this man and his astonishing musical accompaniments: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pete_Rugolo

How ABC mishandled FELONY SQUAD's time slot is covered by Diana Peterson's [July 2025 Web analysis](#). She salutes the show's Directors and names some of the script-writers plus other shows they contributed to. These points are also worthy...

I wonder if being a 30-minute show as opposed to an hour was part of its downfall. No matter how great the writers are, it's tough to get sophisticated and detailed enough with a plot to wrap up in half an hour. The show certainly found talented directors, writers, cast members, and guest stars. The show was shot in color and had a different feel to it, more realistic. The action is right in your face like you're on set instead of watching from far off.

THE FELONY SQUAD deserved a longer run, especially as prime-time line-ups re-discovered classic Cops & Robbers after its lull from Fall '63 to the arrival of *NYPD* and *Mannix* four years later. By the mid-1970s, the menu would be dazzling.

One thing about movie stars: It's a certain air of "f--- it." They accept your adoration, but never ask for it. As needy as they can appear, the best ones don't really care what you think of them. They're not apathetic, or rebellious. Just [micro-pause] self-contained. They can often be mistaken as being oppositional. But it's not so much *that* as an unerring instinct not to have their imagination limited in any way. A ferocious insistence to remain open to the improvisation of life. That's what's so challenging about directing them: You never know what they're gonna do next. And neither does the audience.

— ED ZWICK, from *Hits, Flops and Other Illusions* ([audio version](#))

Gem #60 — "[Fire and Ice](#)" — January 2, 1986 From **NIGHT HEAT** (CTV and CBS, 1985 to '89)

Take some startling slice of the episode, and run it as a teaser, just before the show's theme music. Seeing a favorite character either IN trouble or STOPPING something nasty, you're more likely to stick around for the how and why.

That sort of TV opener — Entrapment by Curiosity — was common 60 years ago. It soon gave way to *starting the episode BEFORE* the theme music. By the late '60s, a few of these openers ran to six and seven minutes. Helpful: We got to see what the Law & Orderlies would be laboring to piece together. When the theme music finally arrived, we had assurance that yes, it's the *right channel and time*.

When NIGHT HEAT launched in 1985, the **Sneak Peak** and **Start with the Crime** were out of fashion. Just run the theme music and reintroduce the regulars. Good enough for a series typically blunt and paced for Impatients.

What else? This '80s series mostly avoided the ultra-clever scripts favored by the producers of *Mannix* and, more cheerfully, *77 Sunset Strip* a decade prior.

Another plus: NIGHT HEAT had no smug or self-reverent regulars. It's a long way from *Remington Steele*, whose splashy intro showed the co-stars eating popcorn in a movie theater riveted on the big screen. On it? Themselves. (Screw *that* show.)

But what if *this* NIGHT HEAT episode had a teaser? For this write-up, it will, thanks to Minute #27: Two Detectives, friends and partners for years, one *slugging* the other and drawing blood, *inside Police Headquarters*. Without my having to edit any video, try the following as your "Fire and Ice" preview...

CARSON: [**Intensely but not yet shouting**] Ya take off from the hotel, you don't tell ANYBODY where you're going, ya didn't come back here [**and then**] *I* got raked over the coals because YOU didn't deliver the UNUSUALS down to the Chief.

"Unusuals" are artifacts, oddities and crime-scene gaps that *must* be in each report.

BURNS: [**Calm but also dismissive**] I think once or twice over the years I had to carry a little extra weight for YOU, so what do you think we just forget about it, okay?

CARSON: Who the HELL do you think you're talking to?

Rage grips Burns. He's covering for a brother who is somehow part of a gruesome robbery and murder. After shoving Carson up against a locker, Burns tries to leave.

Carson, also furious although not wanting to get physical, follows him...

CARSON: COLBY! I am not talkin' about paperwork here. Now I'm asking you again: What did you pick up on the floor [of that bloody hotel suite]?

BURNS: And I told you [thumping Carson's shoulderblade]: *Nothin'*.

CARSON: [In a seething whisper] Then you're a damn liar.

BURNS: Watch your step, Freddie.



[Eugene Clark](#) and [Stephen Mendel](#)

Even when assigned to sniper duty, **Freddie Carson** (right) is a spiffy dresser, and sometimes he can sound like a college professor — the speculatively articulate sort, as opposed to the arrogantly ideological type.

Colby Burns is the tallest of the NIGHT HEAT regulars and (in real life) a former footballer. He only smiles when making a joke at someone's expense at work, or about to body-slam a suspicious whomever outside of the office.

When Colby finds his brother hanging out with his wife at their home, he asks Judy to take their son upstairs — so he can beat the crap out of his brother. Who, *alright*, WAS at the theft and murder scene, *but but but...*

The younger brother is **Devon Allen Burns** ([PHILIP AKIN](#)), nicknamed "Devo," and later I'll quote from their confrontations. Burns versus Carson is one of the four volcanic situations that flare during this episode.

CARSON: I am asking you again: What did you pick up *off the floor*?

BURNS: [Intent on quitting this scene] Look, get out of my face, man.

They step into the men's room and close the door. Now it's Carson's turn to yell. He pulls out a photograph a technician took of the crime-scene floor...

Take a look right there. You see that? It's shining. RIGHT THERE. That's what you took, man; and it's not in any of the inventories, ANYWHERE.

"IT" is a gold lighter. Carson *remembered* Burns picking up *something* at the crime scene. The picture now shows what. *Why* did Burns pick it up? Does he also have

any of the missing diamonds? Burns pins Carson against a six-foot-high divider...

CARSON: Go ahead and hit me. But you better ask yourself *whether it was WORTH it*. **HOW MUCH DID YA SELL YOUR SHIELD FOR?**

Burns then bashes his friend, partner and accuser across the jaw. The chaos has reached Chief Detective [Kevin O'Brien](#). *What the hell is going on in here?*

By the time you reach that part of the episode, you'll know. Burns and Carson's actions, and their *secrecy*, are about to make their ultimate boss angrier than in any other NIGHT HEAT. That's [SEAN McCANN](#), superb as Lieutenant **Jim Hogan**.

When Issue #19 was uploaded in April 2026, this link was active...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RPrHppRqLQ>

For Those with Longer Attention Spans, More Remains to Explain

[MARIO AZZOPARDI](#) directed "Fire and Ice." With just 48 minutes of air-time, he did quite a job with this script by [EDWARD ADLER](#) and [STUART ROSENBERG](#).

Here's most of what gives NIGHT HEAT's "Fire and Ice" its own sparkles...

- First and Second, the way series regular **Colby Burns** puts family loyalty ahead of professional duty; followed by how he and his partner expose two other senior colleagues to withering heat from Lieutenant Hogan.
- LefCourt & Son, a Jewelry-Broker firm. The original son (Bobby), died a young man. His younger sibling is a socialite and a hedonist. We see the guy preparing the weekly inheritance check for Dad to sign: "Thank God your mother isn't here to see what you're doin' with this money."
- The senior LefCourt's embodiment of old-world values, even as he describes the velvety grip flawless diamonds have on him. He is THE reason three (yes, just three) rare stones are coming in from Paris.

Those stone will be examined in a hotel suite his firm leases. In that space...

- A surprise shootout kills five people, and the sole survivor is the guy least likely to know what to do with the loot. Merely the courier, he's ill-prepared for his high-stakes role. Yet he escapes with only a leg wound, and with three tiny stones worth far more than the \$250,000 he and his nightclub-owner/singer friend will try to sell them for.

And do not neglect: The way the Lefcourt family's past gives context to this taut

episode: Family schisms, going back decades. In a bizarre way, similar to the divide between Detective Burns and his own brother "Devo" — yes, the Survivor.

Then throw in the *office* polarity: Two Detectives who are partners and friends. Colby Burns tries to control his brother, while Freddy Carson pushes to verify his partner's honesty. And because Captain O'Brien is distracted by the senior Lefcourt showing up with a transformed attitude, the source of these parallel strains will remain unknown to him as well as Hogan. When Hogan finds out, *ka-bloo-ee*.

"You Shouldn't-a Made Me Lie to Him, Devo"

Meet **Ernest Lefcourt**. At Mid-South Precinct HQ, on the night of the murders and the disappearance of the stones, the veteran gem-collector & dealer had withheld the fact that *he* flew in the Frenchman and set up that murderous meeting.

But at least this man had been forthright about his life's work...

Oh, not for money; I have money. This is a *different* greed. I have difficulty explaining it to myself. It's in the mind, really. It's like an *addiction*. Greed for the IDEA of those diamonds. The idea that, in this world, there can be something pure, hard, *radiant* beyond description. Absolutely perfect — *forever*.

When the masked goons stormed in, Lefcourt was nowhere to be found. But his master appraiser — **Arun Lubarski**, who relocated from the Soviet Union 20 years ago — got killed while firing back with a handgun. The devastating loss of this friend will turn Lefcourt Senior into an admirable if belated asset for the cops.

As for "Devo" Burns? Relieved to be alive, just hours after flying in from Paris, he seeks shelter from **Verna**. In the credits she has no last name, and in real life she's Canadian blues artist [SALOME BEY](#). As this episode aired, she was mid-fifties.

One of the cigarette girls is patching up the leg wound. Looking for Devo, Colby has just left the club; Verna covered for him. She is frosted. Devo somehow got shot tonight. *Who and why?* "It doesn't matter how it happened," he tells her.

Three pricey stones — the episode calls 'em "The Pharoah's Teardrops" — have let him forget the loss of his lighter. Who cares about that? He dodged his cop brother, he doesn't need to go to a hospital, and Devo is *giddy*: "For one time in his life," he tells Verna, "Devo BURNS was in the *right* place at the *right* time."

Amazing to hear him label THAT blood-drenched hotel suite, airplane roar masking the gunfire, as a "right place." If *this* is the intro to his story about tonight,

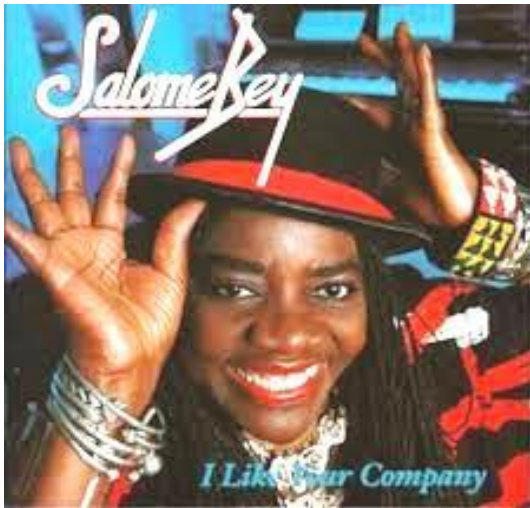
she doesn't wanna hear the rest. Yet another scintillating scene...

Yes you do, Verna, cuz you're the *same* as me. Always were – just *scratchin'* and *scoungin'*, just to stay in the game? Yeah, now Colby's the one who's DIFFERENT. Ya always knew where HE was goin' – yeh, but that's changing [his voice dropping]... I'm the *big winner* now.

He pulls out one of the "Teardrops." Seeing it transforms the seething Verna into a comfy fireplace. Returning his whisper, she tells him, with an approving grin...

You *bastard*. You never *did* quit, didja?

Ernest Lefcourt set up the meeting (though not the killing), and because "the Frenchman" in Paris enlisted him as courier, Devo knows this fact. He and Verna resolve to show him *one* of the three gems. Since Devo's role must never become known to anyone who might tell Colby, Verna will have sit down with Lefcourt. The next day, out of nowhere, she does; and he mistakes her for a call girl.



[SALOME BEY](#) (left) and [CECIL LINDER](#)

This French actor was nearing 75 when "Fire and Ice" first aired. And [Cecil Linder](#) as Ernest Lefcourt is a subtler blend than Verna, Devo Burns, or [Lefcourt's second son Warren](#) (a rakish saboteur who makes Colby's brother seem semi-salvageable).

The night Arun Lubarski got killed, LefCourt had bobbed and weaved: "I was privileged to be Arun's *patron*," he told a skeptical Captain O'Brien and his partner, and "to give him a bench in my workroom [to have] first call on his services."

But *any* dealer or broker could ask this seasoned appraiser to look at a stone and/or cut it. Arun "had his own KEY [and] he could use the suite any time he wanted."

And now Verna's overture is backfiring. It induces Lefcourt to seek a second session with Captain O'Brien. "I'm ready to confess," he says in a stately manner.

Yes, he commissioned the meeting late last night: A disaster that resulted in five deaths. As for [the visitor from Paris](#) — "this is the man you found dead in my suite" — the two had negotiated for months about this transaction.

O'Brien needs a lead: *Who could've sent the killers?* Lefcourt has nothing to offer (and this time he's sincere) on that score. He assumed that his French peer would be super-careful. Lubarski's associate also had a handgun, and he also got killed.

What about a leak in your own office? He has no secretary, and only the cleaning crew comes and goes. But the firm is still called Lefcourt & Son. Lefcourt repeats what he told O'Brien and his partner the night before: The *current* "Son" has no part of it. (The cops caught up with him briefly, and took that to be the case.)

Yet LefCourt Sr. has reappeared. Walked in *on his own*. Why are you sharing these details with the Police *now*? After all, O'Brien says, "the stones are gone."

That's what HE thought! But this woman sat down at Lefcourt's café table a few hours ago. "She wanted to sell me the stones. She HAS them [and] she showed me the smallest one." BAM — the cops have their first decent lead.

Yes, LefCourt has got the 250 grand Verna named as her price, and *of course* he would still love to own any part of the Pharoah's Teardrops — but not by "buying them from the men who killed Arun."

Lefcourt wrongly takes Verna to be part of their plot, and the cops have no reason to disagree. He agrees to meet her again, as a trap so the cops can make an arrest. The man's driver now is *justice* for Arun Lubarski (played by [ERIC FINK](#)).

Of all the guest actors in "Fire and Ice," Cecil Linder as Ernest LefCourt has the kind of integrity that lets him view life as more than diamonds and riches. When you see Ernest and Warren replay their grievances, the clarity is memorable.

ADDENDUM: The one way NIGHT HEAT took itself too seriously

Columnist Tom Kirkwood ([ALLAN ROYAL](#)) is the night-shift newshound, even though his job is not "reporting." He could be the only amateur philosopher to ever serve as detective-show regular. When not embroiled in the story itself, or contributing a bit of research, he muses. He'd like to give the story some wider "meaning."

In "Fire and Ice," it began when the cops encountered the carnage inside Lefcourt's office near the Airport. Sometimes "Tommy" Kirkwood offers a rough substitute for a "moral." Might or might not be a take-away. This time? Too gauzy.

But the *first* part of this Kirkwood paragraph *does* work as Orientation...

The hardest substance known to man is also one of the most fragile. If a cutter strikes an undetected flaw, the most dazzling diamond disintegrates into useless fragments.

Followed by the stretch: "Then what about that *infinitely* more *complex* structure we call a city? What *glue* — what molecular *attraction* — can bind us all together — when *each* atom is so *riddled* with flaws?" Give it a rest, Kirkwood.

Besides, this publication takes apart Gems all the time, peacefully. And you won't need a set of DVDs [to benefit from the "Fire and Ice"](#) being APPRAISED here.

Still Not Done. Listen to How Devo Fended Off his Brother...

COLBY BURNS: If I hear *one line* of your usual crap, you're talkin' to a cop, not your brother.

DEVO BURNS: Okay, [in] PARIS. I work for the *Frenchman*, the one you found on the floor. He owns a club —

COLBY: — and you're the *saxophone* player in the club.

DEVO: Well, he does HIS thing, man, and *I do mine*. We can't all be like YOU, Colby.

Colby's wife Judy ([NERENE VIRGIN](#)) and their five-year-old son are upstairs and not sleeping. Colby yells at Devo to quit the personal zingers and talk facts.

DEVO: All right, I'll tell you how it IS then. I *grins* and I *shucked*, and I'm his NICE LITTLE COLORED BOY. Now, I'm just small *potatoes*, Colby — don't *make it more* than it is!

YOUR lighter along with *five body bags*. "Is THAT your idea of small potatoes?"

DEVO: Noooo man, but I am the MULE, dig? I brought the *ice* through Customs [and] it was none of my play, *none of it*.

COLBY: *Stick* to what happened [in that hotel suite].

DEVO: All RIGHT. It was *going* down *just* like it was supposed to and I'm watching it 'cuz I'm OUT of it, Colby. And these THREE freakos come in through the wall.

Colby corrects his brother: "There were TWO." Devo stands firm: "THREE."

But the camera never showed us more than two. Devo has made up this "extra" evil-doer to explain why the gems were nowhere to be found that night...

DEVO: As soon as I saw the heat pull his piece, I was *flyin' over the*

BAR, and then it was *all over*... So I lay there and I wait. *Nothing*. So I peek my head up over the bar [and] I SAW what you SAW, and I beat it the Hell outta there, now THAT is the whole story ... EVERYTHING.

COLBY: And what *happened* to the stuff everybody was *there* for?

DEVO: All GONE ... [and] I'll tell you who *doesn't* have it, man. If I had even ONE of those rocks, I'd be gone like *snow on water*...

It's an image I bet sticks with you: Again and again, the brooding Detective staring grimly at his wayward brother... And note how Devo opted to sound *credible*: By ADMITTING his readiness to commit grand larceny. Too bad some *mysterious third gunman/robber* fled with the stones. Colby suspends his disbelief and presses for a description. Devo gives one. The sketch is so vague the cops seem to ignore it.

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- "[Babes in Wall Street](#)" – first aired on March 9th, 1962
From [TARGET: THE CORRUPTORS](#) (ABC-TV, 1961-62)
 - "[Private Sessions](#)" – first aired on January 6th, 1993
From [IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT](#) (NBC then CBS, 1988 to '94)
 - "[Leviathan Five](#)" – first aired on January 30th, 1964
From [KRAFT SUSPENSE THEATER](#) (NBC, 1963 to '65)

Although this issue was uploaded in April, that's the [November 2026](#) menu.

In 2018, **Frank Gregorsky** gave up Washington DC wheel-spinning for a new mix of Retail store work and historical media analysis. Before that switch, his [editorial clients](#) included [Hartley Goldstone](#), The Alchemia Group, Capitol Logistics LLC, the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, CELT Corp., [Victoria Harrison](#), [Richard B. Wagner](#), [John A. Warnick LLC](#), Instruction & Design Concepts, The Stuart Legacy Alliance LLC, Working Systems of Washington DC, The Walter Group, Toffler Associates, LifeCourse Associates, Oliver Productions Inc., the Bionomics Institute, the Sunshine Group LLC, the Congressional Institute, Discovery Institute in Seattle, the Progress & Freedom Foundation, and President Nixon's press secretary [Ronald L. Ziegler](#). He is now on the lookout for **an academic co-author** with ideas about how to **co-produce a book** that (somehow) makes innovative use of media history and detective fiction. Meanwhile, if you decide to quote from any issue — the first 20 are [arrayed here](#) — of this publication, please credit **Detective Drama Gems** and the Publisher/Analyst.

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