

FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF *PHILIP SPADE*, AUTHOR AND DETECTIVE:

We split up to look for our hostess and discovered Maria Vallencourt's body in the music room. She'd been bludgeoned to death with a metronome... That military guy, Thunderblast, made a crack about how I'd been trying to get a loan out of Leonora to finance my next novel. Don't know how he got wind of it.

...I had a nose around in Maria's bedroom and found a picture of the old colonel in a Turkish bath with that dictator, Ali Pasha. I figure he's got some explaining to do himself. Then the doctor, Farthing, turned up a wig. It looked like somebody had disguised themselves as Maria to pull some kind of scam. If you ask me, Leonora Fine is a likely candidate.

...I put the squeeze on Thunderblast and he admitted Maria was his daughter and he's been pressuring her to marry Dr. Farthing. Then it turned out the lawyer Harrington had handled Maria's divorce from some foreign bigwig.

...Leonora Fine came up with a fragment of a letter Maria was writing, claiming somebody was threatening her. The cook said she'd seen Maria hiding something in the turnip patch, but she had been locked in her room at the time. I remembered the wig and the disguise angle.

...I figured a poke around in the study would turn up a few more clues. In a secret drawer I found some papers about a deal Leonora was making to corner the perfume market. Before I could finish reading, somebody sapped me over the back of the head. When I woke up the papers were gone.

...It's all starting to come together now. I aim to unmask the killer, if I can only stay alive long enough to track down that last clue...