

## I MADE A KILLING AT THE TRACK

The time is circa 1960 Del Mar California. Bing Crosby played by Bing Crosby Begins and ends each act by strolling across the stage singing to himself ‘where the sea meets the sky...no no, no, where the sands meet the stands no no etc.

### CHARACTERS

Colonel Spader – (Weber)Old time Kentucky horse owner. He is finally heading West with the encouragement of his wife Lillian and over the objection of their trainer Stubby. The Colonel is a fourth generation horse owner. He is not only smart but he is clever. He has an eye for the phillies both horse and human.The horse he is running in the big race is Seduction.

Lillian – (Lori)Well kept attractive woman who is 30 years younger than her husband. She grew up poor and vowed to never be that way again. She fit well into the Kentucky social circles but now has to learn how to live the California life style.

Stubby – (Randy)A skilled trainer who has worked for the Colonel for 20 years. Moving West is troublesome. He has an x wife who has custody of his three kids in Kentucky. His mom won’t move either. His wife likes the idea of the move to get away from all of that. Stubby fears that if he doesn’t move with the Colonel he might not be able to find a job.

Janet – (Linda)Wife of Stubby – Likes the idea of moving to California. Really likes getting some distance from Stubby’s x wife kids and mom. She likes the colonel and his wife but doesn’t trust them.

Tom Stanton –(Bob G.) A wealthy horse owner that has been winning races for the last 30 years. The prize of his stable is “Scarlet Sun” running in the featured race today. She is the favorite with the best time and an opening line of 3-2.

Becky – (Sonja)Tom’s Jockey – Been around for a while and lives ok for a jockey. He runs at least 6 races a day and picks up some reasonable purse money. He sees everyone else making more money for less work with none of the physical risk that he endures.

Big Jim –(Joel)Owns a stable about the same size as Tom Stanton but lately a little slower. He always seems to grab place to Tom’s win. It bothers him to the point that he’s hired a new trainer, Stan, to turn that around. In today’s feature race his horse “Tawny” has been running a quarter of a second off that of “Scarlet Sun”. Big Jim will bet his horse to win but he will be doubling up on his bet to place.

Aldo – (Bill Vance)Big Jim’s Jockey – Aldo has been riding for 4 years. It was tough braking in as a Mexican. He has strung together enough victories to finally earn equal split on purses with

the white riders. He feels he has been abused but likes having a job that allows him to send money home to Mexico. He really want to move his family North but knows that will take mucho dinero.

Kate – (Annie)Young attractive partier that likes the action of the track.

Pickum – (Roger)Spends every day at the track. He knows everybody.

Guido – (a voice on the phone)Mob guy who heads up all the book making for the West Coast. He is affiliated with one of the “families” out of New York.

Act 1 Scene 1 Stage left Jockey Locker room

Aldo – How many races you got today?

Becky – I’m in six, how about you?

Aldo – I’m in seven, we’re head to head in five.

Becky – Yeah the big one is the 7<sup>th</sup>. Big purse and fast horses. I’ll get you by a head again.

Aldo – Yeah, you know that, I know that , in fact everybody knows that. You’ll go off 7 to 5 and I’ll be 6 to 1. What about that Kentucky horse “Seduction”?

Becky – I ran with her the other day. She’s good but not good enough. Probably take show because the rest of the pack’s got nothing.

Aldo – You know a lot of money could be made if my horse got just a little bit faster.

Becky – Or if mine got a little bit slower.

Aldo – Are you thinking what I’m thinking?

Becky – If we got caught we would be so screwed.

Aldo – But if we don’t we could be so rich. I could bring my whole family up to California.

Becky – I’m just tired of seeing the rich get richer while we do all the work and take all the risk. Did you see Benny go down the other day?

Aldo – Yeah, he busted his hip and broke an arm. He didn't do anything wrong. It could happen to us. If and when it does, nobody is going to care.

Becky - I think we need to build a nest egg.

Aldo – I think I need to get my family up here. How do we do this? We can't get caught.

Becky – The “how to” is simple. I'll just start my kick a couple seconds late and you'll end up a head ahead instead of a head behind.

Aldo – What about the bet?

Becky – I'll use Pickum. I trust him. We don't have to pay him because he'll jump on too. How much cash have you got?

Aldo – I've got \$2,350. Six times that would bring my family to me.

Becky – I've got about \$5 grand. 30 grand would be the kind of nest egg to take care of me if something happens.

Aldo – Look, we've all got friends that could use some money. Our risk on this deal is huge. We can't tell anybody...promise?

Aldo and Bucky – Promise.

Scene 2 Center Stage

Becky and Pickum

Becky – Hey Pickum, If I was to give you some valuable information could you take care of some administrative things for me and return with my winnings?

Pickum – Keep talking.

Becky – If I could tell you that a 6 to 1 horse was going to win could you bet this \$7,800 to win and return my winnings by end of day?

Pickum – I can do that quickly and quietly.

Becky – Tawney in the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Becky leaves and Pickum goes to phone

Pickum dials phone and has a one sided conversation with Guido

Pickum – Hey Guido I’ve got one that makes us all good and could punish the Bataglias.

Pause then responds

Pickum – I’ve got a solid 6 to 1 where the guys with the reins have got all their cash in the game.

Pickum - Pause then responds “yeah its interesting allright– We can get guys in every city placing last minute bets on the Bataglia books, dropping them to their knees.

Pickum – Don’t worry these guys are boy scouts. They need money for their families. They will make it happen.

Pickum – Yeah I know you appreciate it. Remember me for this in the future..

Scene 2 at the bar

Pickum, Kate and Tim sing Tin Pan Frugue

Enter Coloner and Lillian

Colonel – Isn’t California beautiful?

Lillian – Certainly is. I’m sol glad we are finally moving out here.

Col – Me too...Everything is soo pretty. (gazing at Kate entering, noticed by Lillian)

Kate – Good afternoon. You folks look like you’re new to Del Mar, my name is Kate.

Col – We certainly are. We are amazed with the local beauty. My name is Colonel Spader this is my wife Lillian. I’m moving my stable out here but so far I have only one horse in California. Her name is Seduction and she is running today.

Kate – Well isn’t that a beautiful name. Is she fast?

Lillian – She did well in Kentucky but out here all the females appear fast.

Col – Miss Lillian mind your manners this young lady was just being sociable.

Lillian – Is that what you call it? Back home they’d say being forward.

Kate – Whatever. I’m going for a drink...can I get you folks something?

Lillian – It's proper for the gentlemen to fetch drinks for the ladies.

Kate – Maybe but it's a new world out here. Women are more independent, more daring...(gazing at the Colonel) and we have more fun too.

Col – I like it and yes I'll have a bourbon. Excuse me ladies but business calls.

Enter Stubby and Janet. Stubby and the Col move stage left as Janet joins the ladies.

Lillian – Miss Kate allow me to present Miss Janet also from Kentucky. She is the wife of our trainer Stubby. Kate is an independent California woman.

Janet – Pleased to meet you. Do you follow horse racing?

Kate – Actually I follow the men who follow horse racing.

Janet and Lillian – I see.

Lillian to Janet – How's the house hunting going.

Janet – The homes are beautiful but the prices are scary. Stubby is having a hard time with the cost.

Kate – You'll get used to it. Sometimes you've got to give a little up to get what you want.

Janet and Lillian – I see.

Meanwhile center stage Colonel and Stubby

Stubby – Col lets quit this nonsense and move back to where we belong. Do you see what it costs to buy a house out here? They want \$70,000 and it's barely got three acres.

Col – I know it's pricey but if we stick to our plan we'll do fine. How's Seduction looking?

Stubby – She wants to run. I've been holding her back for three months. She hates not coming in the money.

Col – We stick to the plan. She'll go off at 10 to one at least. I've spread ten grand worth of bets around in different cities. As promised we'll split 100 grand. You'll have a fat down payment and money to bring your kids out whenever you want.

Stubby – I hope you're right

Colonel and Stubby Join the ladies.

Colonel – Stubby I'd like you to meet one of the reasons California is so beautiful. This is Kate.

Stubby – Please to meet you mam.

Kate - My pleasure. I'm going to make my bet. Can I get you anything?

Janet – Back home the men place the bets for the ladies.

Kate - I imagine they do. Sounds like women back there miss out on a lot.

Lillian – We enjoy being cared for.

Kate – Right.

Scene stays at bar but focuses on the entrance of Big Jim and Tom  
Big Jim meets Tom Stanton at the bar

Tom – Hi Big Jim, you've got a full slate today?

Big Jim – Yeah, I'm in 8 races. I'm hopin' for some trips to the Winners Circle. I know you'll be there.

Tom – I was in 8 but I had to scratch Bellamy in the 3<sup>rd</sup>. She's favoring her left side. The vet wants to rest her a bit. How's Tawney look for the featured race?

BJ – She looks good. I just can't get her to shed those two seconds to bring her in ahead of your Scarlet Sun. Have you met the Colonel yet?

Tom – Yeah, he's an interesting old kook. He's got a pretty good sized stable. So far he's only brought out Seduction. He and his trainer are looking around for a place to buy.

BJ – How fast is Seduction?

Tom – She's a pretty horse but so far her times aren't very good. I've got a buddy back in Kentucky that's been keeping an eye on her. So far, not much.

BJ – Well then it looks like it's you and me in the big race today. The rest of the field is slow. One of these days my Tawney will sneak past your Scarlet Sun.

Tom – That's why we run the race...you never know.

Scene 3 Trackside All present except the Jockeys

Tim calls the race while everyone is rooting at the rail. The lights go down as the 3 horses appear from the kitchen. Seduction wins, Tawney for place and Scarlet Sun to show. The crowd roars as Colonel Spader dies at the rail. All react to his death.

End of Act 1

Bing Crosby strolls by doing his thing

INTERMISSION Who dunnit cards and dessert.

ACT 2

Bing Crosby strolls by

At the Bar

All present as Inspector Callum introduces himself.

Callum – This is no way to treat a new member of our community. It just ain't neighborly, but then lots of stuff been going on today that hasn't been neighborly. The guy who trained me for this job told me to find the motive and follow the money. That's where it got confusing because there are more than one pots of money, more than one motive and more than one crime. In fact we got a plethora of criminals but only one murder. I had to solve them all to find the one murderer.

Lets start with the small potatoes, the jockeys.

Becky – we aren't in the mood for short jokes

Callum – Nobody is laughing.

Aldo – We didn't kill the colonel. We were in the race.

Callum – I know but the two of you worked up this scheme to beat the system out of 30 grand. The racing commission and your employers will be talking to you later. I figured out their game by watching Pickum get his winnings. Here is where the plot thickens because Mr. Pickum here has some nepharious friends.

Pickum – Hey I didn't kill anybody.

Callum – Yeah I know but when you give bad information to bad people some really bad things can happen. This whole group is capable of murder but they just aren't fast enough. Seduction was winning at the same time that the Colonel was losing. They wouldn't know to want to kill

him until he was already dead. They didn't kill him but I've got a vice Lt. anxious to talk to all of them. I then looked at Big Jim and Tom.

Big Jim – Wait a minute, I didn't have anything to do with any of this.

Tom – Me either. I though I was going to win this race, not come in for show.

Big Jim – I didn't know about either fix.

Callum – Relax men. I looked at your betting slips and it's obvious you didn't know about any of this. That quickly took me to Kate.

Kate – Me! I'm a lover not a fighter.

Callum – Yeah I know you're more into fun than felonies. Actually, it was the murder weapon that eliminated Kate and all the rest of you from suspicion.

Kate – What do you mean.

Callum – It was the Colonel's weapon. A dagger hidden in a walking cane. The murderer is from Kentucky, knows the colonel and knows that cane. At first I thought it was Stubby.

Stubby – No way I loved the old man.

Callum – My vice guys have been able to check on the bets the old man through down. He's got over \$20,000 riding on Seduction. That ended up as a \$240,000 payout.

Stubby – He told me he bet \$10 and I was getting half. He always had an angle.

Callum – Well \$240gs or even \$120 is a hell of a motive. The problem is that your name isn't on the bet. You need him alive to collect. So next I thought about your wife Janet.

Janet – I couldn't kill anybody especially not the colonel. I wanted to move to California. Now I don't know what's going to happen.

Callum – Yeah, I know. That brings me to the murderer.

Lillian – Inspector Callum I appreciate your logical approach to solving this heinous crime. But I can't think of a reason in the world why I would want my husband dead.

Callum – I can think of millions.

Lillian – What do you mean?

Callum – Lets start with the \$240,000 winnings that you as heir will be able to collect. Then lets throw in the balance of the Colonel's holdings currently valued at over \$4million. Now let toss

in the big one. On file in Kentucky is a prenuptial agreement that you signed nine years ago on your wedding day. If the Colonel chose to divorce you as he did the last three wives you would be sent packing with \$100,000. That looks like motive to me.

Lillian – That crazy old fool. I saw the way he looked at that hussy.

Kate – You keep talking like that and you're going to need a doctor as well as a lawyer.

Lillian – Miss Kate ten years ago I sashayed around the colonel and roped him away from the more mature women he was married to at the time. She was tossed out with the laundry and a \$50,000 severance. I wasn't going to let that happen to me.

Callum – Don't worry Miss Lillian it won't. Your path looks much darker. Take her away.