



## A drink with Rush Madder

On Spring Street people were finishing work, but I had a job to do. The Quorn Building was a narrow, dirty yellow building. On the wall by the door, between the names of people who could fix your teeth painlessly and people who didn't want to say what they did, I found the name of Rush Madder. He was in Room 619.

Everything in the Quorn Building was old and tired and smelled of yesterday's cigarettes. The door of Room 619 was locked. I knocked.

The door opened noisily and I was looking at a big man with a round face, oily skin, and a thin black moustache.

He put out two yellow fingers. 'Well, well, the old dog-catcher himself. Carmady is the name, I believe?'

I followed him into a room with no carpet, a desk and three chairs. There was a clothes closet and a washbowl in the corner by the door.

'Sit down,' Madder said. 'Pleased to see you. Nice of you to come. Business?'

I sat down, put a cigarette between my teeth and looked at him. I didn't say a word. He started to get worried. He looked up at me quickly, then down again.

'Any ideas?' he asked softly.

'About what?'

He didn't look at me. 'About how we could do a deal together.'

'Who phoned me?' I asked.

'Did somebody phone you?'

I reached for his telephone, picked it up, and very slowly began to put in the number of the Los Angeles Police Station. I knew Madder would know the number as well as I did. He reached over and pulled the phone back.



*Madder reached over and pulled the phone back.*