

# ***The Magic Bullets***

***From a Gun that Couldn't Have Been Used***  
**Suzi B. Mystery #5**

from

*Magic Lamp*



*Press*™

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## **Chapter I**

### **The Mayor's Cake**

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It isn't often that I take pleasure in our fair city's local news, because like so many other large municipalities, our TV stations have turned the evening news into a combination crime report and human interest program, proving the old saying that *if it bleeds, it leads*.

They then follow up with some clueless *on-the-scene* reporter standing in front of some location where a crime took place at some recent time in the past, that attempts to interview some non-witnesses who only offer remarks about how loved the victim was, or how quiet a neighbor the criminal was. This causes me to suspect that they must have some file footage stored away of a *generic* witness who always says the same thing – and they bring it out and play it after every crime.

But today it's a little different – because it's July the 5<sup>th</sup>, so *if it's patriotic it leads...* and we're being treated to stories about firework displays and a tragedy that took place in a very ritzy neighborhood on the west side of town during yesterday's early evening. The mayor was having a patriotic-themed party at his mansion and invited many of the local big-shots. The event was a catered affair, and while the host and all of his guests were seated outside under the large rented tent set up near the swimming pool, some firecrackers were going off nearby.

The party attendees all thought that the evening's fireworks were starting, so they continued ignoring everything but their own self-serving conversations until something

ripped through tent's roof and continued down into the cake, causing some of the frosting to fly up in the air and onto the mayor's chubby face.

While several city employees tripped over each other trying to be first to wipe the mayor's face, another guest took a closer look at where the cake's flying frosting came from and noticed a hole in the top layer.

The caterer came over to inspect it, and after following the hole down a layer or two discovered what had caused the tent rip and airborne frosting: a bullet.

The Chief of Police was also a guest that day, and using his best fear-mongering tactic, suggested that this might have been an assassination attempt on the mayor, and advised all persons present to evacuate the premises so that he might have a mobile command station set up for a full-blown investigation, and to protect the mayor from another attempt.

Fortunately there was another guest there who brought everyone back to a state of reality by informing that their evacuation would mean no face-time on television when the news crews would arrive... and that great suggestion was successfully offered by none other than the county's District Attorney, Ms. Myra Scot Sharp – my bitter ex-wife... a person who is known to become a danger to anyone daring to step in between her and a news camera.

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An in-the-field reporter is standing in front of the Mayor's mansion and introducing who he is going to be bringing on camera:

"We are here at the Mayor's residence, where a gun has been fired, causing some debris to land on the mayor. Fortunately, he was not injured, thanks to what we have heard was the fast action of our police chief.

"Also in attendance at this wonderful patriotic party the mayor hosted was our District Attorney, who will now be making a statement."

Myra steps in front of the camera, and I can tell that she's trying hard to hold back the dirty look she wanted to give the news reporter for taking so long with his introduction. Being the complete 'player' that she is, Myra looks over towards the reporter, fakes a slight grin as she looks at him, and begins her statement.

"We are now in the process of determining what the motive behind this gunshot was, but rest assured that our department's Bureau of Investigation will do a thorough job of finding out who caused this incident."

Whenever I see her display such pomposity, I regret helping her get elected to that office.

Maybe it's unfair for me to even think a thing like that, but subsequent reports that the hole in the tent roof was directly above the cake that got 'shot' will lead even the most avid conspiracy nut to conclude that the entire incident was caused by an errant bullet fired off into the air by some neighbor trying a little too hard to get into the July 4<sup>th</sup> spirit.

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I have no doubt that Myra was under a lot of pressure from the local politicians, so she had to cover all of her bases while investigating the mayor's bullet, and sent details of the physical details of it to all law enforcement agencies, hoping to find a match to any other bullet used in a crime.

Unfortunately no match was found, so a small article buried somewhere in one of our daily newspapers mentioned that the D.A.'s office concluded that the bullet must have been the result of a July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration. This doesn't mean that it's legal, because firing off any weapon outdoors within the city limits is against the law, but it's only a misdemeanor and not worth pursuing by the District Attorney's office.

There was no mention of the bullet for several months, until another incident took place not far from the mayor's residence: a report of a gunshot by a person who claimed that it sounded like it came from the house directly behind his.

This time the police had something to go on: a small area containing only two or three houses. They conducted a house-to-house canvas and in one of them, the homeowner's two minor children were found to be playing with their father's 9mm. semi-automatic handgun.

It's perfect for a woman's purse because it weighs less than two pounds, has a 14-round magazine, and uses 9mm ammunition that's pretty much available in sporting goods stores all over.

This also gives me a chance to hear Suzi lecture me about the difference between caliber and mm designations for bullet sizes.

From what she says, caliber is expressed as a decimal portion of an inch, so that a .25 caliber bullet is 25%, or ¼ of an inch in diameter.

On the other hand, there are 25.4 millimeters in an inch, so that the total number of millimeters in the bullet's description must be divided by 25.4 to find out how wide it is in comparison to a caliber bullet.

Therefore, a nine-millimeter bullet is the same as a  $9 \div 25.4$  or like a 35.4 caliber bullet. In other words, each millimeter is one 25.4<sup>th</sup> of an inch, and each caliber is one 100<sup>th</sup> of an inch.

I have no idea why they don't use the same type of designation for all bullets, so that's just another thing I don't know anything about, but that Suzi knows a lot about.



A CZ 75 P-01 Pistol

When the children's parents returned to the residence, the children admitted that they had found the key to the gun locker, removed the gun and not realizing that it was loaded, accidentally fired it into the swimming pool.

Discovering that they were probably 'in trouble,' they immediately returned the gun to its locker and the key to its hiding place – but their criminal activity hiding methods were a little too underdeveloped to permit them to lie to their parents, and the mystery of the gunshot was finally solved... but that didn't remove the fact that a gun was fired within the city limits, so until the City Attorney's office decided whether or not they

wanted to file a Juvenile Court petition against the children for their alleged *accidental* discharge of a weapon, the handgun and its fired bullet retrieved from the pool were locked up in the L.A.P.D. property room.

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Myra's a pretty sharp cookie, so because the *accidental* shooting of the swimming pool was only a block or so away from the Mayor's house, she requested a ballistics comparison of both bullets and discovered that there was a match. She then realized that those kids had fired off the previous July 4<sup>th</sup> bullet too, but made the politically correct decision to keep her mouth shut because she knew there was no way to prove who fired that first bullet from the gun. It could have been the kids, a parent, a guest at their July 4<sup>th</sup> party, or someone else. All that an investigation would do is cause a lot of political problems and give no solution to a misdemeanor.

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Another few months later, a man convicted of murder was released from prison after a successful appeal on what the prosecution calls a *technicality*, but defense attorneys call a proper interpretation of civil rights afforded by the Constitution of the United States.

Of course this gave the local news services a great cycle of interviews with angry people on both sides of the issue, and also with relatives of the murder victim and disappointed police and prosecutors.

Myra was nowhere to be found by a news camera: she doesn't like to be connected to any losing effort... but she was front and center a week later when being interviewed after the released convict was found murdered. Here's what she said:

"The fact that this man may have been convicted of a crime and then released after an appeal has no bearing on the fact that he was murdered – and our office will not cease our efforts until the shooter has been brought to justice."

And then Myra did something I never thought I'd see... she shared the spotlight with another person!

"And now I'd like to introduce the person who our office is assigning this investigation to – Deputy District Attorney Lydia Moran. She comes to our office from a law enforcement background, and we feel confident that she will bring the guilty party to court and obtain a conviction."

Wow. Myra stepped back out of the limelight, which probably means she thinks the case is a loser that she wants to distance herself from, and therefore stuck the new-hire with it.

Other than that though I'm stunned by the new Deputy D.A. she assigned the case to, because she's really a *looker* I'd like to meet... and if everything goes right, she may even wind up having a chance to be my next ex-wife.

I don't know how I'm going to arrange it, so I'll try calling Myra and offering my help on the case. She'll probably see right through my feeble attempt to meet Lydia, but it's still worth taking the chance.

The only perk I received for helping her get elected was getting her private line's phone number.

"Hello Peter. I'm sure you saw my announcement a little while ago, which means that you'd like to meet Lydia – and I've already warned her about you, so forget about it."

“Myra, I’m shocked that you think I’d stoop so low. My only purpose in making this call is to find out why you’re assigning a high profile case out to someone else in your office.”

Silence: that was a nice save on my part, and it must have worked because she’s not saying anything yet.

“You’re a little smarter than I thought you were Peter. Not that much smarter, but a little bit. The reason I gave the case to Lydia is because this case goes higher than you think, and if you tell anyone about what I say now, I’ll have you charged with obstruction.”

“Okay kiddo, you’ve got my word... what’s up?”

“We ran ballistics on the bullet that killed the ex-con, and got a match to two other bullets in our database. All three bullets came from the same gun: the one that those kids fired into the swimming pool a couple of months ago, and also the bullet that went into the mayor’s cake.”

“That’s great Myra. The murder must have been committed by someone who had access to that gun in the L.A.P.D. property room. Have you looked into that?”

“No we haven’t, Peter. They rejected the gun because they can’t accept donated weapons. The ex-con was killed by a bullet fired from that gun while it was locked up in my desk drawer.”

