The Case of the Petrified Penguin

It was a cold night. It was a damn cold night. It was so cold it would freeze the spit off a spitting image. And so there are those of us who still give thanks that Mortimer Q. Fuzz was not a spitting image. For by a strange flirt of fortune did events befall him which are here set down. In fact set down.

The street light leered consumptively at its reflection in the gloss of Fuzz's shoes. His heels clicked spasmodically in semi-syncopation with his rapier cane as he strode masterfully along Memorial Drive. There was not a woman in the world that Fuzz was not afraid of and his swagger screamed it to the universe. He held his head defiantly high to keep the worms out of his mouth as he kicked them scornfully before him. His was a distinguished head. You could almost distinguish it from his neck. Once there was an unbeliever who vowed that Fuzz couldn't even dunk a cream puff without getting it soggy. We give the lie to you, sirrah! No Fuzz has ever sogged a cream puff. Fuzz marched on.

Suddenly a mansion loomed in the distance. Only it was not a mansion in the distance. It was Walker across the street. And then THE SCREECH.

It rose to a shrill writhing falsetto—then plunged to the depths of bone-softening vibrations which shook people to the guts, so to speak. It shrieked like a mouse that was having its entrails removed centimeter by centimeter if the mouse had a voice like a dorm freshman after midnight. It swelled like Mae West's neck below the neck. It reminded one of steel on glass and rusty iron on steel and fingernails on crepe paper. It was a creeping, jeeking, screeching, gripping up-and-down-the-spine-clawing sound. It was like handling silk with chapped hands. It was like pinching a coed's cheeks when she has make-up on and hasn't taken a bath since she went out with a Voo Doo man. It was annoying.

It dripped from the parallel bars in the Gym and ran around on three feet and a peg leg in the basement. It swung on its tail from the roof. It pervaded the place. It got in the soup. But nobody noticed it on account of a dead cat got there first. It stunk. It smelled. It was like it was no good.

Now Mortimer Q. Fuzz, when he heard this, was not scared in the least. He was terrified. He lifted his nicely creased panties and lit out for home like a Tech man when the shotgun shows up. But he came from a sturdy race, and after he had run manfully for ten miles or so he said to himself, "What is this, Mortimer, can it be that you are scared, and even if so, do you not think that you should make the sterliness of your birthright apparent by going back and licking the pants offen that noise?" And so after a little argument he turned and leaping aboard a passing taxi, which it seems was not a taxi but a coed going to an early morning class, drove rapidly back to Walker.

Tossed nonchalantly up the front steps by his mode of transportation, Fuzz rolled intrepidly down the inside stairs, alighting inverted on the corner of Eddie Pung's newly cleaned rug. Composedly straightening his tie and rising to his hands Mortimer surveyed the situation.

Lying in the center of the rug and asymptotic to a 32-degree line through the North corner of Walker was the Body. "A Penguin," gasped Mortimer. He struggled to his feet. He touched it gingerishly. "It's Petrified," he gasped further. Pulling a small sketching pad from his pocket he quickly drew himself together. "Murder has been done here tonight," he declared, "and Someone Shall Pay the Penalty."

"Procedure 37a2," decided Fuzz firmly, and immediately drawing a pair of tweezers from the corner of his mouth he began to go over the room centimeter squared by centimeter squared. The reason for the centimeters was that it sounded better in the newspaper. He was almost finished when instinct grabbed him by the right ear lobe and pulled him violently to the right as a Walker carving knife shaved and hair-cutted past his left cheek. Seizing his instinct by the middle Fuzz hurled it at his attacker, hitting him smack in the face. Follow-