

The buzzing of blow-flies drew me to the corner of the chip pile. Blow-flies are great friends of mine . . . at times. Helpful little friends, blow-flies—at a time like this. I approached them slowly; and my nose told me that somewhere near was something substantial—substantially putrid. A round object lay on the chips with a long, black, cord-like appendage trailing from it. It was a gizzard, ripe and juicy with the odour of a baker's dozen of rotten eggs; but I pounced on it like a trout rising to an angler's cast. A yard or so away were two more, one quite fresh.

"Chicken gizzards," Joe's father explained.

I slit the fresh gizzard with my pocket knife. Blueberries tumbled out.

"Maybe," I said shortly, "but you know and I know that only one species of fowl around here feed on blueberries. Black ducks. I'll have to . . ."

Joe's father had sidled away during the 'post mortem'. I waited a minute or two, still clutching the odorous gizzards, then entered the kitchen just as the old man emerged from a hall-way that led to the bedroom. He had worked fast, and at the moment looked very innocent. His unconcern vanished, however, when I raised my nostrils and inhaled deeply. For the appetizing smell of roast duck was strong.

I found a duck, roasted to a golden brown, in the oven. It nestled temptingly in the frying pan, a delicious bit.

The old man's expression changed. "Huh," he commented, "Duck, ain't it?"

"Yes," I answered slowly. "It's duck. What did you hide in the bedroom?"

His lips twisted. "I took the wrong pan, dang it. I hid the vegetables by mistake."

Resisting a desire to wrap myself around the cooked bird, I used brown



paper instead. As an exhibit my find would be invaluable. To complete the job I seized Joe's fire-arm, a double-barrelled ten gauge. It was his only gun

As I departed Joe's father stood in the door-way and ripped the hide off a salt codfish. His eyes glared into mine, and his fingers curled around the fish suggestively.

The duck and gizzards were placed in storage, but were not needed; for Joe pleaded guilty. He was fined \$10 and costs or thirty days. When his gun was confiscated he didn't feel so good.

He thought he had been used pretty badly and said so.

"Listen, Joe," I told him. "You've had a long run. You're lucky. You could have been fined \$300. Remember that."

He scratched his jaw. "Guess maybe you're right."

"What puzzles me," I continued, "is why you took so much trouble to burn the feathers and other parts, and left the gizzards lying around. How come?"

"I didn't throw them on the chip pile," he returned. "I buried them. Those damn hens scratched them up."

Which goes to prove that merely scratching the surface sometimes bags a criminal.