

# A Woman's Intuition

By Cpl. K. B. KARDISH

On the quiet day of November 13th 1974, Helen and Clifford Laver were entertaining out-of-town guests at their comfortable Courtenay, B.C. home. Mr. Laver is a prosperous local businessman who owns a chain of independant department stores on Vancouver Island.

The afternoon conversation was interrupted by the phone ringing. Mrs. Laver answered the call, which was for her husband. Shortly after the telephone conversation commenced, Mrs. Laver noted an unusual change in her husband's facial expression. Acting on Mr. Laver's gesture, she picked up an extension phone to overhear a male voice giving instructions to deliver money to a location outside the city. She quickly realized it was an extortion call and instructed her visitor to run next door and telephone the RCMP.

Mrs. Laver hastily drove about 3 blocks to the B.C. Tel. Building, with intentions of having the call traced. As she was running into the building, she noticed a young man using the phone in a nearby phone booth. He appeared to be reading something from a paper. The person calling her husband had sounded like he was reading his demand for money, for he repeated portions of the instructions word for word.

Her feminine instinct aroused, she approached the phone booth and demanded the person inside tell her to whom he was talking. "To my mother", he replied. Mrs. Laver reached for the paper in his hand but the youth evaded her advance and hung up the receiver. Mrs. Laver, a diminutive grandmother, seized the young man by his jacket sleeve and informed him, "You are under citizen's arrest. I think you are phoning my husband and

I'm taking you to the police station." The tall man stepped from the phone booth, wrenched free of Mrs. Laver's determined grasp and fled on foot into a back alley. Mrs. Laver gave chase but could not catch him.

Two Courtenay Detachment members, Cst. Don Clark and Cpl. Kenn Kardish began their investigation. There was no doubt Mrs. Laver's intuition would prove correct. Mr. Laver confirmed that his caller had said the words "to my mother" before hanging up the receiver. These words were not in context with the caller's other conversation.

Two Courtenay youths, Mitchell Richard Gable, 17 yrs and Christopher Donald Joseph Viklund, 19 yrs, were found to be responsible. Tried by Judge and Jury in Nanaimo, B.C., both were convicted of attempted extortion. Gable was sentenced to imprisonment for nine months definite, twelve months indeterminate. Viklund was sentenced to imprisonment for twelve months definite and twelve months indeterminate.

Full marks go to the plucky Mrs. Laver who, acting on her feminine intuition approached the phone booth and courageously attempted to arrest the person she felt was trying to extort money from her husband. In his summation the trial Judge commended her for her alertness, presence of mind and bravery during the ordeal. Had it not been for Mrs. Laver's outstanding resolution and valour, the Courtenay Detachment file likely would read "Still Under Investigation" rather than "Concluded Here".