

# Blackmailer gets caught going big-time

By MARILYN BATES

I cornered the kids in the living room. "OK, everybody freeze. I want to hear the whole sordid story. Who's going to start?"

Two pairs of hands pointed to my younger son, and two voices chorused, "him."

"Let us proceed then," I instructed him. "I want to hear in your own words the sorry tale of how you descended to the practice of espionage and blackmail upon members of your own family."

"Well," he began reluctantly, "one day I was out in the bushes looking for bugs to feed my turtle. I was using my magnifying glass and my junior binoculars cause you can see to find them better. They hide under the leaves sometimes and."

"Do not deviate. Continue, please."

"Then I saw a car stop in front, and she was in it." He pointed to his sister. "She was with this creepy guy with the bushy hair you and dad don't like, and they sat in his car almost ten minutes. He had his arm around her too. I could see them real plain with my binoculars. So when she got out I came out of the bushes and I told her that if she cleared my room for three Saturdays, I wouldn't tell you or dad about the creepy guy."

"The plot thickens. What happened?"

"She was cleaning my room the

next Saturday, then all of a sudden she ran out yelling and holding her nose 'cause she found my dead toad. He got out of his box and went and died somewhere in there, and I couldn't find him."

"I'm not surprised," his sister sniffed. "His room is a health hazard. It should be disinfected and fumigated."

"What happened then?" I pruned my son.

He hesitated. "Well, she was cleaning my room real good 'til she found my toad, and I wanted her to keep on doing it, so I followed her around after school a few times to see if I could catch her doing anything."

"A few times," his sister shrieked. "That gross little kid shadowed me everywhere I went for a week, wearing that crummy ski mask where only his eyes show, and peeping at me through those stupid binoculars. One day he hid in the back of the mail shop until they caught him and made him leave, because he didn't have money to buy anything."

"I hoped I could catch her smoking a cigarette," he said defensively. "Some of them do in there, but she didn't." He seemed depressed at his failure to uncover any hard evidence against her. "So," he continued, "I thought I might have better luck trying to find out something about him." He gestured toward his older brother.

I stared in horror at this full fledged member of the baby Mafia. "Then what?" I stammered.

"I couldn't follow him anywhere 'cause he always talks you into letting him drive the car around," he glared at me in rebuke. "He says he needs it cause his bike doesn't work right. Well, I looked at his bike and I didn't see anything the matter with it, but when I told him I was going to tell you, he just laughed. So one time when he was gone I looked in his room, and guess what I found in the dresser, hid under his T-shirts?"

"I'm afraid to."

"There was a magazine full of pictures of ladies without hardly any clothes on," his voice was triumphant, "and that's why he cut my part of the lawn last time, and he's supposed to do it Saturday too."

"Oh, no," I assured him, "your life of crime is over, and your only concern now is that the courts deal mercifully with you."

And to think that if he hadn't slithered out of the bushes that afternoon, binoculars pressed against his nose, magnifying glass in hand, it might have gone on forever. He sidled over to where I stood inspecting the slight damage I had just done to the car when I backed out of the garage, and offered to exchange his silence for mine. He would not squeal to his

father about the crease in the bumper, if I did not mention what his teacher told me about his handwriting and spelling at open house last night.

Someone should have warned him that absolute power corrupts absolutely, and maybe he would have quit while he was ahead.

## Businesswomen

The Twelve Oaks Chapter of American Business Women's Association will hold a dinner meeting at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 28 at the Schmid Haus, 6620 E. 12 Mile in Warren.

The meeting will be conducted by its new officers: Florence Lytle, president; Betty Brown, vice president; Karen Khan, corresponding secretary; Vivian Nosakowski, recording secretary; and June Floyd, treasurer.

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The Anti-Cruelty Association is selling Christmas cards with three different designs. The cards are priced at

\$4.50 for a box of 25, \$8.75 for 50, \$13.00 for 75 and \$17.00 for 100. Cards may be picked up at the shelter or mailed from the shelter at 1369 Joseph Campau in Detroit or may be ordered by calling 891-7188.

## Club directory being compiled

A directory of women's chartered clubs in Wayne, Macomb and Oakland counties is being compiled by the Detroit Business Woman's Club.

To have your club listed, send the category (such as accountant, nurses, lawyers, etc.), name of organization, mailing address, and phone number to: Ms. Rita Burke, directory chairwoman, 12891 Sixt Avenue, Detroit, Mich. 48229.



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