Another Murder Expected!

KILLER MUTTERS: 'THE SKUNK .

EDITOR'S NOTE: San Francisco police are expecting a murder to be committed. They know the identity of the wouldbe murderer. But such is his cunning they have as yet, been unable to lay hands upon him. They've offered protection to his victim-to-be. But that young man says, "If I'm going to get it, I'm going to get it."

BY RUTH REYNOLDS

OAKLAND, Calif.—Early in 1927 when Ada Rogers Antoine first took over a little grocery store and settled herself and her two boys in the house behind it on Oakland's Brown Ave., her humble, working-class neighbors thought she was a widow. But as they got to know her better-and to like her and become her customers — the neighbors learned her story from her own lips.

"For 11 years I'm married," Ada would say, "and for 11 years my husband looks always for a better job. He gets a good job, he is not satisfied. Right away he wants a better one. Then we pick up and move. This time I say 'No.' I will stay right here."

Ada had been a buxom farm girl when she married Arthur Leroy Antoine, back in Mankato, Mich.

Now she was a weary, harassed woman, determined that Roland, 10, and Kenneth, 8, their two sons, should live in one place and get their educations before she followed her husband further.

ing iron.

behind."

a sugar bowl.

were a widower when you first

began to make love to me.

You could have told me about

your divorced wife running

found her predecessor's curl-

"Imagine that! I'd never

run away with a man and

leave my curling iron behind.

A new one. She must have

been in an awful hurry. Don't

What was she like, Arthur,

I can't imagine what a woman

would be like who would leave

a brand new curling iron

On and on Lila prattled.

bothersome when she discov-

ered a nest egg of money in

"There's something very

funny about that. Why do you

suppose Ada didn't take that

money with her-or leave it

to the boys? Why do you

Antoine's temper flared.

"Oh, shut up about Ada, It's

AFTER THAT Lila ques-

tioned her husband no more.

But she did question the boys

closely. They told her that

Mama had cried bitterly when

she said good night to them

She didn't say good-by," the

boys repeated wonderingly.

why she was crying!"

Bride Sees

of March.

husband.

"But she didn't say good-by.

"And she wouldn't tell us

PERHAPS LILA'S curiosity

over the leave-taking of her

predecessor might have dwin-

dled and then dissipated had

it not been for a request made

by Antoine in the latter days

He asked his bride to oblige

him by signing Ada's name to

a paper transferring the An-

toine house from the name of

the first Mrs. Antoine to her

Lila postponed any such il-

Then by the first bus avail-

able, she went to her brother,

Floyd, at Camp Seco, in the

beautifully wooded Calaveras

legal action by telling her hus-

band she would do it when she

returned from shopping.

the night she ran away.

Ada! Ada! All the time

suppose she forgot it?"

with you it's Ada!"

SHE BECAME even more

you think so, Arthur?

did altogether too

exclaiming when she

away. I'd have understood."

But Antoine, 33, and still a good mechanic, remained a shiftless, confused transient: never satisfied with what he had - always looking to greener fields ahead.

SOON AFTER Ada made down payments on house and store, Antoine was off againlooking for the better job. He found it shortly before Christmas, 1927, with Floyd Stovall, garage owner at Camp Seco, some 90 miles north of Oakland.

"Your husband will be home for Christmas?" the customers asked sympathetically.

"I hope so. The children miss him," Ada lied. She was a gracious woman with all the simple charm so often found in women reared in rural sec-

Surprise Visit

ANTOINE DID show up on Brown Ave. for Christmas and, somewhat to Ada's surprise he returned again on Jan. 12, 1928—their 12th wedding anniversary. But the mechanic didn't stay long. The next morning he dropped in again, just in time to cook up a hearty breakfast for his

school-bound sons. "I've got something to tell you boys," he began. "Mama's fallen in love with another man. Last night she eloped--ran away with him.

"So I'll stay with you. But I've got to go up to Camp Seco and finish up my business there. I'll be back as soon as can. Now run along to

For four days the Antoine boys struggled along by themselves - shopping, cooking, dressing.

THEN ANTOINE returned to the house on Brown Ave. and with him came a pretty young woman. "Lila, these are your new

sons -- boys, this is your new Mama."

Antoine introduced the second Mrs. Antoine -- the lush, 18-year-old big-bosomed sister of his Camp Seco boss.

The boys made friends with Lila immediately. But the neighbors were stand-offish.

Antoine Had An Answer

"WHERE IS Ada?" one demanded.

"She ran off with a rich man who had a big car and owns lots of property in Los Angeles," Antoine answered affably.

"If she ran off-how can you be married again?"

"Shhh---" Antoine cautioned. "I don't want the boys to know. Ada and I have been divorced 6 years. We went on living together for the sake of the children."

BUT THE neighbors were doubtful. They'd liked the brave, amiable little grocery -woman. They didn't believe that she would desert her sons. And so the months of January and February passed.

Then, one of the Brown Ave. neighbors, Mrs. Elizabeth Croft, buttonholed Antoine and told him how she felt about things.

"I may be putting my foot into it but a lot of neighbors say that you did away with your wife," she said, looking the mechanic straight in his brown eyes. "I think it's up to you to give us some suggestions or information that may help us clear up the situation."

Antoine laughed heartily. "If neighbors didn't have something to gossip about they wouldn't be neighbors," he sidestepped Mrs. Croft's ad-

ACTUALLY, Antoine did as cheery as he appeared. Things were not go-Half a dozen times his bride

ing too well at home. had chided. 'I can't understand why you told me you



A Murderer . . . and the Woman He Killed For

Arthur Leroy Antoine (above), having disposed of his first wife, Ada, was talked into a confession by his second, Lila (right). Now a fugitive from prison, Antoine has vowed to kill his son, whom the father accuses of absconding with his life savings.

she meant to do it. Then I ran

after her. I reached the bridge

thing about it because it

meant my freedom. I wanted

to marry Lila and I didn't

want to drag her into any

ANTOINE'S WAS a plaus-

ible story, solemnly told. The

police dragged the Straits.

They found nothing. They re-

turned to Antoine with more

That's odd. She's in there ---"

the house to kill herself. In-

"She flopped on the bed, cry-

ing and sniffling. I got mad. I

went out on the back porch and

got a hammer. She was still

erying when I returned to the

bedroom so I hit her three or

four times. She groaned but

she didn't scream. I hit her

to the bridge, he said, and

until I knew she was dead."

threw it into the Straits.

Bloodstains

In Bedroom

Brown Ave, house,

surrounding Antoine's house.

the morbidly curious who

watched the shovel hour on

hour, a bloodstained mattress

Antoine vowed he knew noth-

ing about it-who owned it,

whose blood was on it, or who

THEN THE second Mrs. An-

toine stepped into the drama.

She volunteered to elicit a con-

fession from her husband. Her

offer was accepted by the non-

Approaching Arthur with an

affectionate smile and assur-

ances of perpetual devotion,

Lila asked him to tell her-

"Dearie, I want you to tell it

Antoine squeezed her hand

and began to talk. As he spoke,

Lila turned white, then whiter.

The blood left her cheeks, her

lips. She was pale as a ghost-

FOR, AS ANTOINE ex-

plained, after he hammered

Ada to death he cut all the

flesh from her face, torso, and

limbs with a butcher knife.

This flesh he placed in a gunny-

With saw and hatchet he

split the remaining skeleton

into a macabre little pile of

human kindling — and right

down to the last hack, whim-

all to me with your own lips,"

only her—the whole story.

buried it in his yard.

plussed police.

Lila whispered.

appeared.

"You didn't find the body?

This time, when Anteine re-

"Well, sir-I didn't say any-

just as she jumped.

scandal."

questions.

County foothills where Antoine had first made love to her during long evening rides.

FLOYD STOVALL listened attentively to all Lila had to tell him, and concluded that his sister had married a biga-

"That rat! We'll get to the bottom of this. I'm going down to Oakland to tell the District Attorney-" Floyd vowed that he would leave no stone unturned until he had righted the wrong Antoine did Lila.

The young wife didn't know whether to be glad or sorry she had encouraged her brother's wrath.

Stovall went to Oakland and told Lila's story to Earl Warren, later Governor of Caiifornia but then District Attorney of Alameda County.

Mechanic Breaks Down

ANTOINE WAS picked up for questioning. At first the little mechanic laughed at his interrogators. But when he discovered that the questioners had already talked with everyone who lived in the vicinity of his Brown Ave. house,

Antoine broke down, He had fallen in love with Lila the moment he laid eyes upon her.

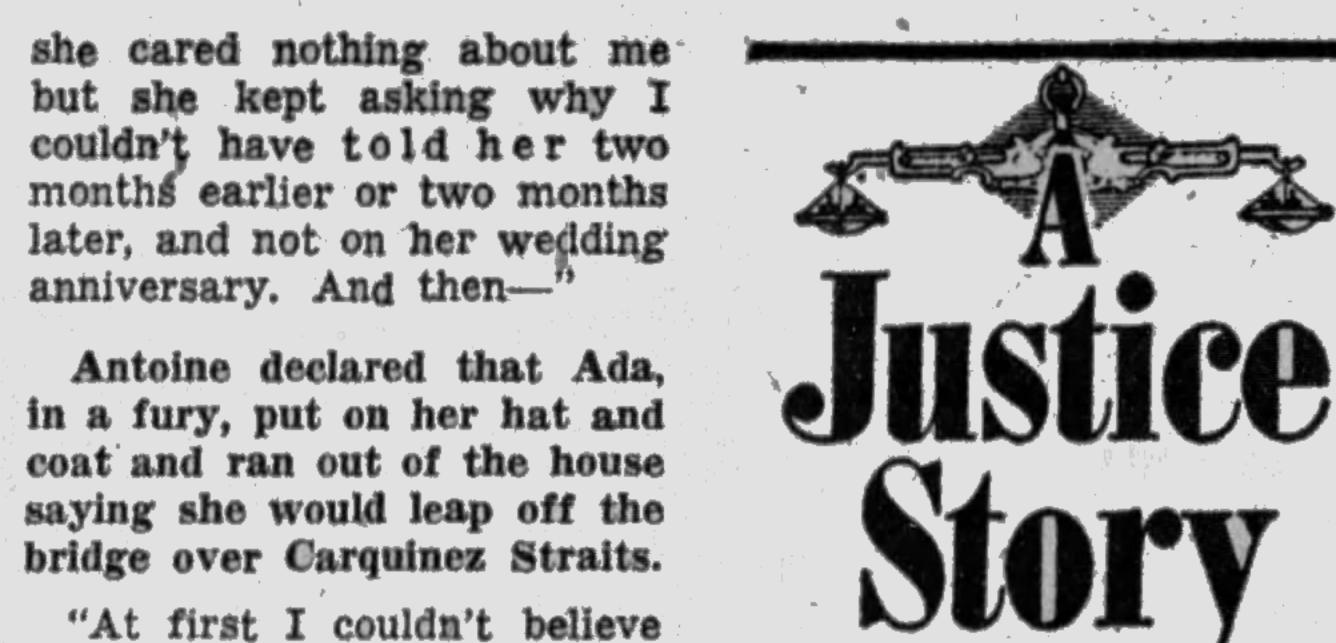
This rush of love prompted him to visit Ada to ask for a divorce. But because Christmas was at hand and he "hated to spoil the season for her and the boys," Antoine said he postponed all divorce talk.

He did not, however, remain at home for Christmas. Taking his wife's wristwatch as a present for Lila he hurried back to Camp Seco.

"ON JAN. 12," Antoine explained to District Attorney Warren, "I returned to Oakland with the intention of gaining my freedom."

But Ada, he said, proved unco-operative. She would consent neither to a divorce nor a separation.

"She cried and called me a dirty cheat and brute. She said



per, and slice he told Lila about it.

Antoine said it took him 18 hours to disassemble his wife. AS DAWN broke over his

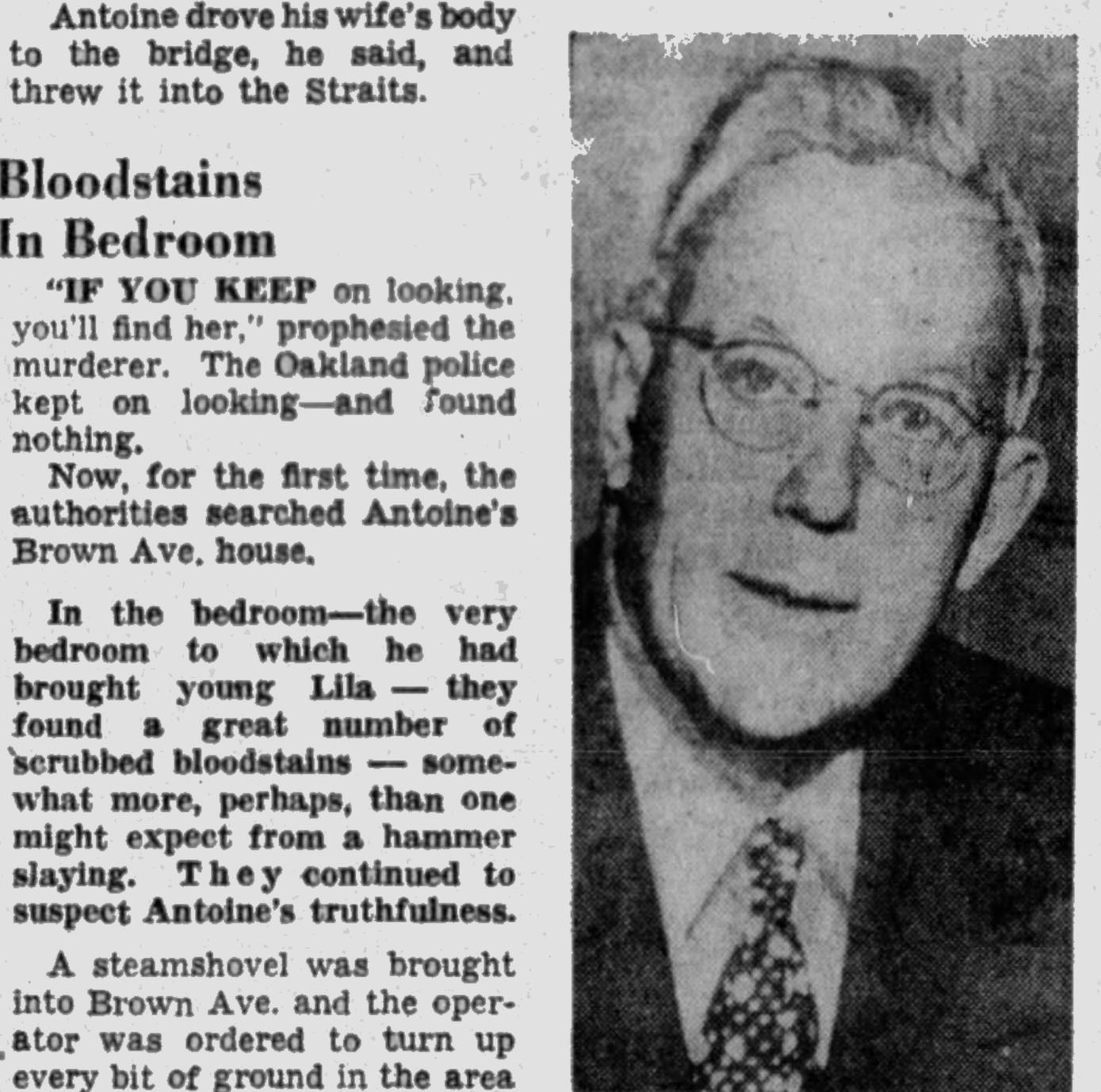
humble little Oakland cottage, he locked the door and drove with two gunnysacks to the bridge. He tossed one sack into the river. Then he motored into the

delta lands along the Sacramento River to deposit the sack of flesh in one of the many muddy sloughs that told his story, he changed it a interlace the region. bit. Ada did not tear out of "I got back in time to cook stead, "Ada went into the bedbreakfast for the boys and get

> them off to school, said Antoine, complying with Lila's request to tell all. "After they left I unlocked the bedroom door and went to

work with a scrub brush so everything would be nice and

He buried the mattress, burned some of the furniture,



Prosecutor To the shivering pleasure of

Earl Warren, now governor but then prosecutor, listened to Lila's story.

changed into his best clothes and hurried north to Lila. "SO YOU SEE your brother was all wrong when he called me a bigamist," Antoine concluded regretfully. (He had

Crafty Lila repeated her husband's story to the waiting constabulary, posed radiantly for the press, and then announced that she was "going to get a divorce from this human beast" just as quickly as the courts could function.

married Lila at the county

courthouse in San Andreas

three days after the murder.)

Lila called him a "beast. The newspapers called Antoine "California's most menstreus criminal," and the "little bigamy story" which the newspapers had used when Antoine was first questioned by District Attorney Warren, burgeoned like the green bay tree.

EMBITTERED by his wife's faithlessness, snarling at the exuberant officials, and snapping at newspapermen, the strange little man was brought

to immediate trial. Now he said that he'd concocted his grisly tale "just to see if Lila would repeat it."

Repudiating any and all confessions, he returned to his first story that Ada had eloped with a mysterious stranger, "and I didn't blame her. I was in favor of Ada doing anything to improve her condition. wasn't a very stable hus-

Despite the fact that no body had been found. Prosecutor Warren declared the defendant "was the man who committed most henious crime in California's annals-its enormity almost beyond belief or

Prisoner

Dances Jig

comprehension."

WARREN ASKED the jury to take measures to assure "that a man capable of such a deed should never be permitted any measure of freedom at large under any circumstances whatsoever."

The jury, by a ratio of seven to five, was at first disposed to hang the mechanic. But they settled on life imprisonment for Antoine,

The prisoner literally danced from the courtroom exclaiming, "I'm the luckiest man in California!"

COMMENTED one news paper editorial writer:

"The jury acted with good instinct. The body of the alleged victim has not been found. There is always the possibility, however remote,



Crime Scene

Map shows Oakland area where Ada Antoine's body was disposed of after being mutilated.

informed that the parole board would consider his case for favorable action, if Antoine could assure them that, once pardoned, he would have a good job. dom, Antoine again summoned Kenneth, and told him the - "This time I want things to be legal," Antoine said. "I have \$1,500 in savings and I want you to do something for

that an innocent man may be

On June 3, 1928—two days

after Antoine was received at

San Quentin penitentiary-two

gunnysacks filled with the re-

mains of Ada Antoine, were

fished from California waters.

It was then too late to do

anything about the murderer's

ANTOINE WAS 34 years old

when he arrived at the prison

on the tip of Point San Quen-

tin, which reaches eastward in-

to San Francisco Bay. Like

most new prisoners, he spent

the first year of incarceration

working in the San Quentin

For the most part, in the

early years, he proved a model

prisoner in conduct and atti-

tude. Only once did he fall

afoul of prison regulations-

when he transformed a file

For that he spent 35 days in

solitary confinement. Before

the year 1935, "solitaries" were

placed in dungeons for their

discipline, deprived of tobacco,

visitors, mail, or reading mat-

ter, and given only one meal

ANTOINE apparently didn't

forget that punishment. For

the next 14 years he deported

himself so circumspectly he

was chosen, in 1943, to be

among those trusted outside

the walls for harvest of war-

Meantime Antoine's sons had

Roland, 27, in 1943, had

ignored his father from the

moment of Antoine's imprison-

ment. But Kenneth, 25, a San

Francisco taxidriver, had

visited his father occasionally

of financial wee-and always,

his father made him small

Always, Kenneth had a tale

Kenneth's interest in his

aging parent was financial

rather than filial. Thus, seeing

a chance for another touch,

he obeyed the request with

"I'm going to get out of

this place," Antoine whispered.

"I need a little help. You meet

me at ---" Antoine named a

of employment. "Bring me

Keeping his thoughts to

SEVERAL DAYS later the

trusty waited impatiently at

the bridge. He was met, not

by his son but by San Quentin

authorities who returned An-

Deprived of his liberty and

again behind bars, Antoine had

plenty of time to wonder how

the prison authorities chanced

upon him at the bridge when

his son was his only confi-

So loath was he to believe

that Kenneth had turned him

in, the father didn't even both-

toine restored his reputation

At 54 he seemed to be a

mild, quiet, aging man, emp-

tied of the passions which had

made him a murdering mon-

ster. Twenty years in prison

had "redeemed" him. Or so

he told the parole board when

for being a good prisoner.

toine to his durance vile.

himself, Kenneth nodded

clothes and money."

After 14 Years,

A Trusty

time crops.

grown up.

at San Quentin.

gifts of money.

to see him.

alacrity.

agreement.

dante.

appointment.

hanged."

jute mill.

into a knife.

Kenneth's eyes glistened as his father continued, "I want you to look around and buy me some small business which will meet with the parole board's approval. You manage it until I get out and then we'll run it

he appeared before its mem-

SOME WEEKS later he was

Eager to regain his free-

bers in 1948.

Kenneth was positively beaming as he left the prison with a paper giving him the right to use his father's life savings.

Father Waits In Vain

together, eh?

ANTOINE WAITED impatiently. Kenneth sent word that it was difficult to find just the right business. Antoine waited more. Kenneth sent word he was still looking. Still Antoine waited.

There was no further word from Kenneth.

Slowly-very slowly-the old man formed his own conclusion about Kenneth's si-

"Rat . . . skunk . . . I'll kill him . . If I ever get out of here I'll kill him . . ." he muttered over and over.

"He'll never get out" his cellmates told one another."

ANTOINE bided his timemuttering the while --- and early in 1950 his patience was rewarded. He was transferred to Chi- .

no, California's new prison for trusties in the citrus and beetsugar growing area, 35 miles west of Los Angeles. Chine is a sert of prison country club without bars where guests are not expected to leave suddenly. But Antoine did.

When the news of his escape reached San Quentin, frustrated authorities and even old cellmates went into something akin to frenzy. They remembered his muttered threats. "We've got to catch him.

He'll kill his son!"

SAN FRANCISCO police we'e warned and Inspector Jack Cruikshank was assigned to offer the taxidriver police protection.

Cruikshank went to young Antoine's frowsy and somewhat dreary rooming house close to the downtown district.

Reluctantly, and with no little vigilance, the taxidriver unlocked the door of his dismal back bedroom. He locked it after admitting Cruikshank.

The two men eyed each other-Antoine defiantly and the inspector in amazement. For the young man of 30 who stood before him appeared almost twice that age-old. nervous, preoccupied, morose.

Son Keeps IN SPITE OF HIS immacu-Door Locked

late behavior the lifer was, at heart, an unreconstructed CRUIKSHANK barked rebel. Shortly after the elder questions and young Antoine Antoine was assigned to outdroned answers. side-the-walls employment he Yes, he knew his father had sent word to Kenneth to come

> father's whereabouts. No, he didn't think he wanted a police guard. "If I'm going to get it, I'm going to get it," he said with a shrug of his shoulders.

escaped. Sure, he'd inform the

authorities if he learned his

As the policeman departed he heard the key turn again in the lock of young Antoine's bridge not far from his place, door.

THE POLICE, still hunting

the escaped prisoner, are of two schools of thought, One small group believes that the elder Antoine fled

south to Mexico, after he walked away from Chino. The larger group-including prison people who are still

active in their search for him -think Antoine is lurking in Central California, biding his time, waiting until he thinks the search for him has ended. waiting until his chance comes to murder his son. For Antoine learned patience in KENNETH THINKS other-

wise. He doesn't believe the

er when next they met to question Kenneth's story of unavoidable delay in keeping the The younger Antoine still drives his taxi at night. More years rolled away. An-

through San Francisco streets. When figures emerge from fog to flag him down he slows to the curb and scrutinizes their features closely-ever so closely-before he accepts a

Yet Kenneth Antoine just can't believe that a murder is about to be committed.



Son is Threatened

The Antoine boys at the time of their mother's murder-Ronald, left, and Kenneth. The father muttered over and over in prison that he would kill Kenneth when he got out.