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**Dramatic  
Publishing**

# **Lead Rings on the Merry-Go-Round**

A Radio Play

By

**EDWARD F. EMANUEL**



**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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*Lead Rings on the Merry-Go-Round* was originally produced by the Fresno State Playwrights Theatre in 1995.

Cast:

LANCELOT T. TERRIERRE .....	Robert Zemkian
ELSINORE .....	Pedro Garcia
CLARK DIMAGGIO .....	Arthur C. Bergman
CLARENCE RARESHOT .....	Thomas Leitner
PETE .....	Billy Silva
REPETE .....	Johnathan Rickendus
MILO MICHELLE .....	Samuel Mendoza
MICK MUSSO .....	William McFee
ORGANA CREOLE .....	Andrea Klipniger
VIRGINIA FLOYDOY .....	Debra Rosen
XAVIER BUSHMAN .....	George W. Lincoln
JAVA BOY/GIRL .....	Louise Jolson
NETWORK VOICE.....	Edward Emanuel

# Lead Rings on the Merry-Go-Round

## CHARACTERS

LANCELOT T. TERRIERRE: The host of the radio show. Also plays the roles of NICK, FATS, LEO, KIPNOS, O'MALLEY (after DIMAGGIO dies) and the recorded NETWORK VOICE.

ELSINORE: The musician.

CLARK DIMAGGIO: The director of the radio show. Also plays the role of O'MALLEY.

CLARENCE RARESHOT: The head sound effects technician. Also plays the roles of CHIEF and DEAN.

PETE: Sound effects technician.

REPETE: Sound effects technician.

MILO MICHELLE: A radio actor. Also plays the role of MATTOX.

MICK MUSSO: A radio actor. Also plays the roles of PARK-A-PONY PETE, SNAKE EYES, BENNY, ELEVENTH VICTIM and DOC.

ORGANA CREOLE: A radio actress. Also plays the roles of BAR GIRL, LORETTA and NURSE.

VIRGINIA FLOYDOY: A radio actress. Also plays the roles of ROSIE, WOMAN and ELVIRA.

XAVIER BUSHMAN: A crazy fan.

JAVA BOY/GIRL: Serves coffee to everybody.

## PRODUCTION TECHNIQUE

When the radio show is being performed, the lines that are addressed to the radio audience are in italics. When the action is on mic, the lines are in a normal font. When the actors finish a page of the script they let it fall to the floor. Eventually the radio studio is covered in a sea of white script pages

This is a frame narrative. There is the radio drama mystery that is taking place on the air and another mystery that is taking place in the studio. As the play progresses, both dramas fuse into one plot. The set is a single unit, just an open space that serves as the studio. There are three RCA 45 microphones in the middle of the space. There is a sound effect space with a gravel pit, a desk with a starter's pistol on it and odds and ends to create the sound effects. There is an "On The Air" sign hanging over the set which goes on and off depending whether the action is on the radio or not.

There is an organ that plays live music. Stabs, runs, transition music. It is not necessary to have an experienced musician at the organ. All the performer has to do is play stab chords.

Note: Cultural references may be updated at the director's discretion.

## Lead Rings on the Merry-Go-Round

*(The studio is dark, except for an “On The Air” sign glowing in red. All of the actors and SE techs are onstage. ELSINORE starts the organ music. LANCELOT T. TERRIERRE walks to the C mic. He hums a strange and mournful song and then speaks.)*

LANCE. *I am the Hummer, and I know many things for I walk by night. Look closely at every dark corner ... murder lurks in the shadows ... death is waiting for ... you!*

*(There is an organ run to a climax. The lights in the studio come on and the “On The Air” sign goes off. Everybody breaks into chatter. CLARK DIMAGGIO comes running onstage.)*

DIMAGGIO. Network news and NFL scores, kids. I’ll give you two minutes when we’re coming back on the air.

LANCE. Dimaggio, I want a word with you and I mean now!

DIMAGGIO. In the booth, Terrierre, I gotta cue up a Soupy Sudsy commercial.

*(DIMAGGIO and LANCE exit.)*

RARESHOT. Hey, java jerk! How about some joe?

*(The JAVA BOY moves slowly toward CLARENCE RARESHOT, PETE and REPETE.*

*MILO MICHELLE and MICK MUSSO begin an impromptu “rap” song.)*

MILO & MUSSO. I got it! I got it! I got it! I forgot it! He got it, he forgot it! We forgot it! Forget it! He said it, he said it, just forget it, forget it! *(Making mic imitations with their mouths.)*

ORGANA. Man, does that suck or what.

VIRGINIA. Sounds like Milo and Musso are doing their imitation of a flushing toilet.

ORGANA. As soon as they found out that this crummy series was canceled they decided to work up a duet and tour the county fair circuit. They open in Bakersfield next October. They say they’re going to audition for *America’s Got Talent*. Hah! Some joke.

VIRGINIA. Man, what a break, just when I was starting to make some do-re-me in this racket!

*(LANCE and DIMAGGIO come racing back.)*

LANCE. Makeup! Makeup! We’ve got five minutes!

RARESHOT. Hey, Lance in the pants! This is radio, you don’t need to look pretty!

LANCE. Says you!

RARESHOT. Yeah, says me and says Pete and Repete!

PETE & REPETE. You know what ahm sayin’?

ORGANA. What a player!

RARESHOT. You know it, baby!

VIRGINIA. A player? Listen, Clarence Rareshot, you ain't got the talent to be a doorstep!

RARESHOT. Yeah and Madonna kisses women!

VIRGINIA. And that goes for you too, Terrierre!

LANCE. Me? I don't kiss women!

*(Everybody is shocked.)*

LANCE *(cont'd)*. No, I mean, I got more talent than a doorstep! And I'm going to save this show!

ORGANA. And just when I was about to pay off my implants, Lance has to screw up!

LANCE. It's not my fault!

VIRGINIA. Not your fault? Yeah, and Hulk Hogan wears pink pantyhose. Your last five scripts were bombs!

MILO & MUSSO. Kaboom!

LANCE. But let me explain! I've got a plan to ...

RARESHOT. Representing Sound Effects Union 341, me, Pete and Repete want to express our distinct disappointment in this whole mess!

PETE & REPETE. What he said!

*(All except LANCE and DIMAGGIO make sounds of agreement.)*

DIMAGGIO. Look kids, hey! Quiet down! Listen! It doesn't make any difference whether this show gets wasted tomorrow or not! We got a show to do today! And in five minutes! So get your butts in gear! Come on!

*(Everybody begins scurrying around, getting ready for the show. Suddenly there is a loud pounding on the door to the studio. Everybody freezes.)*

LANCE. That's what I've been trying to tell you. We're going to be locked in the studio!

*(Suddenly VIRGINIA and ORGANA let out loud screams in front of the mics.)*

LANCE *(cont'd)*. Hey! What are you doing? Stop that! Don't you know what that does to these RCA 45s. These are the best vibrating ribbon mics in the business! Don't you know that there's a poor little metal ribbon vibrating so hard in there that it's about to splinter.

*(The JAVA BOY looks up and adjusts his surgical mask that has fallen below his chin. LANCE strokes the mic as if it's a pet dog.)*

RARESHOT. Forget the BS about the mics, Terrierre, and tell us what this "locked in" crap means!

LANCE. I've hired workmen to install a time lock on the metal doors to the studio and the doors won't open again until after midnight!

MILO. Boy this script must really stink if he has to lock us in to perform it.

*(All but LANCE makes sounds of agreement with MILO.)*

LANCE. No, kids, you've got it wrong! I'm not locking us in ... I'm locking the police out!

*(Organ stab.)*



LANCE (*cont'd*). Thank you, Elsinore.

DIMAGGIO. Listen here, Lance in the pants. If you don't open that door right now I'm going to smack you from here to info commercials.

*(All urge DIMAGGIO to hit LANCE.)*

RARESHOT. Me and the boys will not put up with this kind of employee abuse! We're calling a strike!

PETE. Did you forget, Terrierre, that the john is outside the studio!? What if I get a call from nature?

REPETE. Then you better hang up your cellphone, leaky, because I ain't working with a guy who can't hold his beer!

*(General murmurs from everybody.)*

LANCE. Will you all just shut up! I'm trying to break some important news to you and I haven't got much time!

ORGANA. You are such an idiot! OK, mister network anchor, what's your breaking news? Did Brian Jennings get caught telling the truth?

LANCE. Tonight, I have a new script! Throw away your old ones!

*(Everybody is confused! LANCE runs to a cabinet, pulls out copies of a new script and starts to pass them out.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). After tonight, MTV will be beating down our door to interview us! Rush Limbaugh will be making jokes about us on his show! Oprah will be telling the world that we're perverts! And why? Why will all of this happen?

DIMAGGIO. Terrierre, you're cracked!

LANCE. Yes, cracked! But not me! I, Lancelot Terrierre, the voice of the Hummer have *cracked* the most vicious serial murder case in the history of San Francisco!

VIRGINIA. You don't mean ... ?

RARESHOT. He couldn't mean ... ?

MILO & MUSSO. Do you mean ... ?

LANCE. Yes! I have solved the case of the Lead Rings Murders!

*(ELSINORE plays a musical stab and run with great flourish.*

*Everybody stares at LANCE in shock. LANCE beams.)*

DIMAGGIO. Terrierre, I'm only going to say this once; call the cops and then unlock that door, right now!

*(Everybody screams.*

*LANCE runs over and puts his hands over his RCA mic. The cast and crew grab LANCE and drag him to the door. He struggles out of their hands and jumps up on a desk.)*

LANCE. No! No! Don't you see? Don't you get it? Where's your imagination? We're gonna crack the case right here on the air! Tonight! Right in front of the public! Right in front of the police ...

DIMAGGIO. And right in front of the murderer!

*(Everybody pauses.)*

LANCE. That's right, Clark. Right in front of the murderer, yes! We'll tell that creep that we know who he is! I, Lancelot Terrierre will reveal his name to two hundred fifty million listeners!

DIMAGGIO. You're demented! We don't have two hundred and fifty million people listening to this crappola! The last ratings gave us an audience of slightly larger than a Peewee Herman fan club!

LANCE. Maybe that's true for now ... but wait until after the first commercial break when the world knows that we know what only the Lead Rings killer knows! They'll be throwing their TVs into garbage cans tuning in to us ... to us!

RARESHOT. You're cracked! The cops aren't going to let us get away with that!

LANCE. How're they going to stop us? We're locked in, on the tenth floor! Kids, just think of it. We're inventing "reality radio!" We'll all be famous!

*(Everybody starts to think about it except DIMAGGIO.)*

DIMAGGIO. This is nuts! I don't know about all you guys, but I don't want to go to jail for withholding evidence and obstruction of justice! And I certainly don't want to draw a target on my back for some whacked out serial killer who wants to waste witnesses! I say we do the last show as planned, say aloha to this radio gig, and all get back to good jobs on TV! I hear *Naked and Afraid* is looking for anybody with a death wish.

*(Everybody agrees with DIMAGGIO.)*

LANCE. So it has come to this. Gratitude? This is the thanks I get for lifting this motley crew of no-talents out of the dregs of daytime soap operas into the brilliant spotlight of network fame?

ORGANA. Here it comes folks, the big "remember what I've done for you" pitch.

LANCE. Listen to her! Organa Creole, you were nothing but an Ozzy Osbourne groupie, biting the heads off pigeons when I found you.

ORGANA. The feathers gave me sneezing fits.

LANCE. And you, Milo Michelle, what were you before I turned you into a star?

MILO. Don't say it, Terrierre!

LANCE. A pooper scooper on Animal Planet!

MILO. Damn you, Terrierre!

LANCE. You, Virginia Floydoy ... a professional loser on *Wheel of Fortune*! And you, Rareshot, the Homer Simpson belch!

DIMAGGIO. Can it, Terrierre!

LANCE. And you, Clark Dimaggio, the unkindest cut of all, what were you? —directing info-commercials for do-it-yourself hair implants!

DIMAGGIO. Hey, that was a good gig! Even Ben Affleck bought our kit!

LANCE. And now when I need you the most, you freeze me out! I can't believe it!

DIMAGGIO. Believe it, Terrierre! We're doing the original show! Come on everybody! Hustle, hustle! I gotta do a mic check before air time.

RARESHOT. Sound effects is still on strike!

DIMAGGIO. Sweet. We'll do the show without you. Trust me, Rareshot, fingernails scraping a blackboard would sound better than you guys!

*(DIMAGGIO exits. The actors get in front of their mics.)*

LANCE. Look, Rareshot. I don't feel that way. I think your work is the soul of the show! Please, do our new script!

RARESHOT. On strike!

PETE. Check!

REPETE. Double check.

MILO & MUSSO. Triple check!

LANCE. Coffee!

*(The JAVA BOY pours a cup of coffee for LANCE and moves toward him.)*

LANCE *(cont'd)*. All right! I've appealed to your sense of professionalism ...

*(The JAVA BOY gives the coffee to LANCE, who drinks it.)*

LANCE *(cont'd)*. I've appealed to your sense of loyalty. I've appealed to your sense of professionalism! Now I lay it on the line. Cash. For everyone of you greedy-guts who will do my new script I'll give you ...

*(LANCE checks his wallet. RARESHOT is suddenly interested.)*

LANCE *(cont'd)*. Uh ... ten bucks! What do you say?

DIMAGGIO *(off)*. Fifteen seconds.

LANCE. Come on! All right! All right! Twenty bucks! What do you say?

DIMAGGIO *(off)*. Five seconds.

LANCE. Twenty-five bucks!!!

DIMAGGIO *(off)*. Three ... two ... one ... network!

LANCE. Thirty bucks!

NETWORK VOICE *(off)*. It is eight fifty-nine Rolex Watch Time. And now for a late-breaking news story.

LANCE. Gang! Please! Forty bucks!

NETWORK VOICE *(off)*. President Comcordia Bestaro, while attending a state dinner at the White House honoring the current Superbowl Champions, the Houston Texans, was quoted as saying, "I've always been a big fan of Texas," whereupon her nose grew three inches longer.

LANCE. Please! I can't afford to pay you any more! You gotta do it.

*(All of the actors and techs look at LANCE and shake their heads "no." LANCE goes to his knees.)*

NETWORK VOICE *(off)*. And now for a program reminder.

LANCE. I'm begging you!

NETWORK VOICE *(off)*. Tomorrow at six p.m. on this radio network, it's the *Bill O'Reilly Show*! Bill will be discussing the shocking revelation that many of the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders are high-school dropouts.

ORGANA. Hey, Virginia, there's a job you qualify for.

LANCE. What can I do to make you read the new script?

*(Everybody looks at LANCE and holds out their hands.)*

NETWORK VOICE *(off)*. And now stay tuned. Coming up next, another mysterious adventure starring Lancelot Terrierre as ... The Hummer.

*(The studio goes dark and the “On The Air” sign blinks on. ELSINORE begins playing the theme. As it reaches the climax, LANCE gets off his knees.)*

LANCE. OK! My final offer, fifty bucks and I’ll have to hock my Galaxy seven!

*(As the music finishes with a stunning chord, all of the cast and crew give LANCE the “OK” sign. They pick up his new script. With relief, he stands up and goes to his mic.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the ... Hummer.

*(Organ stab and run.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. I am the Hummer. I know many things for I walk by night ... be careful ... murder lurks around every corner!

*(SFX: Gunshot.*

*ORGANA screams. RARESHOT cues PETE, who falls to the floor with an audible thump.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. Around every corner! Tonight, ladies and gentlemen, do not under any circumstance leave your radio set. This show will depart from its usual format to bring you the most startling true life adventure ever heard on radio! Tonight, the American Mystery Network, Signal Gasoline and I, Lancelot Terrierre, have conspired to bring to you the greatest radio spectacular ever aired!

*(Organ stab.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. Tonight, in a special script prepared by yours truly, Lancelot Terrierre, the Hummer, we will reveal to you, the national radio audience, the solution to the most infamous chain of serial murders in the history of police annals: The Lead Ring Murders.

*(Organ stab and run.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, at the conclusion of tonight’s show, you, the police and the unfortunate murdered victims will know the name of the Lead Rings Murderer!

*(Organ stab.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. So settle back, turn up your radio and prepare for murder ...

*(Organ stab and run.*

*SFX: Rain.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. A dark heavy rain settles over the city as Lt. Max Mattox walks slowly down Fillmore street.

*(SFX: Feet walking on sidewalk.)*

LANCE *(cont’d)*. Your mind is racing, Mattox ...

*(SFX: Running feet on sidewalk.*

*LANCE gives a quick look at RARESHOT, who realizes his mistakes and starts walking slowly again.*

*SFX: Slow walking.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *Your mind is racing, Lt. Mattox. Your body is weary—you've had no sleep for three days.*

*(MATTOX yawns.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *The Lead Rings Murderer has claimed his tenth victim at Play Land By The Beach.*

*(Organ stab.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *For nearly a year you've searched the city for this homicidal maniac but each time, Mattox, like the ever-present fog, he has dissolved, vanished. You can't sleep, you can't eat and you can't bathe. You can't do your laundry, people can't stand to be around you. The nightmare follows you wherever you go. Who is the Lead Rings Murderer and where will he strike next?*

*(Organ stab.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *From an alley, a sinister shadow steps out. You freeze.*

*(SFX: Feet stop walking. Rain fades out.)*

PETE. Got a light, buddy?

LANCE. *You reach into the left pocket of your trench coat and pull out a box of matches.*

*(SFX: Sound of matches rattling in a box.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *You strike the match with your thumbnail.*

*(SFX: Lighting a match.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *As the match blazes, you gaze into the scarred face of a tortured wino. He's fumbling with the cellophane on a pack of cheap cigarettes.*

*(SFX: Fumbling with the cellophane.)*

LANCE (*cont'd*). *Finally, with a trembling hand, he guides the lighted match to the end of the tobacco and inhales deeply.*

PETE. You Lt. Meat Ax?

MATTOX. Mattox! Park-a-pony Pete?

PETE. On the nose, copper.

MATTOX. *Park-a-pony Pete had once been one of the top jockeys in the business. But about ten years ago he got caught dopin' up a nag at Bay Meadows. Ever since he got out of the joint he's been homeless ... and worse.*

PETE. I got it all set up for you, Meat Ax.

LANCE (*loud whisper off mic*). Mattox! Mattox! His name is Mattox!

PETE. Mattox! Mattox, your name is Mattox!

MATTOX. I know what my name is, OK? Now, what's the scam?

PETE. First, the mazoola.

MATTOX. Fifty.

PETE. Make it a honeybee!

MATTOX. *The little creep was holding me up for a hundred bucks! I had an urge to crush his jaw with a well-placed uppercut, but time and experience have taught me a couple of things. Never sock a sucker until he's spilled his guts. I decided to slip him the cash. He grinned a rotten toothy smile ...*

*(MATTOX groans after reading the last part and looks at LANCE, who is in love with his own words.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *And shuffled out into the rain. I followed.*

*(Organ stab and run.)*

LANCE. *And so, Lt. Mattox, perhaps a lead, perhaps a clue that will break the case wide open. And while you are following this outcast of society down a lonely street through the city's canyons of stone and concrete, across town, in a dingy apartment, a crouching figure sits and stares out at the rain through a greasy smudged kitchen window. In his right hand, a round hard object is squeezed over and over. The round hard lead ring from a ... merry-go-round!*

*(Musical stab.)*

MATTOX. *We turned down a sleazy alley off Eddy Street. From somewhere, a garbage can fell to the slime covered sidewalk ...*

*(SFX: Can falling on concrete.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *A mangy tomcat screamed his challenge to the concrete jungle.*

*(SFX: Screaming cat [sounding more like meow].)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *At last, Pete approached a door at the end of the alley. A dim flickering light proclaimed in a muted sign, "Louie's Lowball Parlor." Pete shoved the door open.*

*(SFX: Door opening. Immediately the sound of a Frank Sinatra song is heard.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *A blaze of yellowish light, clouds of stale smoke and the smell of cheap booze rushed out at us. From a tinny stereo the lonely wail of a Frank Sinatra love song slopped over pairs of slowly belly-rubbing dancing bar girls and sailors on leave ... America's finest looking for trouble at twenty bucks a dance. As I stepped into the dive I could see that the place was packed with a variety of citizens.*

*(The entire cast mumbles away from their mics to give the impression of a crowd.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *They were lined up at the bar, seated at lowball poker tables or talking quietly in the dark musty corners of this refuge for the scum of the city. Pete immediately rushed to the bar and bought a bottle of cheap booze; poor lonely soul seeking salvation at the bottom of a bottle.*

BAR GIRL. *Hey toots, wanna have a good time?*

MATTOX. *A seedy woman, reeking of cheap booze and lilac powder, pushed her well-worn body up against me and slipped her bony fingers inside my breast pocket in an effort to seem friendly but what I needed now was info ... and plenty of it.*

BAR GIRL. *Got enough for a good time? I can sure show you a good time, honey.*

MATTOX. *Get lost, Madonna.*

BAR GIRL. *Come on, sweetie, let a gal earn a living!*

*(SFX: Punch in the face. BAR GIRL screams. SFX: Body hitting the floor.)*

MATTOX. *With a good right cross, I put her down like the Olympics dropped Lochte. Suddenly I noticed I was the center of attention. And somehow, I didn't think these citizens were concerned social workers.*

PETE. Come on, stupid! You want to start a riot in here?

MATTOX. *I reached behind my hip and fingered my eight-shot enforcer ... just in case. I always come prepared. Pete hustled me over to a door behind the bar. He knocked twice, which loosened large scab like pieces of paint that slid lazily to the floor.*

PETE. Hey, Rosie, open the door.

MATTOX. *The door opened a crack.*

ROSIE. Make tracks, stinky.

PETE. I got a pal here who needs to talk to Nick.

MATTOX. *A hard looking broad with bleached blond hair gave me the once over.*

ROSIE. Hey, Nick you expecting trouble?

NICK *(off mic)*. Yeah, show the jerks in ...

MATTOX. *The broad opened the door wider ...*

*(SFX: Door opening.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *And I muscled my way into a dark room only lit by a naked bulb hanging from an exposed power cord. It gave off a kind of a yellowish glow illuminating five notorious citizens crouched around a green felt card table. As soon as I walked into the room one of the thugs fingered his iPhone and was about to punch a button ...*

*(SFX: Door slamming.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. Hold it, slime ball. Punch that cell and you'll have more trouble than Al Gore at a Weight Watcher's meeting.

NICK. Hey, what ya talking? Snake Eyes here was just probably puttin' in a call to his dearly beloved mama, right, Snake?

SNAKE EYES. Huh?

NICK. We's just havin' a friendly little game of lowball.

*(SFX: Shuffling cards.)*

NICK *(cont'd)*. There ain't no need for rough stuff, right?

MATTOX. *Through Pete, I had arranged to meet with a citizen named Nick the Pick—a former orthodontist ... gone bad.*

ROSIE. Boy, some Miss Manners you've got, Nickie. Why don't you introduce me. He's got a fascinating ... trench coat. *(Giggles.)*

MATTOX. *The sleazy broad giggled and three cockroaches came out of the trash looking for mama.*  
Mattox, Max Mattox, SFPD.

ROSIE. Gosh, that's a funny way to spell Mattox.

NICK. Sit down, Meat Ax.

LANCE *(off mic)*. What? Why do you keep calling him Meat Ax?

NICK *(off mic)*. 'Cause that's the way you typed it, Terrierre! Look!

*(ROSIE and MATTOX are confused by what's going on off mic. Finally ROSIE jumps in.)*

ROSIE. Let me introduce you to the boys, uh Fats Goldberg from Cleveland.

*(FATS grunts.)*

ROSIE *(cont'd)*. Snake Eyes Willie from Detroit.

*(SNAKE EYES grunts.)*

ROSIE *(cont'd)*. Benny the Embalmer from Atlanta.

BENNY. Keep me in mind if you get wasted.

ROSIE. And Leo the Limey from Boston.

LEO. Right mate.

MATTOX. *Five of the most notorious felons in the country. Putting these thugs on ice would lower the national crime rate enough to get me elected president ... but I had bigger fish to fry.*

NICK. OK, OK, so we're all nice and friendly. What's on your mind, fuzz? And by the way, you got nice teeth.

MATTOX. Thanks. I try to floss after every meal.

NICK. It shows.

MATTOX. The Lead Rings Murderer, I want him.

NICK. So go ask Santa.

*(All of the thugs chuckle.)*

MATTOX. Look, Nick, I ain't fooling around. I want the creep.

NICK. So, what makes you think I'm gonna help you?

MATTOX. *I was beginning to get mad. Pretty soon Mr. Brain Dead here was gonna get in big trouble and that's spelled M-a-t-t-o-x and that spells Meat Ax ... uh, Mattox!*

NICK. And besides, his MO ain't professional. You know? Planting them stupid merry-go-round rings on all of the stiff's. I mean it ain't classy.

MATTOX. Nick! You know every hit that goes down on the west coast Now, I want to know about the Lead Rings Murderer!

NICK. You deaf? I just told you, I know nuttin'!

MATTOX. *All of a sudden, I lost my temper, big time! I reached down, grabbed the table and flipped it over.*

*(SFX: Table crashing down and poker chips hitting the floor.)*

MATTOX *(cont'd)*. *Quick as a snake's tongue I pulled out my heater, cocked it and shoved it right into Nick's face!*

*(Organ stab.)*

NICK. Hey, ya creep. Dis is police brutality. I'm gonna sue!

MATTOX. Sing! Sing like a birdie you rat!

NICK. It's gotta be some independent! I don't know! Some loony!

MATTOX. You could be the killer, Nick. You could be the killer!