

# Alvin Comes Home

A Crip and Henrietta Short Mystery

By Tim Wohlforth

"There you are boozing away as usual."

It was Henrietta looking like she had just walked off the set of *The Night Of The Living Dead*. Scowl on her face, green eyes that matched her spiked hair boring into me. Like I had caused her some harm. Me? Tom Bateman, the San Francisco Bay Area's only paraplegic private eye. Hard enough to earn a living when the only way I could chase a bad guy is using my fingers on a computer and I have had to be plagued with this woman. Henrietta is convinced I need her as my legs. But it wasn't need I saw in those eyes. Like she was mad at me. For what? Just existing?

"One beer, for Christ Sakes, and you are on my case."

I sat with my wheelchair pulled up to a stained wooden table in the back patio of Raleigh's Pub. A college hangout off Telegraph, I loved to just sit, enjoy the crisp air, and inspect the co-eds in their low-cut jeans. I've got a thing for belly buttons. Better than hanging out alone in my house. I usually get my jobs from my PI web site, but nothing doing today. So here I was inspecting, sipping and relaxing. That is until Henrietta showed up. And she was always trouble.

She flicked an ash from her Camel cigarette in my face. "You're just a fuck up, getting me in trouble with Alvin."

"Fuck" sounded more like "futh" because of the fake diamond stud piercing her tongue. Matching rings lined her eyebrows and edged her ears. But my favorite was a large ring with a skull and crossbones attached hanging from her naval. As I said, I have this thing about belly buttons.

"Alvin?"

He was her boyfriend. He had been putting in time at Pelican Bay, the state's maximum security prison.

"He's out, you know."

"I'm happy for you."

"He's not happy so I'm not happy. He's pissed at you."

That Henrietta wasn't happy was no news. She never was happy. I must admit today she appeared sadder than usual. Her hip-hugger jeans were barely hanging on as she had no hips, exposing the top of green panties with frayed elastic. The skin was stretched over her pelvis so tight I was afraid a bone would break through. She sported a new tattoo. The top half of a man's head protruded from above the green panties. The tattoo glared at me from behind the swinging skull. Must be Alvin.

"Why in the world would Alvin be pissed at me?"

"It's about Ralph and Patsy. He says you've ruined them."

"Ruined? Hell, I saved those dogs from being put down."

"Your idea of sending them to dog camp made them useless as guard dogs."

"I think that was the psychiatric help."

"Whatever it was, you should see those dogs now. Alvin showed me. He took Ralph and Patsy outside, pointed his finger at some street kid walking down the sidewalk and shouted 'sic'em.' You know what those dogs did?"

"Can't imagine."

"Jumped up, placed their paws on his shoulders – they're taller than him, you know, and weigh almost as much – and licked him in the face."

"How sweet."

"Guard dogs aren't supposed to be sweet."

"So what does he want me to do about it?"

"Compensation."

"How much?"

"\$10,000."

"Come on for two dogs?"

"They're pure blood Presa Canarios, specially trained. And he says you forced me to sell product to Smith too cheap."

Smith was Alvin's partner in the pot scheme that landed him in Pelican Bay. He put up the money, Alvin provided special seed and managed the place, Ralph and Patsy were the guards. After Alvin went away Henrietta talked me into rescuing the dogs from the warehouse. She took more than the dogs. She harvested the crop. Smith wanted his share. We settled on a figure, admittedly low, that would cover Ralph and Patsy's rehabilitation.

"Why don't you get rid of that guy?" I said. "He's a loser."

"No, he's not. Alvin is headed for the big time."

"Like Pelican Bay."

"He learned a lot in there."

"I'm sure he did, but he's not getting a penny out of me."

Henrietta blew smoke in my face and said, "Alvin is not going to want to hear that."

"I thought you were my friend, Henrietta. Get him off my back."

"That's why I'm here, Crip, and not Alvin. He's not much for negotiations. Tends more towards action. Me, I'm the diplomat."

A pigeon swooped down low over my head. I was afraid it was going to poop in my beer. It was becoming that kind of day. Loud raucous laughter came from the table behind me. I turned. One guy with a beard surrounded by these gorgeous chicks. Looked like a cross

between Jesus and Ché. I wondered if one of them would like to hear a war story explaining how I ended up in a chair. Forgetaboutit. I turned back to face Henrietta.

"I can see that and I appreciate your efforts. But you know me. I barely scrape along. I haven't got it."

"I know that. That's exactly what I told him. No crip is going to make money as a PI. It's just stupid."

"You want me to get some pencils and panhandle?"

"Alvin says you need a scam. Being a crip makes people want to give you money. It's easy really. Maybe bum checks or something. Or use your computer skills for identity theft. That's big now. Alvin has the connections."

"I'm honest."

"You can get over that."

Henrietta stopped hovering over me and plopped down on the chair across from me. I took a big gulp of my beer and waved the empty pint glass at the waitress. I was having Full Sail Amber. I didn't like the direction this discussion was going. She reached across the table and grabbed my hand. God, it was icy. Me and Henrietta holding hands? Ridiculous. I tried to pull my hand free, but she grabbed me all the harder.

"I'm here to help you," she said.

"You can help me by getting Alvin off my back."

"You've got to talk to him, Crip. He's got a proposition."

"I'm afraid to ask what it is."

"He wants to tell you in person. He knows you're my friend, but like he says what's right is right. You owe him. I'll set up the meeting."

"Fuck."

"I knew you would agree."

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I scooted down Telegraph Avenue, my driving gloves pumping the titanium wheels of my chair. They don't come any faster this side of Special Olympic racers. Henrietta trotted along beside me, huffing and puffing from the exertion.

"What's the hurry, Crip?"

"Want to get this over with. Now where the hell is he?"

"Down the street, like I said."

"Where down the street?"

"Your house."

"My house?"

I screeched to a stop. A man in a clown suit on a unicycle careened by, cursing me.

"Don't worry, he won't touch anything. He's honest."

"Honest?"

"Well in his way, with friends."

"I thought he was pissed at me."

"But you're my friend and that's good enough."

"How'd he get in? Shit, you still have a key to my place."

"Well, I do work for you."

"You do not work for me."

"Sometimes."

I gave my wheels one hell of a spin and tore down the sidewalk, weaving between startled students. Henrietta ran after me.

"Fuck you, Crip. I try to help you out and you give me a heart attack. You're just a fucker, Crip, a fuckin' fucker."

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I ran the chair up the ramp and into the open front door of my small cottage off Telegraph. There he was, sprawled over my couch, boom box on the floor blasting away with Metallica's *St. Anger* album so loud that the glasses in a cabinet by the wall were rattling.

"Shut that thing off."

He obliged. Alvin was a short guy with muscular build. He sported dense close-cropped black hair that must be dyed, and a glare that outdid Henrietta's. I had seen that glare somewhere before. Of course, peering out over Henrietta's panties in the form of a tattoo. He wore a tank top and his bulging biceps were covered with tattoos. His left arm featured a swastika and the words "White Power" with lightening bolts going through them. His entire right arm was covered with a tattoo of an AK-47. Charming fellow.

Henrietta entered the house and came up next to me.

"Some muscles," I whispered into her ear.

"Pelican Bay has a marvelous weights program."

"And the charming tattoos."

"What tattoos?"

"White Power."

"Alvin has great respect for his race."

"Wonderful."

"What are you two whispering about?" Alvin shouted out.

"Crip was admiring your muscles."

"You gay or something?"

"Hardly. So what's your proposition, Alvin?"

"You fucked up my dogs. You know the fuckers still eat nothing but raw steaks. And they don't do shit to pay me back. I should put 'em down."

"Why don't you?" I asked.

"Wouldn't be right. They're named after my parents."

"Gotcha."

"You for real?"

"You think I'm faking paralysis?"

"Wouldn't be the first time."

"What do you want?"

"Heard about you taking down Smith."

In another incident involving sweet Henrietta and her dope, I had had to shoot Smith in self defense.

"It was him or me."

"No doubt the bastard deserved it. You got a rep now. That's why I need you."

"To do what?"

"Just to be present when I visit Jones."

"Jones?"

"Smith's partner. He's in charge now. Venture capitalists. And I need capital."

"For what?"

"Business. Ever heard of Berkeley Blasts?"

A look of pride came over Alvin's face. Like he had just been chosen as Trump's apprentice. We were getting on to his favorite topic.

"I believe Henrietta mentioned something about the stuff."

"Best product ever put on the market. Nothing's more potent. A miracle of horticulture. And I created it. A lot of hard work, cross-fertilization, experimentation. If they'd let you patent the stuff, I'd be a rich man, like the guy who invented hybrid corn. Pound by pound the seed is worth far more than gold. And guess who has a bagful of Berkeley Blast seed?"

"You. So what do you need Jones for?"

"He's put up the money for the hydroponics, the halogen lights, that kind of stuff. But he's held back on the cash to keep Henrietta and me going until the crop matures. So I've held back on the seed. We need to work it out."

"And me?"

"I just want you to be there. That's all. You got a rep."

"Suppose I say no?"

Alvin's face twitched, muscles bulged as he sprang up from his seat and in seconds had dragged me up from my chair, hands choking me. The motherfucker was strong. I gasped for air, trying to pull his

hands away from my throat. No way. I was getting dizzy. Stupid way to die. Fucking Henrietta.

"Alvin," Henrietta screamed. "He will, he will. I told you he will."

He lessened his grip.

"I... I will." I stammered.

His hands on my throat relaxed and I slumped to the floor. He left me there and returned to the couch calm, as if nothing had happened. Henrietta helped me back into my chair.

"The meeting's set for five," Alvin said.

"Where?"

"West Oakland."

I was going to say, "with those tattoos?", but decided better of it. I was in no mood to discuss race relations with this bastard. If he wanted to go into a neighborhood that was home to the Black Panthers in the Sixties, it would be his funeral. Hopefully, not mine as well.

"Fabulous."

"Bring your gun."

At Five O'clock I drove my van to the corner of Market and 14<sup>th</sup> with Henrietta and Alvin on board. Henrietta sat up in front next to me, her usual spot. Alvin huddled in the back, arms hugging a large bag of seed.

It looked peaceful enough. A liquor store, with plywood covering its windows sporting gang graffiti, occupied the corner across the street. The apartment building next to it was constructed like a motel with access to the second floor via an external walkway. I spotted broken toys and a rusted Weber grill.

Eerie. I didn't see a single soul on the street. We could be totally wiped out with automatic gunfire and there would be no witnesses. It was one of those neighborhoods where you survived by not witnessing.

A white clapboard church dominated our side of the street. "Full Gospel Light Of the Lord Tabernacle – Rev. Willy Thompson, Pastor" proclaimed a freshly painted sign. Next to the church was a lot filled with trash and a large circus tent. A sign on the tent proclaimed "REVIVAL!" Then came a boarded-up unpainted cottage followed by an inhabited one with bars on the windows and surrounded by an iron gate topped with razor wire. Behind the fence were two snarling pit bulls. What I did not see was a warehouse suitable for use as a marijuana plantation.

Henrietta hopped out of the van followed by Alvin with his heavy load of seed. I scooted to my lift and out the back.

"What now?" I asked Alvin.

"We wait. You got...?"

"Yes."

"This is our turf. They won't frisk. Keep it in your chair with the safety off. Here."

He dumped the bag of seed into my lap.

"Thanks."

"Don't let go of it unless I say so."

"Doesn't sound like you have much confidence in your business associates," I said.

"Jones is like Smith."

"Gotcha."

Alvin started pacing the sidewalk. A nervous fellow. Henrietta approached me and said, "You're doing great, Crip."

"I thought I was useless."

"You are, come to think of it." She pulled out a crumpled pack of Camels from her jeans' pocket and lit up. Sometimes Henrietta is just too profound for me.

We didn't have to wait for long. A black Mercedes moved slowly up Market, made a U-turn and pulled to the curb just in front of my van. A heavy-set brown-suited man with a large fleshy face was driving.

"Driver's Galvano," Alvin said. Watch him."

"Got it. And Jones?"

"Next to him."

Galvano got out, walked around and opened the door for Jones. A young man, he wore a grey three-piece business suit. Red tie with thin blue stripes and glasses gave him the look of a Stanford MBA graduate. Two hoods popped out of the back seat. Jones was taking no chances. Seemed like overkill for a simple business meeting. I wasn't that surprised. Nothing Henrietta got me into ended up being simple.

Jones' eyes focused on the bag of seed in my lap. I plunged my hand under my blanket and gripped the trigger of my gun. Jones duly noted my action. The two hoods walked in my direction. Jones motioned for them to stop.

"Good to meet you as always Alvin. And Henrietta, dear." He shook their hands and then turned to me. "Introduce me to your friend."

"Cri... uh, Tom Bateman," Henrietta said.

Jones smiled.

"Ah yes, I've heard of you. I do believe you were once acquainted with my former partner, Mr. Smith. His demise has opened up certain opportunities for me. Mr. Smith could be a difficult man. What may I ask is your interest in our little business venture?"

"Security," Alvin said.

"Of course," he paused thoughtfully and said, "I see you have the seed, Alvin."

"Yes. Do you have the cash?"

"Of course." He reached into his pocket and pulled out a stuffed envelope, then returned it. "There is just one more matter on the agenda. The location of our enterprise."

"Follow me," Alvin said as he started to walk down the street. He didn't even glance back. I had to hand it to him. He had guts. Must be part of the management training available at Pelican Bay. Jones and entourage followed. Henrietta and I made up the rear.

"I hope your boyfriend knows what he's doing," I said to her.

"Alvin's smart. You'll see, Crip."

"What I see is that we are outnumbered four to one in firepower."

At that point, Alvin abruptly stopped and turned down the sidewalk leading into the Tabernacle. A wise move. If we ever needed God on our side it was right then. But suppose the Reverend Willy's God was black and didn't cotton to Alvin's tattoos? He opened the door and entered the sanctuary. Jones' mob followed. I stopped, searched for a ramp and found one on the side. Good Christians. Then I spun my wheels and headed on in after the gang. Henrietta trailed behind me. So much for her confidence in Alvin's smarts.

A huge African-American man dressed in black with a white clerical collar and an enormous potbelly greeted us. Had to be the Reverend Willy. He high-fived Alvin and said, "How you likin' it on the outside, bro?"

"Miss the weight machines."

"Introduce me to your friends."

"This is Mr. Jones," he gestured to the young man, "and those three other men there are his associates. Mr. Jones, as you know, put up the financing for our enterprise. Of course, you know Henrietta."

"And our disabled brother?"

"Tom Bateman."

"Ah, yes, I feel I know you by reputation. Welcome to the Lord's house."

"I met the Reverend Willy at Pelican Bay."

"There was a little misunderstanding about church funds," Willy explained. "The Devil's doing. Sadly, there was a bit of gun play."

"He volunteered to help out with our project."

"Anything to advance the Lord's work here on earth," the Reverend Willy said. "It is a pleasure to have all of you come visit the Tabernacle. Now if you will please step into the sanctuary, we can discuss a certain matter of a tithe."

"A tithe?" Jones asked.

"Just so that we can better serve the poor. Come inside. The Lord blesses all who serve Him."

Willy got out a set of keys, unlocked three locks, and opened the door that led into the main church hall. The pews had been removed and replaced with long tables holding hydroponic troughs. Long wires strung over them held halogen lights. The cross and pulpit remained.

Two massive dogs lay sound asleep in the middle of the room. Ralph and Patsy. They sensed our presence in the room, lifted their gargantuan heads, and yawned. Then the pair got up, walked over to me and lay down on each side of the chair. I had visited them several times during their country stay and we had bonded.

"What do your parishioners think?" I asked.

"The flock understands that our tabernacle is closed for repairs. You saw the tent next door? We have chosen to view the inconvenience as an opportunity for a nightly revival. Marvelous response. Such spirit. No one misses the old church. Now to the matter of the tithe."

"How much of a tithe?" Jones asked.

"A tithe is always ten percent," Willy answered with a wide smile on his face.

"Got to admit, it's a great set up," Alvin said. "PG&E isn't going to hassle a church. Neither are the cops."

"I intend to account for the power surge by the lights I use for the Revival," the Reverend said.

"Good location," Jones said. "The ten percent comes out of your share, Alvin."

"Maybe we should split it," Alvin offered.

"I don't negotiate," Jones said to Alvin. "In fact I've been rethinking this whole proposition. All I need from you is the seed. I believe I'll just take that now and we will forget about everything else."

Galvano and the two hoods moved towards me. Shit. No way was I in a position to shoot it out with the three of them. And I was not about to risk my life for Alvin's seed. However, once Jones had the seed I didn't figure we witnesses were long for this earth.

I heard a shout from the choir loft behind us. "Hold it you honky mother-fuckers."

I turned, looked up and saw half-dozen young African-American men, dressed completely in black and wearing matching berets. Each held an automatic weapon. Looked like Uzis. They glared down on Alvin and his tattoos.

"Meet some of the bloods from our youth ministry," Willy said. He had a warm fatherly smile on his face. "They be studying up on

the Black Panthers. You know the Panthers started out right here in West Oakland. We're still mighty proud of them."

"Impressive," I said.

"Now, Mr. Bateman," Willy said, "if you just wheel on over here with that bag of seed, we can work things out as the Lord would wish us to, without violence." He spat out each word. Willy had dropped his mask. The most violent non-violent speech I had ever heard. I stared into the face of one hard-ass completely ruthless dude.

What a fucked up mess. Jones wanted the seed and now Willy. Nobody seemed to give a shit about working with Alvin. I almost felt sorry for the bastard. But he's the one that got me into this mess. I was the only one in the church who wasn't after the seed. And I felt I would be the first to perish. Though maybe not the last.

At that precise moment Jones and his men made a fatal error. They reached for their guns. A deafening volley blasted away from the gallery. Smoke filled the room and when it cleared four men lay dead on the floor. I glanced around me. Alvin had disappeared. Henrietta, shaking all over, hid behind a hydroponic trough.

Willy pointed a gun at me. Ralph and Patsy awakened from their slumber and sat up in attack mode. Their instincts kicked in overriding \$10,000 worth of retraining. And they had bonded with me. They would defend me with their lives. The young imitation Black Panthers pointed their Uzis at me. I grasped my pistol under my blanket. A lot of good it would do against this gang. I was reminded of Walter Mosley's book *Always Outnumbered; Always Outgunned*.

"I gather you want the seed," I said calmly. I was not feeling calm. I couldn't shoot my way out of this situation so I would have to try to talk my way out. Living in a chair all these years I have learned that there are times when a bit of thinking can go a long way. I certainly wasn't going to try a karate chop. "I have no problem with that."

"Are you fucking crazy?" Henrietta shouted. "The seed is worth a fortune."

"Pay her no mind. I'm the one with the seed."

"Hand it over," Willy said, "or you're dead."

"Somehow I have a feeling I'm dead either way. However, there is a chance we both can get out of this alive. And you'll also end up with the seed."

"What are you talking about? Try to pull the trigger of that gun you have under your blanket and in a second there will be a hundred bullets in you."

"No doubt true. But there is just a chance there will be one bullet in you. And you run an additional risk."

"Like what?"

"Ralph and Patsy." The two dogs growled at the mention of their names.

"Them hounds useless."

"They were useless to Alvin and useless to you. They are now trained to respond only to me. One word and the two will fly through the air and rip you apart. Maybe the bullet won't hit you. Maybe you'll kill the dogs before they tear you to ribbons. But just maybe you'll end up dead. Why take the chance?"

"What do you have in mind?" A crafty smile formed on Willy's face. I had him.

"Simple enough. I back away towards the door behind me, along with Ralph, Patsy and Henrietta. At the door I drop the seed on the floor. Then we exit unharmed. Agreed?"

"Crip, you dumb fuck," Henrietta shouted, "he'll shoot as soon as you drop the seed."

"Willy's not stupid. He knows even at the door he's running a risk that my bullet will get him before I die, that Ralph and Patsy will make it to him."

Henrietta had a point. My worry, however, wasn't what would happen when I dropped the seed. The real danger would come once I passed through the door. Then everything was up for grabs. My only edge would be the hope that Willy would stop on his way to gun me down to check the seed and that the young bloods would take a few seconds coming down from the choir loft. An edge, but an edge of only seconds. Still better than dying here and now.

"Deal," Willy said. "Let's get on with it."

"Lower your guns."

Willy raised a hand and the Black Panther squad did as directed.

I backed my chair slowly towards the door. The dogs crouched down and didn't move, their eyes riveted on Willy.

"Henrietta get the hell out of here," I shouted.

I felt my back pushing against the door. I reached for the handle and unlatched it. "Come," I commanded. I wasn't about to leave Ralph and Patsy to be slaughtered even to gain a few seconds for myself. The dogs rushed to my side. In one fast motion, I spun a wheel, turning the chair, then grabbing both wheels I propelled the chair through the door. Ralph and Patsy loped along at my side.

I have never turned wheels as fast as I did at that moment. The chair shot like a rocket out the front door, down the ramp, and onto the walkway to the street. No one was in the street. A city of no witnesses.

Behind me the front door banged open and the Black Panther look-alikes spewed out on the lawn in front of the tabernacle. They began firing at me. I twisted and spun the chair as best I could, trying

to be as difficult a target as possible. But, even a six year old with a water gun could hit a wheelchair-bound man at ten feet. And these guys had Uzis. This was one moment when I really missed legs. I could have ducked, rolled, run. It reminded me of that night in 'Nam when that sniper's shot landed in my spine making me what I am today.

Ralph and Patsy, fangs exposed, turned and leapt through the air at the two closest young hoods. They were trained to go for arms holding guns. They tore into them. Blood spurted out on the green lawn. Two down. Patsy fell over. Gunshot wound. The rest of the bloods ran in terror. They were willing enough to shoot it out with thugs, but not battle enraged dogs. I didn't blame them.

"Come on, Crip," Henrietta shouted, who was already in the van.

"Got to save Patsy."

"Only a dog."

"No, it's Patsy."

I spun around and wheeled towards the limp animal. Ralph stood guard over his sister. Henrietta ran from the van. Together we hauled the heavy creature up onto my lap. As I turned to return to the van, Willy came out of the church, gun in hand. A mistake. Ralph got sight of the gun and leapt upon Willy, biting into his arm and flinging the fellow to the ground. I spun over and picked up the gun that fell from Willy's hand. There was a look of terror on his face.

"Get this mutt offen me."

"Ralph's no mutt. He's a full-blooded Presa Canario fighting dog. And your boys shot his sister."

I turned to Ralph and said, "Back."

Ralph did as I instructed and then nuzzled Patsy. She opened her eyes. Still alive.

"Keep your damn seed," I said, "but don't ever come near me again or I'll let Ralph and Patsy finish the job."

Fearing the return of the Black Panthers, I spun around and wheeled back to the van like Lance Armstrong at the finish line of the Tour de France. With Henrietta's help we got the dog into the van. No easy task with a limp 120-pound bitch. Ralph jumped in after her. We rushed her to an emergency vet I know on Broadway, a vet that doesn't ask too many questions about pets with gunshot wounds.

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"Thanks, Crip," Henrietta said, "for saving my life." She sat opposite me at a table in Raleigh's patio. She dressed up for me. Or down would be more accurate. Faded jeans, the lowest cut I have

ever seen, a hole in the crotch exposing green panties. Still and all there was the belly button with the dangling skull.

"Alvin mad at me for losing the seed?"

"He respects you, like I told you. And he told me to tell you not to worry about the seed. Grass seed."

"As in lawns?"

"Told you he was smart. He wouldn't bring the real stuff when dealing to the double-dealer like Jones. Couldn't be sure the guy would bring the 25 grand."

I wondered if he did. Only Willy now knew the answer to that. Serve him right if that envelope in Jones' pocket was filled with blank paper.

"So we risked our lives over lawn seed," I said.

"Premium grade. Kentucky bluegrass. How's Patsy?"

"Fine. The vet extracted the bullet from the shoulder. I've put both of them into foster care through Presa Canario Rescue. I have visitation rights. Where's Alvin?"

"He figured he better skip town for awhile."

"Henrietta, may I make a modest suggestion?"

"Sure."

"Get a different boyfriend."

She lit up a Camel, blew smoke in my face, and said, "Mind your own fucking business."

*Tim Wohlforth's story "Jesus Christ Is Dead!" made the "Distinguished Mystery Stories" list in Otto Penzler's 2005 Best American Mystery Stories. A story of his was chosen for inclusion in the Mystery Writers of America's Relationships Can Be Murder, edited by Harlan Coben to be published in August 2006 by Little Brown. Dennis McMillan has just published a Crip and Henrietta story as part of his Plots With Guns anthology. Other contributors include Michael Connelly and Laura Lippman.*

*He is a 2003 Pushcart Prize Nominee. He has received a Certificate of Excellence from the Dana Literary Society. Wohlforth has had seventy short stories accepted for publication. These have appeared in Futures Magazine, Detective Mystery Magazine, Crimestalker Casebook, Storyteller, Orchard Press, Hand Held Crime, Plots With Guns, Mysterical-e, Hardluck Stories, Without A Clue, SDO Detective, StoryOne, Dana On Line, CyberPulp, New Thrilling Detective, Mindfire, Shred of Evidence (2004 Readers Choice Winner), Crimson Dagger, ThugLit, Echelon, Fictionwise, Web Mystery Magazine and Writers Hood.*

*His writings also appear in a total of eleven anthologies including the just released Techno-Noir and Short Attention Span Mysteries.*

*A contemporary noir novel, No Time To Mourn, was published by Quiet Storm in April, 2004. He co-authored the non-fiction book, On The Edge: Political Cults Right and Left, published by M.E. Sharpe.*

*Wohlforth moderated and appeared on short story panels at numerous Bouchercon and LCC conferences. He is a member of The Short Mystery Fiction*

*Society, Mystery Writers of America, Private Eye Writers of America, and Sisters in Crime.*

*Comments on No Time To Mourn:*

*"Like a great twelve-bar blues – the comfort of a familiar form jazzed by a fresh key and an exciting new voice." – Lee Child*

*"A dark gem of a crime novel" – Jeremiah Healy*

*"Pulse-stopping suspense" – Gayle Lynds*

*[www.timwohlforth.com](http://www.timwohlforth.com) [tim@timwohlforth.com](mailto:tim@timwohlforth.com) 510-654-6662*

*He is represented by Jo Grossman ([jogrossman@grossmanandholmes.com](mailto:jogrossman@grossmanandholmes.com))*