

Phil Bailey, Esq.

In the spring of 1971, Phillip Mackin Bailey has a one-man law office on the first floor of an old three-story brick building at 503 3rd Street, N.W., just across from the D.C. Court of General Sessions.

Every morning he goes to court and they give him a new case. Usually it's a prostitution case, because the other lawyers don't want them. More often than not, it's another streetwalker⁴⁹ who works for the Thacker brothers, two black pimps whose headquarters are at 14th and U Street over a storefront church.

But that's okay with Bailey, because to tell the truth, he's a little obsessed with sex. More than a little, actually. The oldest son of a civilian air force mechanic and destined for the priesthood, Bailey had attended a five-year seminary before discovering girls and enrolling at Catholic University, in Washington, D.C., where he majored in history and lettered on the swim team. From there it was on to Catholic University Law School, where he would win the moot court and be voted the 1968 graduate "Most Likely to be Disbarred." He's five-foot six, with curly hair and a quick smile, a scamp if you ever saw one.

It's not long before Bailey meets "Jay the Lawyer," Irving J. Levine, who takes young Bailey under his wing. Levine knows his way around the courthouse. Nice suit, nice tie. Doesn't carry anything with him except an expensive leather appointment book with pink slips sticking out of it: name of the client, the charge, next court date, and that's all he needs. Levine introduces Bailey to the right vice cops. The ones who'll forget to show up for court if you slip them \$50.

Bailey starts paying off the cops. Right there in the main corridor of the courthouse, while everyone is milling about: two twenties and a ten, placed in the cop's open notebook. The cop closes the notebook and sticks it in a coat pocket. That's all there is to it.

He doesn't pay them off in every case, of course, just for the Thacker brothers' top girls. He does the best he can for the rest of them—bargaining down

charges, delaying the legal process whenever possible. As Bailey soon discovers, getting a “continuance” in a case is often to his benefit as well. Court-appointed lawyers get paid for each court appearance.

Levine, it seems, is something of a hound dog. He always knows the newest houses of prostitution—the high-class ones, not the ones Bailey represents—and recommends them to him. Sometimes Bailey goes, sometimes he doesn’t. He’s got a full social schedule of his own, after all. This is the ’60s. Sex, drugs, and rock ’n’ roll.

Jay the Lawyer is particularly high on this particular house, though: French and German girls who’ll do anything you want, he says. A week later, when Bailey says he hasn’t gone yet, Jay the Lawyer almost insists. To get him off his back, Bailey says he’ll go.

It’s a large townhouse in the Adams Morgan district. Bailey rings the doorbell and a middle-aged woman answers the door. Bailey tells her his name and says Jay the Lawyer sent him. That’s the password.

He’s ushered into a room with a big bed. Everything is a rich red or blue. There’s a Persian carpet on the floor, Tiffany-style lamps and flowers in vases around the room. A woman enters the room and puts a record on the stereo.

Bailey is there, he estimates, 30–45 minutes. The next day when he sees Jay the Lawyer at the courthouse, he tells him he wants to go back again. Jay the Lawyer gives Bailey the phone number so he can make the appointment himself, and a week later, that’s what he does.

This time there are three women and two other guys in the room. A stunningly beautiful blonde woman comes up to him, smiling.

“Don’t be afraid,” she says, with a slight German accent. “My name is Erika. Take off your clothes. We’re going to have some fun.”

It is, as Bailey would describe it years later, a “daisy chain gangbang.” Erika, who seems to be in charge, gives the signal when it’s time to change partners. She’s cool and sexy at the same time.

As Bailey’s putting his clothes back on, he hands Erika his card in case she ever finds herself in need of a good lawyer. He doesn’t think it’s very likely that she’ll ever call him, because, as he knows by now, high-class operations like this one are usually well-protected. It’s only the streetwalkers who ever get busted. He figures it can’t hurt to try, though.

Outside, as Bailey is getting into his red Camaro convertible, parked on a side street behind the brownstone, he sees a telephone company truck and a repairman on a pole behind the house. When he looks closer, he recognizes the guy on the pole. He’s a member of the vice squad, and they’re obviously in the

process of installing a tap on the phone. That means they're getting ready to bust the place.

Another undercover cop who recognizes Bailey from the courthouse comes over and asks Bailey what he's doing there. Bailey says it's none of his business. He's single and can do what he likes.

The cop, who apparently feels like needling Bailey a bit more, asks Bailey if he noticed that there weren't any windows in the room he was in.

"And you know why?" says the cop. "Because they were filming everything you did. How's that grab you?"

Bailey drives straight to his office. Taking a chance that the police haven't finished tapping the phone, he calls the number again and asks to speak to Erika. "Hello, Phillip," she says, "what can I do for you?" He tells her to look out, they're getting ready to raid the house.

A week later, Erika calls to thank him for the tip. There was a raid, all right. A couple of girls were taken in and booked, but she wasn't there at the time. Bailey takes the opportunity to impress her with his qualifications as an expert on prostitution law and drops a few subtle hints about how useful his cozy relationship with the vice squad might be. As he is acutely aware, representing a high-class call girl operation would be a huge step up for him.

Unfortunately, Bailey tells her, he's about to take off on a trip to California. Erika says not to worry. She gives him her phone number and tells him to give her a call when he gets back.