

## Mary McGuire's Huggermugger

By Dennis Knight

Some time ago I reported about a new book, *Murder* by Mary McGuire. You will be interested to know it is a smashing, world-wide success, full of romance and intrigue about the death of Mary's interloper of a husband, Romeo. As it turns out, the Denver Police Department has taken the book as the author's confession, and they would like to get their hands on her.

Mary, when she finished and mailed the manuscript, had the foresight to fly immediately to Madagascar, because it does not have an extradition treaty with our nation, and it happens to be famous for its coffee, which was Mary's second criterion in finding safe haven. It is a beautiful place, the fourth largest island country in the world, full of natural wonders, and home to indigenous species seen nowhere else on earth. But as long as she remained under warrant in Colorado, Madagascar was a prison to Mary.

What Mary needed was a way to send the investigators in a new direction, but that wouldn't be easy, because her book had pretty much clinched the facts against her. Now she rued her own conscientious dedication as a writer to the truth.

Mary brewed a fresh pot of strong Madagascar Excellence, studied her manuscript to see if there could be anything in there that would cast a shadow of doubt. Had she introduced some innocuous character who she could point to as an alternative suspect? Did she mention any odd item that could provide a tempting new lead? She needed a device to send DPD off on a wild goose chase or as it is known in the parlance of mystery writers, chasing a red herring.

Mary McGuire finally found her hook in a casual reference to Romeo's addiction to a tiny brick shaped candy. Mary opened a blank page in her laptop, and typed the title line, *Death by Pez*, poured another cup of java, and launched into chapters about Romeo's collection of Pez dispensers, including those modeled after super heroes, Disney characters, Muppets, Charlie Brown and friends, Bugs Bunny, Star Wars, the founding fathers of America and hundreds more.

She focused on the pride of the collection, the Pez Shooter, a realistic plastic pistol with shiny black barrel and loaded magazine clip in the brown grip. Unlike his other dispensers, this model, what Romeo called the Pezinator, packed enough power by rubber band that he could actually shoot himself in the mouth. Mary's task was to make the Denver cops think that was just what happened, and that it was fatal.

Mary wrapped up her huggermugger with chapters lending detective-deflecting aromas to her red herring of a book. She has just mailed it to her publisher and the Denver Police, with hope it will create the reasonable doubt she needs to be removed from Colorado's Most Wanted list. If it doesn't, maybe the sequel will sell enough copies to keep her for life in Madagascar Excellence Coffee.