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dollars out of the sugar bowl, drove over to Ed Luby's Steak House, and carried on like King Farouk and his latest girlfriend. There were lights on in Luby's, and there was music inside. And there were plenty of cars in the parking lot-all a good deal newer than what Harve and Claire arrived in. Their car was an old station wagon whose wood was beginning to rot. ED LUBY'S KEY CLUB The restaurant was obviously in business, but the red front door wouldn't budge. Harve banged away some more with the knocker, and the door suddenly swung open. Ed Luby himself opened it. He was vicious old man, absolutely bald, short and heavy, built like a .45-caliber slug. He was furious. "What in hell you trying to do-drive the members nuts?" he Part One said in a grackle voice. "What?" said Harve. Luby swore. He looked at the knocker. "That thing comes down right now," Ed Luby worked as a bodyguard for Al Capone once. And then he went into he said. "All the dumb things-a knocker on the door." He turned to the big thug who lurked behind him. "Take the knocker down right now," he said. bootlegging on his own, made a lot of money at it. When the prohibition era ended, Ed Luby went back to his hometown, the old mill town of Ilium. He Yes, sir," said the thug. He went to look for a screwdriver. "Mr. Luby?" said Harve, puzzled, polite. "What's going on? bought several businesses. One was a restaurant, which he called Ed Luby's Steak House. It was a very good restaurant. It had a brass knocker on its red front door. "What's going on?" said Luby. "I'm the one who oughta be asking what's going At seven o'clock the other night, Harve and Claire Elliot banged on the door on." He still looked at the knocker rather than at Harve and Claire. "What's the with the brass knocker-because the red door was locked. They had come from big idea?" he said. "Halloween or something? Tonight's the night people put on a city thirty miles away. It was their fourteenth wedding anniversary. They would funny costumes and go knock on private doors till the people inside go nuts?" be celebrating their anniversary at Luby's for the fourteenth time. The crack about funny costumes was obviously meant to hit Claire Elliot Harve and Claire Elliot had a lot of kids and a lot of love, and not much squarely—and it did. Claire was vulnerable—not because she looked funny, but money. But once a year they really splurged. They got all dolled up, took twenty because she had made the dress she wore, because her fur coat was borrowed.

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