



This is the Zodiac message received yesterday

NEW ZODIAC LETTER

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ten-month period that began in December of 1968.

The sixth victim known to be Zodiac's — a coed murdered in Riverside in 1966 — was brought to light by The Chronicle in 1970 in its own investigation of the baffling case.

Zodiac eventually acknowledged that he indeed had been responsible for the Riverside slaying in a letter mailed on March 15, 1971, from Pleasanton in Alameda county.

That was the last communication from the killer — until yesterday.

Using a blue felt-tip pen, Zodiac wrote a cryptic note on a sheet of white paper and tucked it into an envelope addressed simply "San Fran. Chronicle/Please Rush To Editor."

From the postmark, and the zip code numbers "940," it was determined that the letter was mailed Tuesday from somewhere in either San Mateo county or Santa Clara county.

The note itself, replete with probably deliberate misspellings, read:

"I saw & think 'The Exorcist' was the best satirical comedy that I have ever seen.

"Signed, yours truly,

"He plunged him self into the billowy wave

"And an echo arose from the suicides grave

"Titwillo titwillo titwillo

"Ps. If I do not see this note in your paper, I will do something nasty, which you know I'm capable of doing."

Zodiac then added this chilling notation:

"Me-37 SFPPD-6"

In the past, Zodiac has used that style to boast of the latest total of his victims and the fact he has not yet been caught.

In the March 15, 1971, letter, he bragged that his victims totaled "17 plus."

The poetic lines in Zodiac's note are from the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta

"The Mikado," in a second-act aria sung by Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner.

The latest Zodiac communication was turned over to Inspector William Armstrong of the homicide detail, who has been one of the chief investigators of the Zodiac case since the outset.

After conferring with a handwriting expert, Armstrong confirmed that the note was in fact from Zodiac.

Immediate questions raised by the letter include, of course, why Zodiac had remained silent for almost three years; what prompted him to break that silence; and whether he can be believed in his claim that he has actually killed 37 persons.

Armstrong reserved comment on the latest letter until he and other Zodiac investigators have had time to study it and to confer.

The Zodiac killings in Northern California began on Dec. 20, 1968, when he gunned down David Faraday, 17, and Betty Lou Jensen, 16, in a lovers' lane at Lake Herman reservoir near Vallejo in Solano county. He did not take credit for the double murder at the time.

In 1969, Zodiac began boasting of the killings in letters to The Chronicle and other newspapers.

On Oct. 11, 1969, San Francisco cab driver Paul Stine, 29, was shot to death in Pacific Heights in what at first appeared to be a robbery murder.

Three days later, The Chronicle received a letter from Zodiac in which he took that name for the first time and said he'd killed Stine. He proved the claim by enclosing a bloody swatch of the cab driver's shirt. Included with his boasts during this period was a message in code.

The cryptogram was soon decoded and it told a bizarre tale: Zodiac said his killings were to provide himself with "slaves" who would serve him in "Paradise."