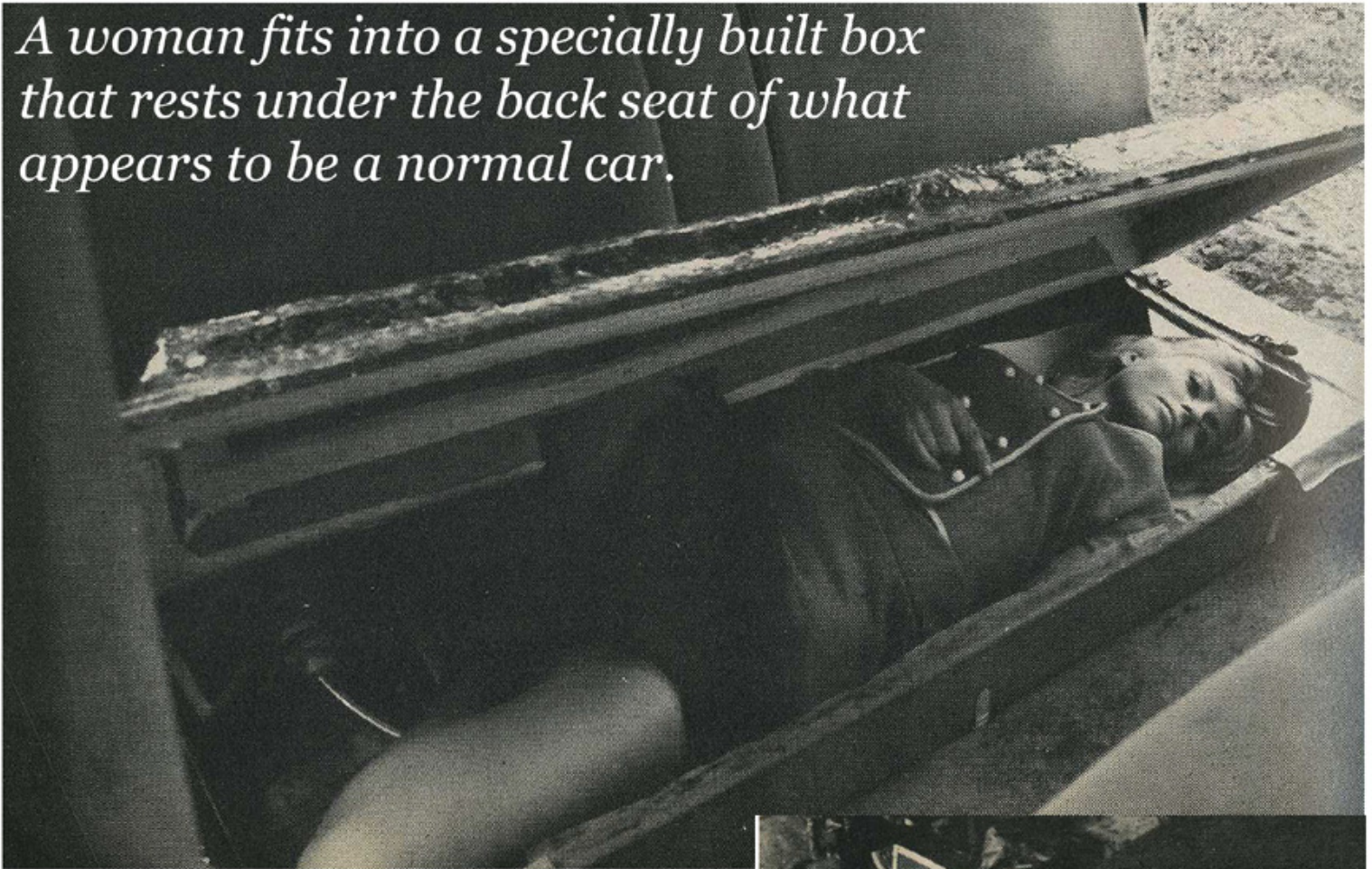


**THIS MAN
IS A
SMUGGLER
OF PEOPLE**

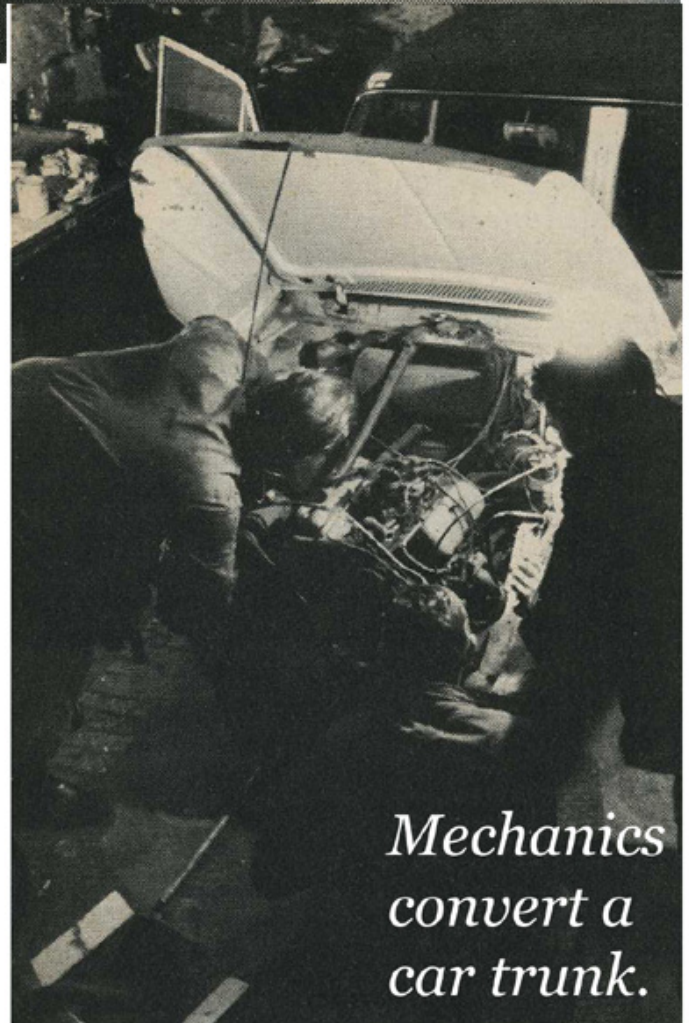
Pageant
July, 1967
p. 155

Escape from East Berlin

A woman fits into a specially built box that rests under the back seat of what appears to be a normal car.

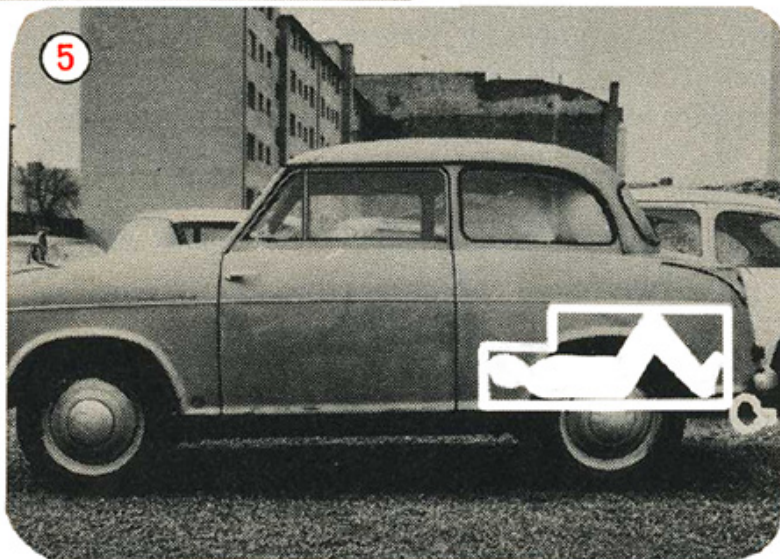
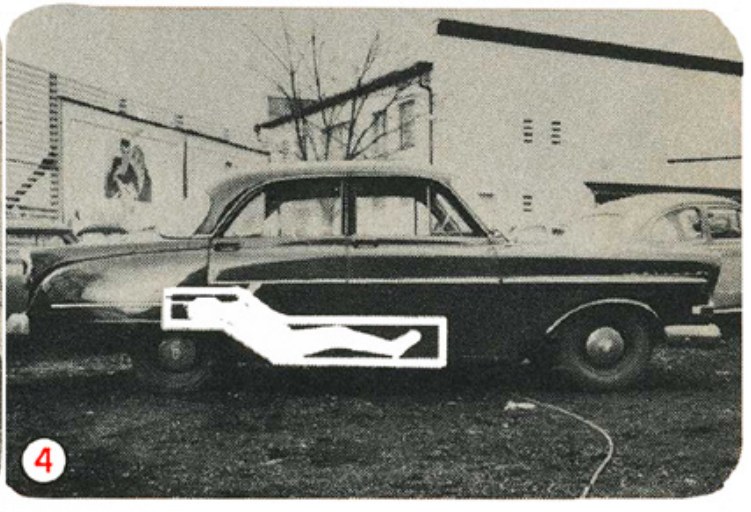
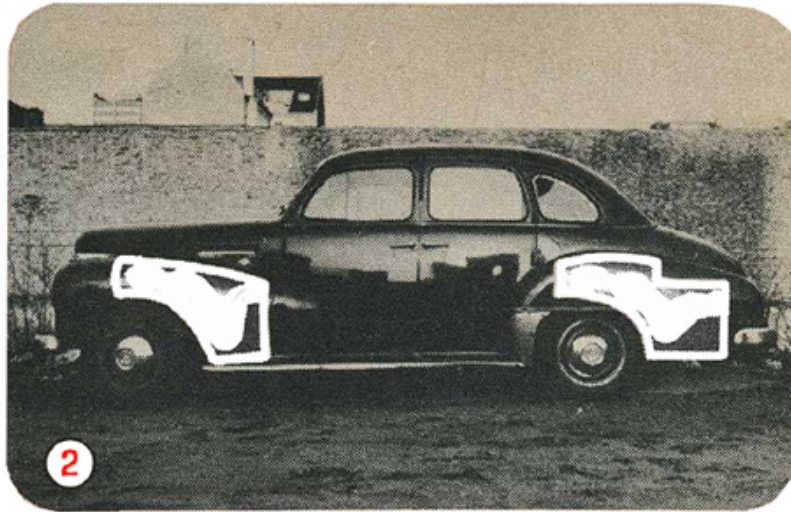
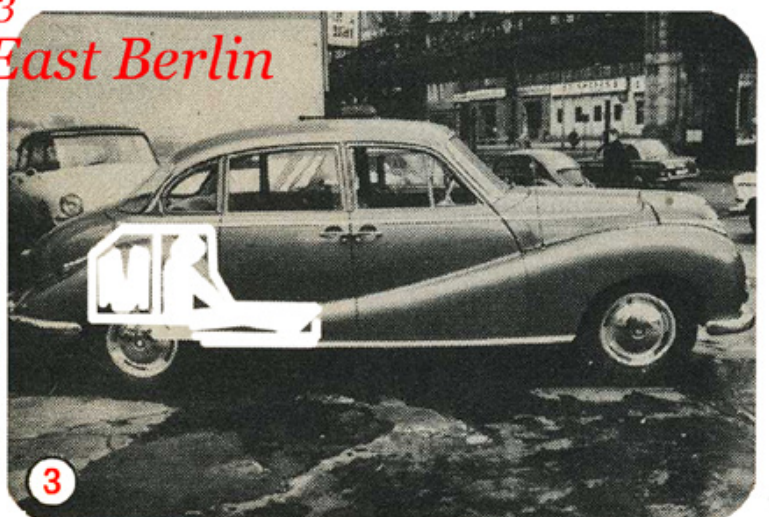
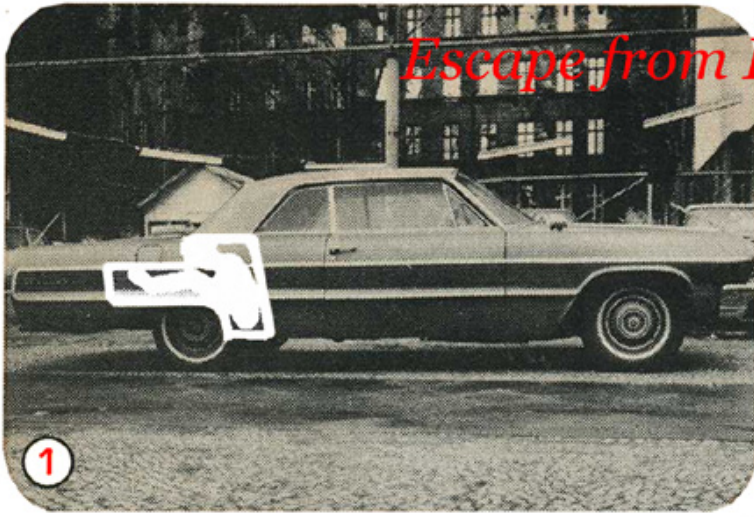


■ In a small garage hidden in West Berlin, 41-year-old ex-cabdriver Kurt Wordel masterminds the overhauling of cars. No ordinary mechanic, his specialty is replacing automobile parts with humans who want to escape from East Berlin. Since the Berlin Wall went up, over 500 people have paid him \$15,000 to \$20,000 fees for his escape services.



Mechanics convert a car trunk.

3
Escape from East Berlin



Seventeen people escaped between the trunk and back seat of this "body by Fisher," a Chevrolet (1). Two hundred and eighteen were concealed in the front fender and gasoline tank of this converted car (2). Thirty-four people entered the West, two at a time, hidden under and between back seat of this BMW (3). Twenty-eight were smuggled out beneath back seat and floorboard (4). Seventeen made it in trunk and gas tank of car (5).

⁴
Escape from East Berlin



This young woman will escape by hiding in the trunk of a converted Volkswagen. Painstaking details are taken to prevent detection. The escapee is left no room at all in which to move.

The escape business is a perilous one for both Wordel and his clients. Escapees endure a trip fraught with such physical hardships that one man lost an ear by hiding in a space too small to hold him. Wordel is usually one step ahead of The Red Guards, but occasionally something will go wrong to give him away. Recently, two of his drivers were sentenced to seven years in prison because a child hidden in one car woke up and cried just as they reached the border. Wordel's wife, who stays home and minds the children, is philosophical about the danger her husband faces. "The job must be done," she says.

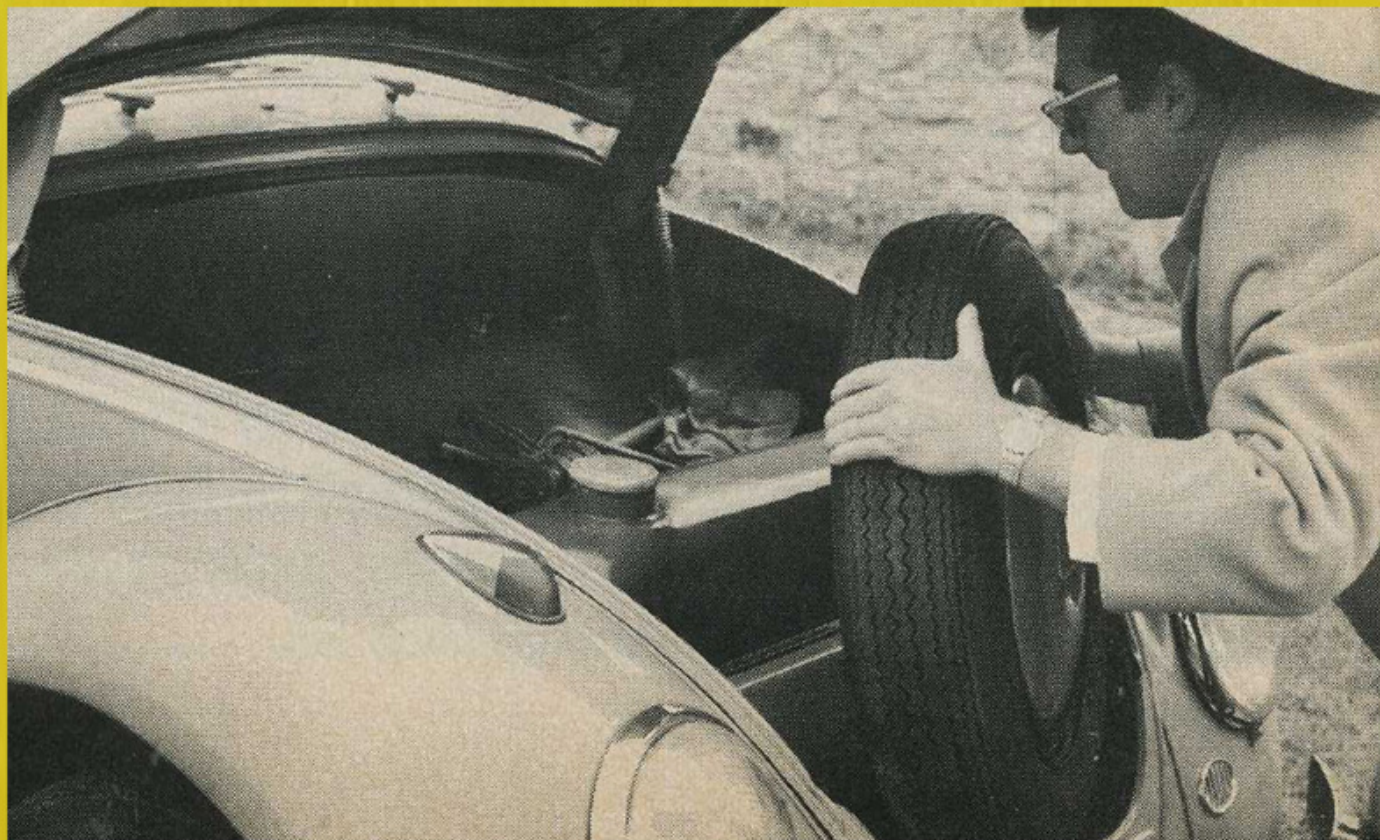
Escape from East Berlin

husband faces. "The job must be done," she says. His clients display the same kind of moral fortitude. After a particularly difficult trip one man said, "I would gladly do it all over again."

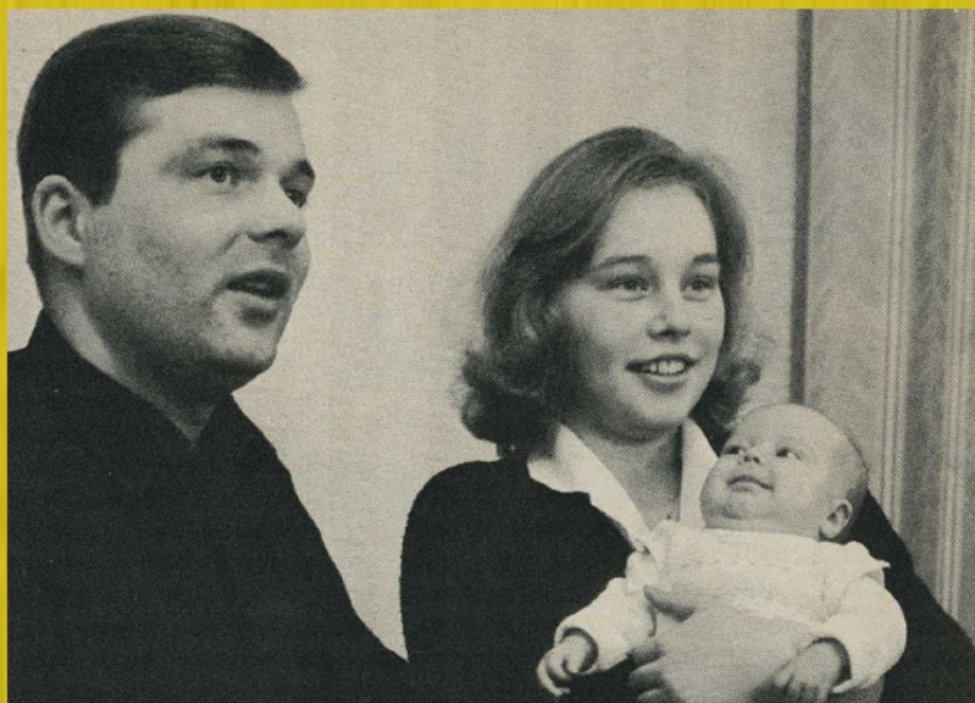


The converted gas tank is closed over girl's head, leaving only air holes for her to breathe through

Escape from East Berlin



Then the spare tire is placed over her (below).



The young couple above owe their marriage to Wordel. Klaus met Jutta when he visited East Berlin. They fell in love, and she became pregnant. But Jutta was not permitted to go with Klaus when he returned to the West. With Wordel's help, she escaped in an old BMW. Wordel took time out of his busy schedule to attend their wedding. Many other families are reunited through Wordel's efforts. Berlin's most successful escape artist risks his life daily performing his body smuggling job.