

THAT'S THE WAY THE FORTUNE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A CHAMELEON'S MURDER MYSTERY

Script by
Jim Christian



Salt Lake City

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THE CHARACTERS

LLOYD PENNINGTON -- U.S. AMBASSADOR TO CHINA - AGE 51 - BORN 1892 - A DRAGON - TYPICAL "FARMED OUT" POLITICIAN -- CHEERY, HOMEY AND A TRIFLE BOOKISH

NELLA PENNINGTON - LLOYD'S WIFE AND HOSTESS - AGE 49 - BORN 1894 - A HORSE - AUTHORITY ON CHINESE CULTURE - AN ELEANOR ROOSEVELT WANNABE

ALLEN MASSEY - SPOILED NEW YORK PLAYBOY - AGE 34 - BORN 1909 - A ROOSTER - SEEING THE WORLD ON DADDY'S MONEY - EASILY BORED AND BLASE

REV. EZEKIEL BOB JACKSON - SOUTHERN BAPTIST MISSIONARY - AGE 48 - BORN 1895 - A SHEEP - GENTEEL WIDOWER PREACHING THE WORD IN THE ORIENT

SWEET PEA JACKSON - EZEKIEL BOB'S DAUGHTER - AGE 20 - BORN 1923 - A PIG - DRESSED AS IF SHE WERE STILL A CHILD - HELPS "THEATRICALIZE" HER FATHER'S MINISTRY

TONY "DIGGER" TOD - WAR CORRESPONDENT NEWSPAPERMAN - AGE 38 - BORN 1905 - A SNAKE - LOUD AND PUSHY -- QUICK THINKING & TRICKY KEEPS OTHERS ON THEIR TOES

BENJAMIN "BENNY" KRAPLODOWSKI - NAVAL M.P. - AGE 33 - BORN 1910 - A DOG - PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS -- BEEN HIT IN THE HEAD ONCE TOO OFTEN - ENTERPRISING

DOTTIE CRANDALL - OUTGOING U.S.O. ENTERTAINER - AGE 31 - BORN 1912 - A RAT - INDEPENDENT AND CHARMING -- NATURAL BORN LEADER "NEVER-SAY-DIE" PHILOSOPHY

SETTING:

CHINESE EMBASSY IN PEKING (BEIJING)

CHINESE NEW YEAR - 1943

SLAUGHTER ON THE STRIP *A CHAMELEONS MURDER MYSTERY* by Jim Christian **Characters:**

5m 3w Synopsis: The Pink Mink Hotel provides the setting for this Las Vegas spectacular where a manipulative showgirl double-crosses once too often and misses her entrance thanks to one of her fellow entertainers. **(ORDER #3093)**

1 -- COCKTAILS

(IF POSSIBLE, A LARGE GONG IS SOUNDED OR SOME OTHER ATTENTION GETTING DEVICE AS LLOYD AND NELLA EWER AND STEP UP TO THE MICROPHONE)

LLOYD: HELLO? HELLO? IS THE P.A. SYSTEM WORKING? GOOD EVENING AND HAPPY 1943! I'M AMBASSADOR LLOYD PENNINGTON AND THIS IS MY LOVELY WIFE, NELLA, AND WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME YOU TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN PEKING AS WE CELEBRATE THE START OF A BRAND NEW YEAR -- CHINESE STYLE.

NELLA: *(HORNING IN)* WHAT MY HUSBAND MEANS TO SAY IS "WELCOME TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BEIJING. BEIJING."

(TO LLOYD)

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, DARLING ?

LLOYD: YES, NELLA, DEAR.

NELLA: *(CONTINUING TO THE CROWD)* YOU SEE, AS AMERICANS, WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO THE ANGLICIZED PRONUNCIATION "PEKING" WHEREAS THE ACTUAL PINYING SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION IS 'BEIJING.'

LLOYD: *(TO THE CROWD)* YOU HAVE TO EXCUSE MY WIFE, FOLKS. SHE'S A BIT OF A FANATIC WHEN IT COMES TO THINGS CHINESE.

NELLA: A 'SINOPHILE' TO BE EXACT. WITH THE DEEP, RICH HERITAGE OF CHINA SURROUNDING US, IT WOULD BE RIDICULOUS NOT TO INDULGE OURSELVES IN THE TREASURES OF A CULTURE WHICH HAS THRIVED FOR COUNTLESS MILLENNIA.

ALLEN: *(WITH COCKTAIL IN HAND)* WELL, BEFORE ANOTHER 'MILLENNIA' PASSES BY, ARE WE GOING TO SEE SOME SHRIMP ROLLS AROUND HERE? I'M STARVING.

LLOYD: MR. MASSEY, IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS WITH THE MAGNITUDE OF THESE FESTIVITIES, I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO DASH OVER TO CHUNGKING AND CRASH THEIR PARTY.

NELLA: AFTER ALL, IT IS THE CAPITAL OF CHINA. IT HAS A BIGGER EMBASSY. I'M SURE THEY'LL HAVE ALL OF THE SHRIMP ROLLS YOU'D WANT,

LLOYD: MAYBE POT STICKERS, TOO.

ALLEN: BUT I LIKE IT HERE I IT'S SO WONDERFULLY ... JEJUNE. YOU SEE, I CAN AFFORD ALL OF THE EXCITEMENT I WANT, BUT GOOD ENNUI - NOW, THATS HARD TO FIND.

LLOYD: WELL, WE WISH YOU'D FIND IT SOMEWHERE ELSE. YOU'VE BEEN FREELOADING AROUND THE EMBASSY FOR WEEKS AND IT'S GETTING A LITTLE 'ENNUI-FUL' FOR US.

ALLEN: HOW DROLL

(HE WANDERS OFF, DRINKING)

LLOYD: *(COVERING)* LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE DO HAVE SOME 'HONORED' GUESTS HERE, TONIGHT. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO MEET TWO PEOPLE WHO HAVE BECOME VERY WELCOME FACES AROUND HERE. THE REVEREND EZEKIEL BOB JACKSON AND HIS LOVELY DAUGHTER, SWEET PEA.

REVEREND: *(STEPPING UP TO THE STAGE)* THANK YA, THANK Y'ALL AND BLESS Y'ALL. MY

by Jim Christian

SWEET PEA AND I ARE SO GRATEFUL IN OUR HEARTS TO BE HERE TONIGHT, DOIN' THE GOOD WORK, HELPING TO BRING ALL OF OUR FINE ORIENTILE BROTHERS AND SISTERS INTO THE FOLD.

SWEET PEA: PRAISE BE.

REVEREND: THESE PENNINGTONS ARE FINE FOLKS.

SWEET PEA: FINE FOLKS.

REVEREND: AND IF IT'S NOT PRESUMIN' TOO MUCH, MY SWEET PEA AND I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SPECIAL THOUGHT ON THIS SPECIAL OCCASION.

NELLA: BY ALL MEANS.

REVEREND: SWEET PEA - YOU GO ON UP THERE AND DO YOUR PECE.

SWEET PEA: YES, DADDY!

(SHE STEPS UP TO THE MICROPHONE AND PRESENTS A WELL-CHOREOGRAPHED, SINCERE-TO-THE-TEETH VERSION OF 'AMAZING GRACE' TO EZEKIEL BOB'S HUMMED ACCOMPANIMENT)

AMAZING GRACE HOW SWEET THE SOUND
THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME.
I ONCE WAS LOST, BUT NOW I'M FOUND.
WAS. BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE.

REVEREND: NOW Y'ALL JOIN US AT THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED LAMB OF DUNG FAO THIS SUNDAY,

SWEET PEA: AND AMEN TO THAT.

REVEREND: AND DON'T YOU WORRY CAUSE WE FINALLY GOT IN SOME OF THEM BIBLES THAT READ FROM RIGHT TO LEFT FOR OUR GOOD CHINESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

LLOYD: THANK YOU.

(TO THE CROWD)

THEY'RE GOOD PEOPLE, AREN'T THEY.

NELLA: YES. CULTURALLY NAIVE, BUT BASICALLY SWEET,

DIGGER: *(FROM THE CROWD)* AMBASSADOR PENNINGTON ?

LLOYD: YES.

DIGGER: *(FLASHING HIS PRESS CREDENTIALS)* TONY TOD, STARS AND STRIPES PERIODICAL I'VE BEEN SENT TO COVER THIS EVENT FOR OUR BOYS IN EUROPE AND I WONDERED IF I MIGHT ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS.

LLOYD: CERTAINLY, MR. TOD.

DIGGER: YOU CAN CALL ME 'DIGGER.' NOW, WHAT'S WITH THIS CHINESE NEW YEAR AND WHY CAN'T THEY JUST ENJOY JANUARY 1ST WITH THE REST OF US?

LLOYD: I BELIEVE THAT ...

NELLA: DARLING, LET ME HANDLE THIS.

(WAXING ELOQUENT)

THE CHINESE NEW YEAR COINCIDES WITH THE FIRST FULL MOON AFTER THE SUN ENTERS

by Jim Christian

AQUARIUS. AS YOU CAN SEE ON THE DIAGRAMS AT EACH OF YOUR PLACES, EACH YEAR CORRESPONDS TO ONE OF THE TWELVE SIGNS OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC. NOW, RATHER THAN ASSIGNING THE ASTROLOGICAL SIGNS BY THE DATE OR MONTH OF BIRTH AS WE DO IN THE WEST, THE CHINESE CALENDAR ASSIGNS BY THE YEAR IN WHICH PEOPLE ARE BORN AND 1943 WILL BE THE YEAR OF THE SHEEP.

DIGGER: SO ANYBODY BORN DURING THE NEXT YEAR WILL BE A SHEEP ?

NELLA: EXACTLY. FOR EXAMPLE, IN WHAT YEAR WERE YOU BORN ?

DIGGER: 1905.

NELLA: (*CALCULATING QUICKLY*) 1905 ... 1905 AHA! THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE.

DIGGER: THANKS A LOT,

SWEET PEA: OOH, WHAT ABOUT ME?

NELLA: WELL, WHEN WERE YOU BORN, SWEET PEA?

SWEET PEA: NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE, MA'AM.

NELLA: (*THINKING BRIEFLY*) THAT WOULD BE THE YEAR OF THE PIG.

SWEET PEA: (*HURT*) OH.

REVEREND: I TOLD YOU THEM HOROSCOPES WAS EVIL.

DIGGER: ANYWAY, SO WHAT'S WITH ALL THE DRAGONS AND FIREWORKS AND STUFF...

BENNY: (*ENTERING AND CROSSING TO LLOYD*) BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR, BUT I'VE BEEN ASKED TO TELL YOU THAT THE U.S.O. COMPANY HAS ARRIVED AND IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING TRANSPORTED, SIR.

LLOYD: THANK, YOU...?

BENNY: KRAPLODOWSKI, SIR. BENJAMIN J. BUT ALL THE GIRLS CALL ME BENNY, SIR.

LLOYD: THANK YOU, SOLDIER.

DIGGER: SAY, KRAPLODOWSKI -- IS THAT WITH AN 'I'?

BENNY: THAT IS CORRECT, SIR.

DIGGER: OKAY, SWABBIE, LET'S HEAR YOUR SLANT ON ALL OF THIS. DO YOU LIKE BEING STATIONED IN CHINA OR WOULD YOU RATHER BE KNOCKIN' SOME HEADS ON THE FRONT LINES?

BENNY: (*INDICATING UNIFORM*) I'M AN S.P., SIR. I'M KNOCKIN' PLENTY OF HEADS RIGHT HERE. MOSTLY OUR OWN BOYS. I LIKE IT THAT WAY.

DIGGER: ANXIOUS TO GET STATESIDE?

BENNY: NOT QUITE YET, SIR. BUSY MAKWG PROVISIONS FOR WHEN I DO THOUGH.

DIGGER: OH, REALLY WHAT KINDS OF PROVISIONS?

BENNY: WELL, SIR, I'D LIKE TO SET UP MY OWN IMPORT BUSINESS WHEN I GET BACK. I'M MAKING CONTACTS NOW AND STOCKPILING SOME MERCHANDISE TO SHIP HOME. LIKE THIS.

(*PRODUCES GLASS ELEPHANT FROM HIS MIDDY*)

DIGGER: PRETTY SNAZZY.

(*NELLA GASPS*)

LLOYD: DARLING?

NELLA: *(TO BENNY)* LET ME SEE THAT.

(SHE SNATCHES IT FROM HIM)

WHERE DID YOU GET THIS ?

BENNY: LADY. TAKE IT EASY.

(HE SNATCHES IT BACK)

I GOT IT FROM THIS OLD CHINESE GUY.

NELLA: DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT THAT IS ?

BENNY: *(KNOWING ART FROM A HOLE IN THE GROUND)* IT'S A ELEPHANT.

NELLA: OH, ITS MUCH MORE THAN THAT. IT'S ONE OF THE SACRED CRYSTAL ELEPHANTS OF THE CHOU DYNASTY. THERE ARE ONLY FOUR LIKE IT IN THE WORLD. THE EMPEROR KUNG TI OF THE POSTERIOR CHOU DYNASTY HAD THESE MADE TO COMMEMORATE THE FOUR ELEPHANTS WHO SAVED HIS DAUGHTER'S LIFE BY DOUSING HER FLAMING GOWN WITH WATER FROM THEIR TRUNKS. THESE ARE PRICELESS RELICS WITH A MAGNIFICENT LEGACY OF ARTISTRY AND HONOR.

BENNY: *(THIS HAS ALL BEEN COMPLETELY WASTED ON HIM)* YEAH WELL, I FIGURE I CAN GET MAYBE SIX SUCKS A POP FOR THESE LITTLE DUMBOS BACK IN THE STATES,

REVEREND: OH, I'M SURE THAT YOU COULD, IN'FACT, I'D BE HONORED TO BE YOUR FIRST CUSTOMER.

SWEET PEA: *(DELIGHTED)* OH, DADDY!

REVEREND: ALWAYS HAPPY TO HELP OUR BOYS IN BLUE. NOW, WAS THAT SIX DOLLARS YOU SAID?

BENNY: SURE.

DIGGER: SAY, THIS'D MAKE A GREAT LITTLE FEATURE FOR THE BOYS ON THE FRONT. TELL YOU WHAT, KRAPLODOWSKI -- I'LL GIVE YOU SEVEN BUCKS FOR YOUR FRIEND THERE.

SWEET PEA: DADDY!

REVEREND: NOW MR. TOD, I DID MAKE THE FIRST OFFER AND I WOULD HATE TO HAVE TO FORCE YOU TO BE A GENTLEMAN.

DIGGER: LOOK, POPS -- WE MAY NOT BE IN THE U.S. OF A. RIGHT NOW, BUT AMERICA IS BASED ON THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND IF HE WANTS MY SEVEN BUCKS HE CAN HAVE IT.

REVEREND: THEN SURELY YOU WOULDN'T MIND IF OUR FRIEND HERE WERE TO SELL THE ELEPHANT TO ME FOR EIGHT DOLLARS.

DIGGER: NINE.

REVEREND: TEN.

DIGGER: ELEVEN!

LLOYD: GENTLEMEN, I SHOULD LIKE TO REMIND YOU THAT WE HAVE NOT BEEN BROUGHT HERE FOR AN AUCTION. BESIDES, MY WIFE'S AN AUTHORITY ON CHINESE ARTIFACTS, AND THIS IS NO MERE SOUVENIR WE ARE TALKING ABOUT. THIS IS ONE OF THE FOUR CHOU ELEPHANTS AND I WOULD GLADLY OFFER MR. KRAPLA-WHATEVER-YOUR-NAME-IS FIFTY DOLLARS FOR THIS FINE PIECE OF WORK.

by Jim Christian

BENNY: HOLY SIMOLEONS. YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A...

REVEREND: WAIT! I'LL MAKE IT SIXTY,

DIGGER: SEVENTY.

REVEREND: EIGHTY!

LLOYD: NINETY!

NELLA: ONE HUNDRED!

LLOYD: NELLA!

NELLA: SORRY. YOU KNOW ME.

REVEREND: ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY.

DIGGER: ONE FIFTY.

LLOYD: TWO HUNDRED!

SWEET PEA: DADDY!

BENNY: HOLD IT, HOLD IT, EVERYBODY. NOW BEFORE YOU ALL BLOW A GASKET, I THINK I CAN WORK A LITTLE MAGIC HERE WITH SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

(PRODUCES THE OTHER THREE ELEPHANTS FROM HIS MIDDY)

SEEMS WE GOT ENOUGH TO GO AROUND.

NELLA: LLOYD! HE'S GOT ALL FOUR!

DIGGER: I WANT TWO OF THEM -- FOR BOOKENDS.

BENNY: BOOKENDS?

DIGGER: WELL, FOR ITTY-BITTY BOOKS.

NELLA: LLOYD NEEDS ALL FOUR OF THEM FOR PAPERWEIGHTS!

LLOYD: YES, I HAVE LOTS AND LOTS OF PAPERS.

SWEET PEA: DADDY!

REVEREND: I DEMAND AT LEAST ONE OF THEM! WE ASKED FIRST.

LLOYD: *(PRODUCING HIS CHECKBOOK)* HOW MUCH FOR ALL FOUR? FIVE HUNDRED? SIX HUNDRED?

ALLEN: *(HAVING HAD ENOUGH)* PUH-LEEZE!

(THEY ALL FALL SILENT AS HE PULLS OUT HIS WALLET)

BEFORE THIS GETS ANY MORE BORING, I'LL GIVE YOU TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS A PIECE -- CASH.

NELLA: LLOYD!

(HE GESTURES HELPLESSLY WITH HIS CHECKBOOK)

BENNY: *(FRANTICALLY DRAWING THE MULTIPLICATION IN THE AIR)* THATS - UH - UH -

ALLEN: EIGHT-THOUSAND DOLLARS.

BENNY: *(CHOKING ON THE WORDS)* EIGHT THOUSAND...

ALLEN: OH DARN. NO CHANGE.

(HE PRODUCES A SINGLE BILL, HANDS IT TO BENNY AND BEGINS RELIEVING HIM OF THE ELEPHANTS)

BENNY: *(STARING AT THE BILL GOGGLE-EYED)* THIS IS -- THIS IS --

ALLEN: *(POCKETING THE ELEPHANTS)* A TEN THOUSAND DOLLAR BILL!

BENNY: I - I -

(TAKING IN THE PORTRAIT ON THE BILL)

-WHO THE HELL IS SALMON P. CHASE?

(ALL OF THE OTHERS STARE AT HIM GLUMLY, OBVIOUSLY BURNING OVER THE RESULTS OF THE SALE)

DOTTIE: *(IN THE DISTANCE)* YOO-HOO I HELLO ? IS ANYBODY HOME ?

LLOYD: *(STILL STINGING FROM THE LOSS OF THE ELEPHANTS)* WE'RE IN HERE!

DOTTIE: *(APPEARING LADEN WITH SHOW PARAPHERNALIA)* IS THIS THE U.S. EMBASSY

DIGGER: WELL IT SUIRE AIN'T GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE.

DOTTIE: GLORY HALLELUJAH!

SWEET PEA: *(AUTOMATICALLY)* AND AMEN TO THAT.

DOTTIE: *(AS SHE DROPS HER BAGGAGE -- AND BEGINS SEARCHING THROUGH IT)* OH, I NEVER THOUGHT I'D GET HERE. I'M DOTTIE CRANDALL FROM THE UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND AS PROUD MEMBER OF THAT ORGANIZATION I'M HERE TO TELL YOU...

(PRODUCES AN AMERICAN FLAG ON A STICK)

ITS SHOWTIME!

BENNY: *(BEGINNING A ONE-MAN OVATION)* WHOO-HOO!

(WHISTLES AND CLAPS ALONE UNTIL IT BECOMES OBVIOUS TO HIM THAT NO ONE IS JOINING IN - HE TRAILS OFF)

NELLA: AND WHERE, PRAY TELL, IS THE REST OF YOUR TROUPE ?

DOTTIE: *(DOING HER BEST TO MAKE A GOOD SHOW OF IT)* WELL - OUR LAST STOP WAS IN CHANGCHUN AND WE WERE SERVED A BAD-BATCH OF MOO GOO GAI PAN AND, WELL -- THEY'RE ALL DEAD --

(QUICKLY)

-- BUT I'VE GOT EVERYTHING WE NEED RIGHT HERE TO HAVE A BANG UP SHOW!

DIGGER: SO HOW COME YOU'RE STILL ALIVE ?

DOTTIE: OH, I HAVE AN ALLERGIC REACTION TO BOK CHOY - I GET ALL PUFFY AND SO I NEVER TOUCH THE STUFF. NOW, WHICH ONE OF YOU IS AMBASSADOR PENNINGTON?

LLOYD: THAT WOULD BE ME.

DOTTIE: WONDERFUL!

(LINKING ARMS WITH HIM, MUCH TO NELLA'S CHAGRIN)

I BET YOU KNOW JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY GATHERED HERE TONIGHT, DON'T YOU?

LLOYD: NOT REALLY.

DOTTIE: GOOD. I'M GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP PICKING OUT SOME PEOPLE, TO HELP ME PUT MY SHOW TOGETHER. YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO SINGS ?

LLOYD: WELL...

(HIS FIRST GLANCE FALLS ON ALL-TOO-EAGER-NELLA AND HE QUICKLY GLANCES AWAY)

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THE REVEREND JACKSON AND HIS DAUGHTER SING.

REVEREND: YES, BUT IT'S MOSTLY JUST IN THE SERVICE OF THE SHEPHERD.

DOTTIE: THATS PERFECT. I UNDERSTAND HE'S EVERYWHERE, SO HOW DO WE KNOW HE'S NOT SITTING RIGHT OVER THERE AT TABLE SIX?

(TO LLOYD)

WHO ELSE?

LLOYD: *(NELLA CLEARS HER THROAT)* ACTUALLY, I AM RATHER AN OFFICIONADO OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN MYSELF.

BENNY: HEY, I WAS BETTY GRABLE IN OUR 'STARS AND GARTERS' REVUE LAST FOURTH OF JULY.

DOTTIE: BETTY GRABLE?

BENNY: *(PROUDLY)* BEST GAMS IN THE FLEET.

NELLA: *(GROWING IMPATIENT)* LLOYD!

LLOYD: OH -- AND MY WIFE, NELLA, IS A ... CLASSICALLY ... TRAINED ... SINGER.

NELLA: OH YES, I'VE STUDIED FOR YEARS WITH MADAM LA VIOLETTA BACK IN WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT. SHE SAID THAT I'M A NATURAL

LLOYD: *(SMUGGLING IN A SLUR)* UNNATURAL DOESN'T BEGIN TO DESCRIBE YOUR TALENT, MY LOVE.

NELLA: THANK YOU, DARLING.

DOTTIE: *(MAKING A BEELINE FOR ALLEN AND DIGGER)* AND WHAT ABOUT THESE TWO HANDSOME GENTLEMEN.? I'LL BET YOU'VE BOTH GOT SOME 'HIDDEN' TALENTS.

DIGGER: ME UP ON STAGE? YOU'RE CRAZY.

DOTTIE: PRETTY PLEASE! WITH WHIPPED CREAM ON TOP AND A LITTLE COOKIE ON THE SIDE.

DIGGER: *(WEAKENING)* AW, WHY NOT. I CAN PROBABLY FIGURE OUT AN ANGLE ON THIS. MAYBE I CAN EVEN GET A BYLINE.

DOTTIE: *(TO ALLEN)* AND HOW ABOUT YOU?

ALLEN: IF THERE'S ANY COLE PORTER, I'LL DO IT.

DOTTIE: FABULOUS. OK THIS IS GOING TO BE JUST PEACHY. NOW, WHAT I NEED YOU ALL TO DO IS HELP ME GET THESE THINGS BACKSTAGE AND I'LL START HANDING OUT SHEET MUSIC.

NELLA: I KNOW 'CHIRI-BIRRI-BIN.'

DOTTIE: OH, I DON'T THINK WE DO THAT ONE, SORRY.

(AS THEY ALL GATHER HER EQUIPMENT)

BE CAREFUL WITH THOSE.

(THEY ALL BEGIN HEADING. BACKSTAGE)

REVEREND: DONT, WORRY, THEYRE IN GOOD HANDS

SWEET PEA: AND AMEN TO THAT,

BENNY: *(TURNING BACK AS HE EXITS)* I USED TO HAVE THE SPLITS BUT THEY MIGHT BE A LITTLE RUSTY.

DOTTIE: WE'LL TRY TO WORK AROUND IT.

BENNY: *(EXITING)* OKEY-DOKEY.

ALLEN: *(ALONE WITH DOTTIE)* MISS CRANDALL, IS IT?

DOTTIE: THAT'S RIGHT, AND YOU'RE ...?

ALLEN: ALLEN MASSEY, OF THE WESTCHESTER MASSEYS.

DOTTIE: *(TRYING TO BE IMPRESSED)* HMM!

ALLEN: NOW, MISS CRANDALL...

DOTTIE: DOTTIE.

ALLEN: DOTTIE... I WAS WONDERING, WHEN YOU WERE IN CHANGCWN...

(OBVIOUSLY USING A SECRET PASSWORD)

... DID "THE UMBRELLAS FLY LIKE AN ALLEGHENY MOON?"

DOTTIE: *(AFTER A BEAT)* BEG PARDON ?

ALLEN: DID "THE UMBRELLAS FLY LIKE AN ALLEGHENY MOON?"

DOTTIE: NO..., BUT I GOT MY SNOOD CAUGHT IN A GINGKO TREE ONE NIGHT AFTER THE SHOW.

ALLEN: *(KNOWING THAT SHE'S DEFINITELY NOT A CONTACT)* NO KIDDING.

(HE STARTS TO EXIT UPSTAGE CARRYING A LARGE BOX WHEN A SHOT RINGS OUT AND HE IS SLIGHTLY KNOCKED BACK)

DOTTIE: WHAT WAS THAT?

ALLEN: *(KNOWING FULL WELL BUT TRYING TO COVER)* OH, NOTHING. PROBABLY A JEEP BACKFIRING.

DOTTIE: AH. WELL, I'LL BE BACKSTAGE DRILLING THE TROOPS. AUF WIEDERSEHN.

(SHE GOES)

ALLEN: *(AFTER EXAMINING THE FRONT SDE OF THE BOX, HE EXTRACTS A SLUG AND HOLDS IT UP)* SO ... IT APPEARS THAT THE GAME IS AFOOT.

(HE GOES, ALMOST COLLIDING WITH LLOYD WHO IS REENTERING)

LLOYD: *(CARRYING SHEET MUSIC, HUMMING "BEGIN THE BEGUINE" AND WEARING SOME STRAY COSTUME PIECE)* LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT LOOKS LIKE THE SHOW IS GOING TO BE DELAYED SLIGHTLY. SO IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAVE A FANTASTIC MEAL PREPARED, SO WE'D LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO BEGIN AT THE BUFFET AND WE'LL BE BACK SHORTLY.

(EXITING, SINGING)

"WHEN THEY BEGIN THE BUFFET."

2 -- DINNER

(DURING DINNER, THERE ARE FREQUENT EFFORTS BY LLOYD, NELLA, DIGGER EZEKIEL BOB AND SWEET PEA TO OBTAIN THE CRYSTAL ELEPHANTS FROM ALLEN, BUT TO NO AVAIL. DOTTIE IS BUSILY ENGAGED IN EMCEEING THE USO SHOW WHICH INCLUDES VARIOUS SMALL NUMBERS. EVENTUALLY, SHE GAINS CONTROL OF THE ROOM AND DIALOGUE CONTINUES)

3 -- AFTER DINNER

MUSICAL # 2 -- CHATANOOGA CHOO, CHOO

8 pages

3 -- RAMBLES

4 -- RESOLUTION

3 pages

5 -- BOWS

6 -- ANNOUNCEMENT OF MASTER SLEUTH