

PERUSAL SCRIPT

THE CASE OF THE MISSING DOG

by
Brandan Ngo

RADIO HOUR EPISODE #14



Newport, Maine

© 2025 by Brandan Ngo
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION:

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that
THE CASE OF THE MISSING DOG

being fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States Of America, the British Empire, including the Dominion Of Canada, and the other countries of the Copyright Union, is subject to royalty. Anyone presenting the play without the express written permission of the Copyright owners and/or their authorized agent will be liable to the penalties provided by law.

Script and music copies must be rented from the Publisher and Royalty must be paid to the publisher for each and every performance before an audience whether or not admission is charged. A performance license must first be obtained from the publisher prior to any performance(s).

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the author or his respective agent(s), or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 or under the terms of any license permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency.

Federal Copyright Law -- 17 U.S.C. section 504 -- allows for a recovery of a minimum of \$250 and a maximum of \$50,000 *for each infringement*, plus attorney fees.

The professional and amateur rights to the performance of this play along with the lecturing, recitation, and public reading rights, are administered exclusively through LEICESTER BAY THEATRICALS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be made. For all other rights, inquiries may be made to the authors through LEICESTER BAY THEATRICALS. Any adaptation or arrangement of this work without the author's written permission is an infringement of copyright. **Unauthorized duplication by any means is also an infringement.**

FOR PUBLIC PERFORMANCE RIGHTS YOU MUST APPLY TO THE PUBLISHER OR YOU ARE BREAKING THE LAW!

The possession of this PERUSAL SCRIPT, does not constitute permission to perform the work herein contained, in public or in private, for gain or charity. Proper prior application must be made, license granted and royalty paid before a performance may be given. Copies of this SCRIPT and all other rehearsal materials may be rented from:

LEICESTER BAY THEATRICALS
P.O. Box 536 Newport, ME 04953-0536
www.leicesterbaytheatricals.com

Printed in the United States Of America

THIS NOTICE MUST APPEAR IN ALL PROGRAMS, ON ALL POSTERS AND PUBLICITY MATERIALS AND INTERNET ADVERTISING/WEBPAGES FOR THE PLAY:

“The Case of the Missing Dog is presented through special arrangement with Première Theatrical Licensing on behalf of Leicester Bay Theatricals. All authorized materials are also supplied by LBT, www.leicesterbaytheatricals.com”

NOTE: Your contract with Leicester Bay Theatricals limits you to making copies of this document for persons directly connected with your production. Do not distribute outside of your cast and crew. Following your performance run you must destroy all photocopies, preferably by shredding them. If we sent you the document in printed format, you must return that document to us. If we provided you with an electronic PDF file, simply trash that on your computer so that it cannot be recovered. The electronic document may only be on ONE computer -- it may NOT be duplicated. This is also a part of your contract with Leicester Bay Theatricals.

ORDER #3391a

CAST OF CHARACTERS — 6m, 3f, 2 either

Detective Jack Mihaff (M)

Katherine Trillby (Kitty) (F)

Mayor Butteface (M)

Miss Butteface (F)

Junior (M)

Jeon Yeong (M)

Trainee Jimmy (M)

Little Fan (F)

Lenin (dog)

Thug (M)

Officer (M or F)

The Case of the Missing Dog by *Brandan Ngo*. Episode 14 of the RADIO HOUR SERIES. 11 characters [6M, 3f 2 either] (doubling possible) Running Time: 55 minutes. SET: Old Time radio Station OR actual scenery 1930s Costumes (if desired) A hard-boiled detective scours the streets of Chinatown looking for an elusive pup - but some stones are better left unturned, and some answers can more easily be found in therapy. **ORDER #3391**

Brandan Ngo — Brandan is a regional C-List actor and writer who loves plants, bugs, hikes, and a good riparian habitat. Brandan has performed in and written for several theatre, film, and TV projects based in Salt Lake City including for Plan-B Theatre and Hale Center Theatre, and spends his second life doing ecological work, maintaining natural areas, parks, and trails in and around the city.

THE CASE OF THE MISSING DOG

ACT I - THE CASE

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: A missing dog - seemed simple enough. Frankly, too simple; any other day I would have turned the case down and kept the phones clear for something bigger. But these days, it was a case I couldn't refuse. Maybe it was the recession, maybe it was bad luck, or maybe I had just lost my touch - whatever the case, I needed this job like I needed a handrail on a steep staircase after a night of frightening, experimental love-making.

MUSIC CUTS

KITTY: Say, you sure like talkin' aloud to yourself, don't ya?

JACK MIHAFF: What's that now, Kitty?

KITTY: Well, on the drive here you did nothin' but gab, and at first I thought you were talkin' to me but after about twenty minutes I realized you were just thinkin' your thoughts to the open air.

JACK MIHAFF: Ah, apologies for that, Kitty. Tell you what, it's your first day as my assistant so I'm gonna give you some pointers: First thing you gotta learn about being a detective is that you always gotta keep your mind racing, thinking of clues, links, deductions. Talking out loud helps me keep the story straight. But enough about that, here's the mayor's estate. Remember, in a missing person's case, sensitivity is the key. You never know how distraught or crazed folks can get when a loved one has suddenly and mysteriously dropped out of their lives. And in a city like Little Beverly, you never know what they could be hiding...

KITTY: Gotcha, detective!

F/X: Knock on the door It creaks open

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: What's the meaning of this? The press release finished over an hour ago. My personal expenses are none of anyone's business! I'm taking no further questions, and certainly not at my own private residence!

JACK MIHAFF: Good afternoon, Mayor Butteface --

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: That's Butteface.

JACK MIHAFF: Apologies, Butteface. I'm detective Jack MiHaff.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Pardon?

JACK MIHAFF: I'm here about the missing dog.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Missing dog, what on earth -- what did you say your name was?

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: Hm. A city mayor answering his own door. No sight quite like it; almost like seeing your Sunday School teacher in pajamas at the corner store. Just doesn't look right.

MUSIC CUTS

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: For your information, *detective*, I've just let my housekeeper go in light of evidence he had been stealing from me for the last three years! Now, if you're looking to fill the vacancy, and your bedside manner is as sloppy as this exchange is leading me to believe, I'll have to turn you away!

MISS BUTTEFACE: What is this racket, dear?! I've told you, I need utter and complete silence while I'm on my calls!

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: <*gasp*> Dear, what have I told you about presenting yourself to the public in your bathrobe?? We've an image to maintain!

MISS BUTTEFACE: Dearie, it's the latest fashion trend! The folks in Chinatown are selling it. Apparently it's called a *kee-pow*, and frankly there's no harm this "bathrobe" could do to this family's image that your toupe hasn't done already. Besides, this handsome couple doesn't look like press.

JACK MIHAFF: Well, yes, you're quite right ma'am, and it's good to make your acquaintance. This is my assistant, Kitty, and I'm Detective Jack MiHaff.

MISS BUTTEFACE: Detective what?

KITTY: We're here about a missing dog! I gotta say, though, you two don't look like dog people!

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Look, doggy, or kitten, or whatever it is you're looking for, we have no information! Please leave or I will phone the police!

MISS BUTTEFACE: No you won't! Not while I'm on line!

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Who could you possibly be calling at this hour?

MISS BUTTEFACE: It may be late for us Westerners, but the folk in Chinatown are used to a different timezone! Money doesn't discriminate between customers, dearie, and they're my most loyal ones.

KITTY: Chinatown, huh? What's a ritzy mayor's wife like *you* doin' business in Chinatown for?

MISS BUTTEFACE: Oh, honey, I'd love to divulge all my business secrets to a perky youngster like you, but I've got sales to make and a pudgy mayor's debt to pay off.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Please!

JACK MIHAFF: Mr. Mayor, there's been no mistake. Someone from this residence most certainly called our office just last night about a necklace!

KITTY: Don't you mean dog, Jack?

JACK MIHAFF: Ah, that's right, a dog. Thank you, Kitty.

MISS BUTTEFACE: Come to think on it, it must have been our son, Junior. He's always running around this gaudy house, playing pretend, crank calling, making a racket. Dearie, if you don't hurry and find a second housekeeper to keep our son company, I'm leaving you for a more fiscally responsible man.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: *Please*, return to your calls, dear! I'll handle these solicitors!

JACK MIHAFF: Is your son home, Mr. Mayor? May we speak to him?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Junior is at his lessons. And if it will get you to finally leave us in peace, then yes, you may wait in the parlor for his return. He finishes at seven - shouldn't be more than fifteen minutes now. This way.

JACK MIHAFF: I thank you.

KITTY: Goodness, Detective, I know I've only been working for ya about a day and a half, but if you don't mind me sayin'... I've never seen you act so... assertive before.

JACK MIHAFF: Is that right? What are you getting at, Kitty?

KITTY: Oh... let's just say I liked what I saw.

JACK MIHAFF: Well, well. You know, I'd hate to jeopardize our professional relationship, but, like you said, we *have* been working together for only a day and a half...

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: I don't know if it was the thawing winter outside or the fact that I haven't spoken to a

woman since my mother died five years ago, but something about the way Kitty eyed me today stirred my virgin heart something fierce. I never gave it a second thought until now, but maybe it's time I start allowing myself to have some fun in life. She's a little ditzy to be wife material, but what's the harm in a little workplace fling?

MUSIC CUTS

KITTY: Excuse me?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Whatever is happening here, I beg you, at the very least, please wait until I leave the room. And don't do anything on that couch, it is nigh on priceless, I just had it brought in from Hong Kong.

JACK MIHAFF: Not to worry, Mr. Mayor. Kitty and I are here strictly on business.

KITTY: The mayor's got one thing right: Your bedside manner is leavin' me wantin'!

ACT II - THE BOY

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: Sure enough, the boy, Junior, showed up just after seven. Why a ten-year-old was at his lessons so late in the day, I'll never figure. What sort of lessons were they anyhow? Swimming lessons? Self-defense lessons? I've got a friend who gives self-defense lessons, and he operates in the morning only. The night time is for drinks and cigars, he says. And how did this kid get home? The estate is miles from the city. Does he have a bicycle? What age do children normally wean off of training wheels anyhow? Nothing was adding up about Junior, not one piece. At any rate, if the boy came home with damp hair or a drying towel, I'd have known if he was swimming or not. Or would I have?

MUSIC CUTS

JUNIOR: Have you anything specific to ask me? These all sound like rhetorical questions! Have you found my dog yet, or haven't you?

KITTY: Boy, Mrs. Butteface sure said it, this kid's got an attitude.

JUNIOR: And why shouldn't I? After our housekeeper left, that dog was the only company I had in this gaudy mansion, and I'd hardly even call it company. It couldn't even fix me a cup of tea the way I liked it! But it sure was a cute little pup...

KITTY: A dog boiling a kettle for tea. Now that's a sight!

JACK MIHAFF: Well, now, Junior, why don't you start from the beginning?

JUNIOR: It's quite a simple tale. I recently took the dog in - about a week or two ago - because Mother and Father —

JACK MIHAFF: The mayor and his wife, I presume.

JUNIOR: What? Er, of course, yes. Mother and Father, they had become so preoccupied with their work –

JACK MIHAFF: Work?

JUNIOR: Yes, always busy with their work. And with the housekeeper having been let go on top of this, I was hopelessly, desperately alone!

JACK MIHAFF: Alone, you say?

JUNIOR: And bored!

JACK MIHAFF: Bored, yes.

JUNIOR: The dog was my new and only friend, and for a week things were going swimmingly well --

JACK MIHAFF: Swimmingly?

JUNIOR: ...Yes. Things were going swimmingly well, until one day, the dog and I went out on a walk... and we were ambushed by a local gang of miscreant socialists!

JACK MIHAFF: On a walk, eh?

JUNIOR: Yes, socialists! Oh -- yes, a walk.

JACK MIHAFF: And is this when...?

JUNIOR: Yes, they made off with the dog and left me in the mud. The earthly stains still haven't been washed out of my slacks, a harrowing reminder of that horrid day.

JACK MIHAFF: Well, this has been very enlightening, Junior, and I think I can help you out. Is there anything else I need to know?

JUNIOR: Yes, in fact, I can tell you exactly who the gang is and where and when they meet!

JACK MIHAFF: Hm, frankly I don't see how that would be of use.

JUNIOR: They're called the Pink Ponies, and every Wednesday night they gather just outside of the old Chinatown Hotel and Noodle House.

KITTY: Tonight's Wednesday night!

JACK MIHAFF: Good God, I'd forgotten you were here, Kitty. Why, yes you're right. And Chinatown... why does that sound so familiar?

KITTY: ...Because it's the city's Chinatown district, chief! Over there!

JACK MIHAFF: Ah, yes, of course... the city's Chinatown district... over there...

JUNIOR: You're certain you two are up to the task? I need that dog back as soon as possible.

JACK MIHAFF: Of course, Junior! I've been a detective for as long as I can remember. Your dog is in good hands - paws, you could say.

KITTY: You're sure they were socialists?

JACK MIHAFF: Let's focus on the case here, Kitty. Now, Junior, I'd like to ask your mother and father some additional questions, if that's alright.

JUNIOR: For what purpose? I've given you all the information you need!

JACK MIHAFF: Hmm. Well, that's true, now, isn't it?

JUNIOR: Yes! Go find that dog!

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: I've never heard a human voice reach such atmospheric frequencies. A shrill child if I ever heard one. Could this dog of his --

JUNIOR: Who in blazes are you speaking to?? GO!

JACK MIHAFF: Right then, Junior. You can rest easy tonight. We'll see about this gang, and we'll let you know the second we find anything about your missing necklace.

JUNIOR: Dog!

JACK MIHAFF: Right.

ACT III - THE PUZZLE

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: Back outside in the late winter moonrise... the cold air was leaving, but what about my dry spell? Could the changing of seasons be heralding something for me? A major break? A new love? A dog? Should I get a dog?

MUSIC CUTS

KITTY: Jack, don't ya think it was strange that he kept calling the dog "the dog," instead of any sort of name? I figure if he liked it so much, he'd have named it Precious or Tito or somethin'! And how could the parents not know about it? There's no way I'm gonna believe they were so busy they didn't hear any yappin' or barkin' around the house for a whole week!

JACK MIHAFF: Please, Kitty, I'm trying to think here... Chinatown... Chinatown... that must be in *town* somewhere... somewhere Chinese...

KITTY: Also, how does Junior know exactly who and when and where the gang is? Sounds like he's had run-ins with them before! And probably the friendly kind! Somethin's not addin' up about this kid!

JACK MIHAFF: I imagine if it were called *Chinaforest* or *Chinathecountryside*, it'd be nowhere near the city... no, this must be downtown. It's got to be a sort of neighborhood. Why, it'd be unmistakable. I know what, I'll talk to the mayor. It's his city; he ought to know it like the back of his hand.

ACT IV: THE MAYOR

MUSIC

JACK MIHAFF: We walked into the Mayor's study and found him piling stacks of dollar bills into a faded brown suitcase. Cash is a funny thing... My mother used to give me a nickel every one of my birthdays until I turned fourteen. I always liked the size of nickels - not so easily misplaced as dimes, not so pretentious as quarters --

MUSIC CUTS

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Oh for God's sake, what are you still doing here? How did you find my study?

JACK MIHAFF: Forgive us, Mr. Mayor, the conversation with your son left us a bit wanting. Is it alright if we ask you a few more questions?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: It is eight-thirty in the evening!

JACK MIHAFF: We won't be but a moment.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: You've been here for hours!

KITTY: Mr. Mayor, we find it hard to believe that you spent an entire week in this house without knowing your son was takin' care of a dog!

JACK MIHAFF: Now hold on, Kitty, let me do the talking. Mr. Mayor, where is Chinatown?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: What?

JACK MIHAFF: It's a simple question, no need to get defensive.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: ...I will answer your questions. And then, I beg you, you must leave our home. Chinatown is between 5th and Broad Street and 9th and Cherry Lane. And as far as not realizing there was a dog in my house, might I remind you that I am a *city mayor* and am therefore rather busy most of my days! I had entrusted the parenting duties to my dear wife, but she seems to be more preoccupied with her insatiable desire for money! Her latest venture it seems has awoken the stockbroker in her. She thinks I haven't noticed, but she's taken to selling her jewelry to offset every bad trade. I tell you, it's only a matter of time before our chairs and mattresses disappear!

JACK MIHAFF: 5th and Broad Street, you say?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: ... Yes.

KITTY: Golly, Jack, I wonder if her stock tradin' and jewelry sellin' is somehow connected to the folks in Chinatown! You don't think she maybe sold the dog off for some quick cash?

MISS BUTTEFACE: Now that is quite an accusation, dear!

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: My goodness, how long have you been standing there?

MISS BUTTEFACE: Long enough! Don't let this pearl-clutching husband of mine convince you that I'm anything but the backbone of this family's finances. I may have lost a few here and there to the bull and the bear but I'm not some animal smuggler! I didn't even know we had a little pooch running around here!

JACK MIHAFF: Hmm.... well, if the Mayor and his wife insist they had nothing to do with it, I suppose that clears them of any suspicion.

MISS BUTTEFACE: You're not much of a detective are you?

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Please, dear. The man is about to leave.

JACK MIHAFF: No, we won't bother you any longer. Thanks for the tip about Chinatown, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR BUTTEFACE: Of course!

F/X: Door opens, closes. A light drizzle of rain outside.

KITTY: Whoa, whoa, Jack! Are you sure we should be walkin' away so quick? We hardly questioned 'em at all!

JACK MIHAFF: Nonsense, Kitty, we asked about Chinatown and they pointed us in the right direction. I'm comfortable saying that saved us at least a good two or three hours of searching.

KITTY: But --

JACK MIHAFF: Hop in, Kitty. We're ordering stakeout for tonight.

F/X: Car doors open and close. Key turns, a car engine whirrs to life

JACK MIHAFF: Like "takeout" with an S. So it's a "stakeout."

KITTY: Okay.

ACT V: CHINATOWN

MUSIC

F/X: Light city traffic, driving.

JACK MIHAFF: I never properly learned how to drive. It's a miracle I got anywhere today, let alone safely and alive.

MUSIC CUTS

KITTY: What??

JACK MIHAFF: Ah, here we are. Best barbecued pork in the city, Kitty. Just wait til you try it.

KITTY: Whaddya mean you never properly learned how to drive??

JACK MIHAFF: Steamy, fluffy rice... juicy, sweet, brown, brown pork on a skewer...

KITTY: I've been drivin' around with ya in this piece a' junk this whole day!

JACK MIHAFF: Please Kitty, no need to make a scene. Just because you aren't used to the cuisine or culture doesn't mean you'll have a bad experience.

KITTY: Jack, what - wait a minute, "Korean BBQ Tavern?" What are we doin' here?

JACK MIHAFF: Well, I figure since Chinatown is so enormous, we'd need a lead - some more info, you see? And I've got the best source in town.

F/X: A musty door opens; an entrance bell TRINGS.

JEON YEONG: Helloo, welcome to - oh no.

JACK MIHAFF: How are ya, June?

JEON YEONG: No! Jack, how the hell do you keep finding me? I don't have the energy for you, every time you're around something bad happens to me! Get outta here!

JACK MIHAFF: Come on now, June! That's no way to treat an old friend! I want you to meet my mother I mean my partner, Kitty. Kitty, this is June.

KITTY: June?

JEON YEONG: It's Jeon.

KITTY: Jeon?

JACK MIHAFF: Isn't that what I said?

JEON YEONG: No, it's not!

JACK MIHAFF: June. Hm. Say it again for me.

JEON YEONG: What are you doing here, Jack??

KITTY: We were hopin' you could help us find a dog!

JEON YEONG: A dog?

JACK MIHAFF: It was kidnapped by some shady sorts; gangsters, possibly animal traffickers. We were told they meet outside of the Chinatown Hotel and Noodle House every Wednesday night. You happen to know what today is?

JEON YEONG: ...Wednesday.

JACK MIHAFF: Really? Ah, that's right. Strange, I keep thinking it's Thursday. Well that's good, Kitty,

that'll save us a lot of waiting.

KITTY: Are you sure yer a detective, Jack?

JACK MIHAFF: Well, some things are hard to remember, Kitty.

JEON YEONG: Jack!!

JACK MIHAFF: Ah, yes. Well, June, friend of friends, we were told they'd be meeting outside the Chinatown Hotel and Noodle House. Tonight. You have any idea where this, er, "hotel" is?

JEON YEONG: ... You're asking me if I know where the Chinatown Hotel and Noodle House is?

JACK MIHAFF: Why, yes.

JEON YEONG: The one we both washed dishes at last summer before you got us both fired?

JACK MIHAFF: Oh, *that* Chinatown Hotel and Noodle House!

KITTY: Washin' dishes?

JEON YEONG: I told you Jack, leave me alone! Okay? I finally landed this solid job, I'm trying to live my life!

JACK MIHAFF: I thank you, June. You've saved the day. Let's scram, Kitty!

KITTY: Thank you, Jeon!

JEON YEONG: Yeah, yeah, just please get out of here before you ruin my life again -

F/X: *BANG! A gunshot through the front door!*

KITTY: What in blazes??

JEON YEONG: Agh my leg!!

F/X: *BANG! Another!*

JACK MIHAFF: Gunfire, Kitty! The Pink Ponies must be onto us! Take cover behind this table!

F/X: *BANG BANG! Wood splintering, tiled walls shattering!*

KITTY: Holy smokes, is the whole gang out there or somethin'?

JACK MIHAFF: From the frequency of the gunshots it sounds like there must just be one or two!

F/X: BANG!

KITTY: What do we do, Jack??

JACK MIHAFF: Not to worry, Kitty, I've got some firepower of my own!

KITTY: I hope your aim's better than your driving!

JACK MIHAFF: At ease, Kitty. I spent years watching Mother shoot at stray cats with her trusty revolver. Ol' Dick she used to call it.

<long sniff>

It still smells like her.

KITTY: Oh.

F/X: BANG! BANG! Glassware and porcelain destroyed!

KITTY: Um, Jack! Now would be a good time to shoot back don't ya think??

JACK MIHAFF: Good plan, Kitty. Here, take Ol' Dick here and cover me! I'll run for help!

KITTY: What??

JACK MIHAFF: It's easy, Kitty, just pull the trigger! I find it less frightening if I close my eyes while I shoot!

KITTY: Jack!!

JACK MIHAFF: I'll be right back, Kitty!

KITTY: I didn't take ya for such a cowardly cock!

THUG: Suckers! That's from the Pink Ponies! You'd be smart to keep your nose out of our business!

F/X: An engine revs, a car peels away.

KITTY: Jack, I think they're gone!

JACK MIHAFF: Well, thank goodness that's over. Excellent work, Kitty, we really held our own there!

KITTY: What did we do exactly? I didn't fire a shot!

JACK MIHAFF: They must have been trying to spook us. Keep us from digging any deeper into this canine conspiracy. Unlucky for them, I wore my brown pants today. Nothing's stopping me from getting to the bottom of this one!

JEON YEONG: My frickin' leg!!

KITTY: Oh, Jeon! Are you alright?

JEON YEONG: Could someone help me please??

JACK MIHAFF: Sorry, friend, I'm not much of an expert in field trauma or wound dressing. Come on, Kitty, no time to lose! We have some gangsters to bust!

KITTY: Um. Right! Sorry Jeon!

JEON YEONG: Oh for cryin' out loud!

14 MORE PAGES TO THE END