

Excerpt from...
"THE BIG SNOOZE"
A JUSTIN THYME MYSTERY
By Bruce Kane

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"THE BIG SNOOZE"
A JUSTIN THYME MYSTERY
By Bruce Kane

CHARACTERS:

JUSTIN THYME – A Bogart style, hard boiled detective
EFFIE – Thyme's voluptuous secretary.
MACDOUGALL – Local cop dressed as a Keystone Kop
RAPUNZEL – Beautiful with a large pile of hair on her head
B.B. WOLFE – Local crime lord
BIG JACK JOHNSON – Munchkin
BO PEEP – Hot, young shepherdess
VERONICA VIRAGO – Sexy and evil
BAMBI – Young, sleeping beauty

PRINCE CHARMING – Arrogant prince

ECHO – Off stage voice

SETTINGS:

Thyme's Office – A beat up wooden desk, a rotary phone, a chair and an old wooden hat rack sit off to one side. Thyme's beat up fedora and rumpled trenchcoat hang from the rack.

All Other Settings – The rest of the set can be as minimal as a blank stage or one filled with colorful cartoon like cutouts of trees, bushes, creatures, etc.

ACT ONE

SOUND: BLUESY SAXOPHONE MUSIC

LIGHTS UP ON THYME'S OFFICE:

(JUSTIN THYME sits behind his desk wearing a rumpled suit, shirt and tie)

THYME: *(to audience)* A place that wasn't what it seemed to be. A missing dame who may or may not want to remain missing. A murder that may or may not have been a murder. Three possible suspects who may or may not have committed a murder that may or may not have been a murder. Solving a murder is hard. Solving a murder that may or may not have been a murder is even harder.

(MUSIC OUT)

THYME: It all began once upon a time when Effie, my overdeveloped secretary with the underdeveloped typing skills perambulated into my office.

(EFFIE perambulates in. Feel free to underline all of her entrances and exits with drum beats)

THYME: She told me some guy named Dumpty had called while I was out.

EFFIE: Some guy named Dumpty called while you were out.

THYME: William Jefferson Dumpty? *(to audience)* I asked.

EFFIE: Didn't leave his full name.

THYME: *(to audience)* She replied.

EFFIE: Know him?

THYME: *(to audience)* She inquired. *(to Effie)* Yeah. *(to audience)* I retorted monosyllabically. *(to Effie)* He helped me out on a case a few years back.

EFFIE: Now he says he needs your help.

THYME: Did he say what about?

EFFIE: I asked but he said he couldn't talk about it over the phone.

THYME: How'd he sound?

EFFIE: Scared. Said for you to grab the next boat to Peppermint Bay.

THYME: Peppermint Bay? Did you say Peppermint Bay?

EFFIE: Yeah. That's what I said. Peppermint Bay.

THYME: That's what I thought you said.

EFFIE: Then why'd you make me repeat it?

THYME: Dramatic emphasis.

EFFIE: Peppermint Bay. Isn't that the place where bon bons play on the sunny beach?

THYME: Don't let the brochures fool ya. Take away the cotton candy, the gingerbread houses, the little furry woodland creatures singing pop tunes in high, squeaky voices and Peppermint Bay is just like any other burg. Corrupt... Depraved... Debauched. *(to audience)* In short, it was my kind of town. *(to Effie)* Dumpty say where I could find him?

EFFIE: Said he'd be sittin' on the dock of the bay.

THYME: Say what he'd be doin'?

EFFIE: Watchin' the tide roll away.

THYME: *(to audience)* I told Effie to book me a one way ticket on the Good Ship Lollipop. Destination Peppermint Bay. *(to Effie)* Book me a one way ticket...

EFFIE: Yeah, yeah.

THYME: *(to audience)* She said annoyedly.

EFFIE: The Good Ship Lollipop. *(starts to exit then turns back)* If you need me for anything else, just buzz... You know how to buzz don'tcha, boss?. You just put your lips together and *(shaking her head rapidly)* bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz. *(exits)*

(Thyme stands and puts on his trenchcoat)

THYME: *(to audience)* I watched Effie undulate out of my office, rolled my tongue back into the general vicinity of my mouth, grabbed my fedora *(takes fedora off hat rack)* and cued my saxophone accompaniment ... *(nods)*

(SOUND: BLUESY SAXOPHONE UP AND UNDER)

(Thyme crosses out of his Office and onto Main Set)

THYME: Way back when Dumpty helped me out, I told him I owed him a favor. Of course, I never expected him take me up on it. Leave it to Dumpty not to recognize an empty gesture when he heard one. It was no wonder nobody liked him. So here I was in Peppermint Bay looking for one William Jefferson Dumpty. When I finally found him, he wasn't exactly sittin' on the dock of the bay. More like he was all over it.

(MUSIC OUT:)

(MACDOUGALL, dressed like a Keystone Kop, enters shooing away unseen onlookers)

MACDOUGALL: Move it along... Move it along... This is an accident scene, not a pop up book.

THYME: *(to MacDougall)* Lemme guess. Dumpty.

MACDOUGALL: That's right, laddie. Humpty Dumpty.

THYME: He hated that name. His mother hung it on him when he was a kid. She thought it was funny.

MACDOUGALL: And you wonder why some people turn out the way they do.

THYME: How'd he buy it?

MACDOUGALL: Sat on that wall. Had a great fall.

THYME: Tough way to go.

MACDOUGALL: We did everything we could for him, but it was no use.

THYME: What about all the king's horses and all the king's men?

MACDOUGALL: Budget cuts.

THYME: When did it happen?

MACDOUGALL: Sometime before one o'clock.

THYME: Who found him?

MACDOUGALL: Hickory Dickery Dock.

THYME: Who's Hickory Dickory Dock?

MACDOUGALL: A mouse.

THYME: A mouse?

MACDOUGALL: That's right. A mouse. Runs up and down the clock.

THYME: Why?

MACDOUGALL: He's a mouse. What else is he gonna do? Dumpty a friend of yours, laddie?

THYME: You could that say that.

MACDOUGALL: I just did.

THYME: He helped me out on a coupla cases sometimes back.

MACDOUGALL: You a cop or something?

THYME: Or something. The name's Thyme.. Justin Thyme. I work for the F.B.I.

MACDOUGALL: The F.B.I?!

THYME: The Fictional Bureau Of Investigation. I handle the toughest, dirtiest crimes in English literature.

MACDOUGALL: You mean..?

THYME: That's right. I'm a fictional detective.

MACDOUGALL: Yeah... Sure... Thyme... I read about you. You broke the Cinderella case. Nice work.

THYME: Thanks.

MACDOUGALL: Nice to meet you. The name's MacDougal.

THYME: No. I just said it's Thyme.

MACDOUGALL: No, my name's MacDougal.

THYME: Oh... Nice to meet you MacDougal. Any suspects?

MACDOUGALL: You think it wasn't an accident?

THYME: Maybe.

MACDOUGALL: Think he was pushed?

THYME: Maybe.

MACDOUGALL: Think you can figure it out?

THYME: Maybe.

MACDOUGALL: It won't be easy.

THYME: Maybe I'll win or maybe I'll lose. Or maybe I'll just end up singing the blues. But nevertheless...

MACDOUGALL: Yeah?

THYME: I'd still like to look around. See what I can see and what I can't see. Sometimes what you can't see is more important than what you can see. Only problem is... you can't see it.

MACDOUGALL: Makes sense to me.

THYME: Did you know Dumpty?

MACDOUGALL: We had a few brushes. Dumpty was always a little hard boiled for my taste. Always playing the angles. Looking for the quick buck. Sometimes people got hurt. Sometimes they complained.

THYME: Any of the good citizens of Peppermint Bay angry enough to want to use the sidewalk for a frying pan?

MACDOUGALL: It'd be easier to make a list of everyone who didn't want to poach Dumpty.

THYME: He have any next of kin around here?

MACDOUGALL: Not that I know of. Although, last I hear he was hooked up with a singer over in Happy Valley..

THYME: I might want to look her up.

MACDOUGALL: Hear she's a real looker.

THYME: Then I'll definitely want to look her up. What's the canary's name?

MACDOUGALL: Rapunzel.

THYME: Rapunzel? Did you say Rapunzel?

MACDOUGALL: Yeah that's what I said. Rapunzel.

THYME: That's what I thought you said.

MACDOUGALL: Then why'd you make me repeat it.

THYME: Dramatic emphasis. Where I can find this Rapunzel?

MACDOUGALL: Works at a dive called Jack Sprat's.

THYME: How do I get there?

MACDOUGALL: Just take Happy Valley Turnpike, out to Happy Valley Boulevard. Turn right until you get to Happy Valley Drive. Go two miles, take a left on Happy Valley Street. Take a right. Go three blocks. Hang on right on Happy Valley Boulevard and you're there. You can't miss it, it's on...

THYME: I know. The edge of town.

MACDOUGALL: If you see Rapunzel, give her my best.

THYME: You know her?

MACDOUGALL: Never had the pleasure. *(exits)*

THYME: *(to audience)* I figured I'd start with the canary. In my experience, nine times outta ten, a guy gets scrambled, it's usually a dame handlin' the whisk.

(Thyme turns to see RAPUNZEL ENTER. She's a beautiful woman, in a slinky gown with long hair piled high on top of her head. She's holding a microphone)

RAPUNZEL: For my next song I'd like to sing a tune made popular by Ole King Cole and his Fiddlers Three. It's a little ditty I like to call The Spider Song. *(She sings the song slow and sexy in a low breathy voice. For reference check out the recordings of Julie London. As she sings Rapunzel crosses in Thyme's direction)* Little Miss Muffet... She sat on her...*(pause for effect)* ... tuffet... Eating her curds and whey. When, along came that big, bad spider... Well, you know what he did? That big bad spider? He sat down right beside her... And frightened poor, little Miss Muffet away.

(SOUND: SLIGHT APPLAUSE)

RAPUNZEL: Thank you... Thank you... Stick around. I'll be back in five... *(to Thyme)* Well, well, well. If it isn't Justin Thyme, fictional dick.

THYME: Hello, Rapunzel.

RAPUNZEL: It's been a long time, Thyme.

THYME: Too long.

RAPUNZEL: Is that a gun in your pocket Thyme, or are you just glad to see me?

THYME: It's a gun.

RAPUNZEL: *(disappointed)* Oh....

THYME: *(to audience)* Rapunzel was one of those dames who always had lousy luck with men. When I first knew her she was hooked up with an ugly little half-pint named Rupelstilskin. Nobody could ever figure what she saw in the creep. But, then again, trying to figure out a dame was like trying to unravel quantum physics while banging your head on a wall. Either way, all you end up with is a bunch of formulas and a headache.

RAPUNZEL: You done with the metaphors?

THYME: Yeah, I'm done... For now.

RAPUNZEL: What brings you all the way out here, Thyme?

THYME: I don't know how to tell ya this.

RAPUNZEL: Why don't you try stringing a few verbs and nouns together until they form a complete sentence.

THYME: *(to audience)* I gave it to her straight, because I knew that's the way she liked it. *(to Rapunzel)* Dumpty's dead.

RAPUNZEL: Too bad. How'd the little ovum buy it?

THYME: Fell off a wall. Had a great fall.

RAPUNZEL: Doesn't make sense.

THYME: Why's that?

RAPUNZEL: Dumpty was afraid of heights.

THYME: How come?

RAPUNZEL: He was an egg. You do the math.

THYME: You don't seem too broken up.

RAPUNZEL: Dumpty and me weren't exactly what you would call sunny side up.

THYME: Another dame?

RAPUNZEL: I told him to beat it. Doctor's orders.

THYME: Doctor's orders?

RAPUNZEL: My cholesterol was outta sight.

THYME: Did he seem different lately?

RAPUNZEL: How different could he be? He was an egg. They're a dollar eighty nine a dozen.

THYME: Where were you around one o'clock?

RAPUNZEL: Yeah, sure. Stick it to old Rapunzel. Right, Thyme? Just like the old days.

THYME: *(to audience)* Rapunzel and me had what you might call a love-hate relationship. She loved hating me and I hated ... But that's another story for another time in another place during another episode about another case where.....

(Rapunzel slaps him)

THYME: Hey, what's that for?

RAPUNZEL: You were runnin' on.

THYME: You liked doing that, didn't ya?

RAPUNZEL: Almost as much as you liked me doing it.

THYME: *(to audience)* Rapunzel was right... I did like it... There was just something about getting socked in the jaw by a gorgeous dame that made you feel alive.

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