

*(An excerpt from...)*

THE BIG SNOOZE  
A Justin Thyme Mystery  
By Bruce Kane

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THE BIG SNOOZE  
A Justin Thyme Mystery  
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Our story takes place ONCE UPON A TIME in PARADISE BAY, a magical land where bon bons play. The setting can be anything from a brightly lit stage to one filled with cartoon like trees, flowers and gingerbread houses.

CHARACTERS:

JUSTIN THYME: Tough talking, hard boiled Bogart like private eye.

EFFIE: Thyme’s over developed secretary.

KOP: Older than Thyme, dressed like a Keystone Kop, has a slight Irish or Scottish accent.

RAPUNZEL: Beautiful, sexy with a lot of hair piled high on her head.

BIG JACK JOHNSON: A Munchkin.

B.B. WOLFE: Gruff talking crime kingpin.

RED RIDING HOOD: Tall, leggy, sexy. Lots of attitude.

VERONICA VIRAGO: Tough, sexy, dressed in black, gives wicked stepmothers a bad name.

MARY: Angry gardener.

BO PEEP: Young, sexy shepherdess.

BAMBI: Young, shallow and incredibly gorgeous.

ECHO: Off stage voice

PRINCE CHARMING: Handsome and arrogant.

SCREAMING WOMAN: Woman who screams.

*LIGHTS UP*

*(A WOMAN ENTERS. She looks out over the audience, sees something horrible, screams and runs off.)*

MUSIC: BLUESY SAXOPHONE

*(JUSTIN THYME ENTERS wearing a trench coat and fedora. He speaks to the audience)*

THYME: It ended like most of my cases... happily ever after. But it began, once upon a time in a land of champagne wishes and caviar dreams. I'd just wrapped up the Moby Dick murder case. The white whale did it, when Effie my overdeveloped secretary with the underdeveloped typing skills pulsated into my office .

*(EFFIE pulsates in. You can add drum beats to emphasize her walk)*

EFFIE: Ya gotta lettah.

THYME: Who's it from apple cheeks?

EFFIE: Some guy calls himself Dumpty.

THYME: *(to audience)* William Jefferson Dumpty was an old friend. He'd helped me out a few years back when a gorgeous young dame had gone missing. I searched everywhere for her . When it comes to finding gorgeous dames, I make it a point to give it my best shot. But I never found her. It's the one case that always haunted me. I told Effie to read the letter. *(to Effie)* Go ahead cumquat knees. Read it.

EFFIE: Readin' ain't in my job description.

THYME: Just what is in your job description, grapefruit cheeks?

EFFIE: You oughta know. You wrote it.

THYME: Oh yeah. *(to audience)* The reading part must have slipped my mind during the interview. I told Effie to give me the letter. *(to Effie)* Why don't you give me that. *(Effie hands him the letter.)* She did. I told her "thanks." *(to Effie)* Thanks..

EFFIE: No problem.

THYME: *(to audience)* She said.

EFFIE: If ya need me, just whistle.

THYME: *(to audience)* She added.

EFFIE: You know how to whistle, don'tcha? You just put your lips together and...

THYME: And what?

EFFIE: You're the gumshoe. You figure it out.

*(Effie pulsates out to more drum beats)*

THYME: *(to audience)* I watched Effie pulsate out of my office, rolled my tongue back into the general vicinity of my mouth and opened the letter. I was right. Dumpty had some news about the missing frail but he couldn't put it down in writing. He sounded scared. Very scared... He said for me to meet him as soon as I could. He said he'd be sittin' on the dock of the bay, watchin' the tide roll away. I immediately packed my fedora and saxophone accompaniment and had Effie book me a one way ticket on the Good Ship Lollipop. Destination Peppermint Bay.... *(Thyme crosses the stage)* It was one of those playgrounds for the rich and famous where bons bon play on the sunny beach.

*(A KOP, dressed like a Keystone Kop, enters shooing away some unseen onlookers)*

KOP: Move it along... Move it along... This is a crime scene not a parade float.

THYME: Let me guess. Dumpty.

KOP: 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.

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

THYME: How'd he buy it?

KOP: Sat on that wall. Had a great fall. 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?

KOP: Budget cuts.

THYME: When did it happen?

KOP: Sometime before one o'clock.

THYME: Who found him?

KOP: Hickory Dickery Dock.

THYME: Who's Hickory Dickory Dock?

KOP: A mouse?

THYME: A mouse?

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

THYME: Why?

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

THYME: You could that say that.

KOP: I just did.

THYME: He asked me to meet him here. He had some information on a case we worked a long time ago.

KOP: Case?

THYME: Yeah, case. The name's Thyme... Justin Thyme. I work for the F.B.I.

KOP: The F.B.I.?

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

KOP: You mean...?

THYME: That's right, I'm a fictional detective. Know if Dumpty had any next of kin livin' around here?

KOP: I don't know if you'd call her next of kin, but word was Dumpty was living with a woman out on Happy Meadow Road.

THYME: Sounds like Dumpty, alright. Maybe, I'll just give her a call.

KOP: I hear she's a real looker.

THYME: Then I'll definitely give her a call. *(to audience)* In my experience, nine times outta ten, a guy gets scrambled, it's usually a dame handlin' the whisk.

KOP: *(to unseen onlookers)* Alright, move it along... Move it along. This is a crime scene not a pop up book. *(exits)*

THYME: *(to audience)* I found Dumpty's dump out on Happy Valley Road. I rang the bell.

SOUND: A DISNEY LIKE SONG

*(RAPUNZEL ENTERS. She's a beautiful woman with long hair piled high on top of her head.)*

THYME: The door was answered by a dame with a body that wouldn't quit... or even take a few minutes off.

RAPUNZEL: Well, well, well. If it isn't Justin Thyme, fictional dick.

THYME: Hello Rapunzel. (*to audience*) I called her Rapunzel because that was her name.

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 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 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 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 sunny side up, if you get my drift.

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: Any idea who'd want Dumpty dead?

RAPUNZEL: Not a clue.

THYME: Where were you when Dumpty took the dive?

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. *(to Rapunzel)* I didn't come out here to reminisce about the good old days, Rapunzel. I'm here about Dumpty. He wrote me a letter. Said he knew something about the skirt that went missing once upon a time. Know anything about that?

RAPUNZEL: News to me.

THYME: *(to audience)* I told Rapunzel if she could think of anything that might help me find Dumpty's killer, to let me know. She said she'd do that.

RAPUNZEL: I'll do that.

THYME: *(to audience)* I told her I'd be back. *(to Rapunzel)* I'll be back. *(to audience)* She said not to wait so long, next time.

RAPUNZEL: Don't bother.

*(Rapunzel exits.)*

THYME: *(to audience)* Having broken the bad news to Rapunzel, I decided to head back to Paradise Bay to see what I could see. At the beginning of every case I like to look around, see what I can see and what I can't see. What you can't see is often as important as what you can see. Only problem is you can't see it. I was on a lonely and deserted stretch of road when I heard a pssssting sound.

SOUND: SOMEONE GOING 'PSSSSTTT.'

THYME: I looked around to see what it was and where it was coming from. That's when I saw hiim. He stood about three feet high, wearing a red tunic, blue tights and a yellow cloth cap that came to a point and then tilted over to one side.

*(BIG JACK JOHNSON ENTERS. A normal sized man, he shuffles in on his knees which happen to have shoes attached to them to make him look like a munchkin)*

THYME: You pssssting at me?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: There's only the two of us... Who else would I be pssssting, Judy Garland?

THYME: What do you want?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: You the guy asking around about Dumpty?

THYME: You know him?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Yeah... I knew him... You could say he was a good egg.

THYME: You could say that. I never would.

BIG JACK JOHNSON: I heard him and Wolfe got into it big time.

THYME: Wolfe?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Yeah... B. B. Wolfe.

THYME: The blues singer?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: No, that's B.B. King.

THYME: Who's this Wolfe guy?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Runs just about everything in Peppermint Bay. Not a good idea to get on his bad side and he doesn't have a good side.

THYME: Is that so?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: That's so. Last week he foreclosed on three little porkers when their mortgage came due. When they wouldn't move out, he blew their house down.

THYME: Brought in a wrecking ball?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: No... He huffed and he puffed and blew the place down.

THYME: So, when did this Wolfe and Dumpty have their set to?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: A couple of days before somebody cracked Dumpty's shell.

THYME: Know what they were arguing about?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Couldn't hear over all the whistling.

THYME: Whistling?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Yeah... We whistle while we work... Company regulations. We took it to the union, but so far nothing.

THYME: Thanks... You've been a big help.

BIG JACK JOHNSON: By the way, you seen Dumpty's old lady?

THYME: Yeah, I seen her. What's it to you?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: She start datin' yet?

THYME: Why do you care?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: I was thinkin' of paying her a little call. I hear she likes her men... well, kinda...

THYME: Short?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: Diminutive. If you happen to see her again, tell her Big Jack Johnson says hello.

THYME: Who's Big Jack Johnson?

BIG JACK JOHNSON: I am.

THYME: I thought you guys all had names like...

BIG JACK JOHNSON: (*angrily*) Like what?

THYME: Nothin'... Nothin.' I'll let her know.

BIG JACK JOHNSON: You do that. (*He shuffles off whistling*)

THYME: I decided to head out to Wolfe Fine Mining And Dining, high in the Cotton Candy Mountains. It was an unusual combination of fine cuisine and open hole quarrying. Diners could enjoy a fine escargot while watching little men with lights on their head haul heavy rocks out of the ground.

*(WOLFE, a tough looking man chomping on a cigar enters shouting angrily to someone offstage)*

WOLFE: The other way. It goes the other way. *(turns to Thyme)* And he wonders why everyone calls hiim Dopey

THYME: Are you the man in charge?

WOLFE: Who's askin'?

THYME: *(to audience)* I flashed my badge. *(flashes his badge)* I found it saved a lot of time and needless conversation.

WOLFE: What's that?

THYME: My badge.

WOLFE: Badge? Badge for what?

THYME: For who I am and what I do?

WOLFE: Who are you and what do you do?

THYME: My name's Thyme. I work for the Fictional Bureau of Investigation.

WOLFE: Why didn't you say so in the first place? We coulda saved a lot of time and needless conversation.

*(The play continues...)*

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