

# THE 4TH DIGIT

## By Gary Ray Stapp

Copyright © 2009 by Gary Ray Stapp, All rights reserved.  
ISBN: 1-60003-427-6

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

*Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC*

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

## CHARACTERS

ALICE

A middle-age lady

CYNTHIA

A young woman

OFFICER

A city police officer

## SCENE

A quiet, secluded area of a public park.

## TIME

The present. Late Afternoon.

Do Not Copy

## THE 4TH DIGIT

by  
Gary Ray Stapp

**SETTING:** We are in secluded area of a public park, a place hidden by lots of trees and bushes. At Center is a park bench with a small blue box sitting on it. At Stage Left is a trash can.

**AT RISE:** ALICE sits on the far left of the bench, staring at the box at the opposite end. SHE holds one hand over her mouth. SHE is somewhat breathless.

ALICE: (SHE stares at the box for a beat, then cautiously scoots down the bench just far enough to lean over and pick up the box with her outstretched hand. SHE looks around to be sure SHE is not watched, then cautiously opens it up and looks inside.) Ooooooo! (SHE snaps the lid back in place, recklessly returns the box to the bench, quickly stands and moves SL a few steps, continuously staring at the box.)

(CYNTHIA enters SL, walks past ALICE.)

CYNTHIA: Hello. Are you sitting here? (indicates the bench) Ma'am?  
.... Hello?...Are you alright?

ALICE: ---Yes....

CYNTHIA: Are you sure?

ALICE: ---No...

CYNTHIA: Ma'am, you look somewhat pale. Perhaps you should sit  
down—

ALICE: NO!

CYNTHIA: Why not?

ALICE: (SHE points) That box—

CYNTHIA: This box? Is it yours?

ALICE: No.

CYNTHIA: Who's is it?

ALICE: I'm not sure.

CYNTHIA: What's in it?

ALICE: I—I can't say.

CYNTHIA: You didn't look?

ALICE: I looked ... twice. I wish I hadn't looked.

CYNTHIA: You looked twice? But wish you hadn't looked? Why did  
you look the second time?

ALICE: I was curious.

CYNTHIA: Your curiosity should have been satisfied the first time you looked.

ALICE: If you must know, I was curious as to whether my mind played a trick on me.

CYNTHIA: I'm sorry, it's none of my business why you looked, or how many times you looked, or what's even in the box to begin with. So, what's in the box?

ALICE: I can't say.

CYNTHIA: But you looked inside twice. Why can't you say what's in there?

ALICE: I don't want to say what's in there.

CYNTHIA: It can't be that bad. It's a very nice box.

ALICE: It is a nice box.

CYNTHIA: It's actually a very pretty blue box.

ALICE: Yes—it's Tiffany's.

CYNTHIA: Oh, then you do know who's box it is!

ALICE: No. I don't think so. I hope not.

CYNTHIA: But you just said it was Tiffany's.

ALICE: It's FROM Tiffany's. The jewelry store.

CYNTHIA: Ah! Tiffany's! Wow, no wonder you're dazed. It's probably very valuable, isn't it?

ALICE: Yes ... particularly valuable to one person.

CYNTHIA: I've got to look!

ALICE: Don't look!

CYNTHIA: You looked!

ALICE: I was curious!

CYNTHIA: Okay, so now I'm curious. (*SHE picks up the box.*)

ALICE: Don't say I didn't warn you.

CYNTHIA: How bad can it be? What's inside here sparkles doesn't it?

ALICE: A part of it does.

CYNTHIA: It will make me gasp, won't it?

ALICE: I'm sure of it.

CYNTHIA: (*SHE opens box and gasps.*) Ahhhaa! (*SHE quickly closes the lid shut and returns the box to the bench and moves away a few steps SR, staring at it.*) That's a—there's a---

ALICE: Sparkles, doesn't it?

CYNTHIA: I don't know ... I didn't notice.

ALICE: You should look again.

CYNTHIA: I – I don't want to. (*SHE moves back to the box.*)

ALICE: But you're going to.

CYNTHIA: I – I can't help it. I have to make sure.

ALICE: Why?

CYNTHIA: Because I'm curious.

ALICE: Your curiosity should have been satisfied the first time you opened the box. Seems like I've heard that somewhere before.

CYNTHIA: I'm wondering if my mind played a trick on me!

ALICE: Welcome to my world.

CYNTHIA: (*picks up the box and cautiously removes the lid*) Oh my, gosh! That's—that's gross!

ALICE: At least three carats, I'd guess.

CYNTHIA: No—I meant the—

ALICE: I know what you meant. It really sparkles, doesn't it?

CYNTHIA: Yes ... and no.

ALICE: It is rather grotesque, isn't it?

CYNTHIA: Yes ... I wonder who it belongs to.

ALICE: What what belongs to?

CYNTHIA: You know what!

ALICE: Then say it out loud.

CYNTHIA: Why?

ALICE: So I know I'm not crazy.

CYNTHIA: I can't say it.

ALICE: Can't or won't?

CYNTHIA: Does it matter? I think I should take it to the police.

ALICE: I don't think so. After all, I found it first. I should be the one to take it to the police.

CYNTHIA: No. I don't think that's such a good idea.

ALICE: It was your idea.

CYNTHIA: I—I changed my mind. Look—lady—I—

ALICE: Alice. My name is Alice.

CYNTHIA: Okay, Alice. I know this is going to sound a little bizarre ... but ... I think I recognize that ring.

ALICE: Really? You recognize it?

CYNTHIA: Yes, Alice.

ALICE: Is it the style that is familiar, or its obvious value?

CYNTHIA: The style. I have no idea what its worth.

ALICE: I can tell you what its worth---Miss---?

CYNTHIA: Cynthia ... you can call me Cynthia.

ALICE: Cynthia—that ring has a retail value of twenty-three thousand five-hundred dollars.

CYNTHIA: Twenty-three thousand, five hundred dollars?

ALICE: And seventy-seven cents.

CYNTHIA: That's being rather exact. How do you know it's not eighty-seven cents?

ALICE: Because it's mine ... I bought it three months ago.

CYNTHIA: You bought THAT ring? Three months ago?

ALICE: Yes, Cynthia, I did.

CYNTHIA: Then, Alice, why did you say and act as though you had no idea what was in the box.

ALICE: Because of that other thing—in there.

CYNTHIA: At least you can't "claim" that that belongs to you.

ALICE: Obviously.

CYNTHIA: And what would you say if I told you that I recognize the other "thing."

ALICE: I don't know what I would say. I'd probably be speechless.

CYNTHIA: Well, just so you know. I recognize it.

ALICE: I don't believe you.

CYNTHIA: I thought you were going to be speechless.

(OFFICER enters SR.)

ALICE: Oh, dear—

OFFICER: Good afternoon, ladies.

CYNTHIA: (*quickly sits the box down on the bench*) It's NOT mine!

OFFICER: What's not yours?

ALICE: That box. It's not hers.

OFFICER: Okay—

CYNTHIA: (*to ALICE*) It's not yours either!

ALICE: I know that! I told you that!

CYNTHIA: It's not her box, either, Officer.

OFFICER: Okay, then who's box is it?

ALICE: We don't know.

OFFICER: What's in it?

CYNTHIA and ALICE: We can't say.

OFFICER: Oh, you didn't look?

ALICE: We didn't say we didn't look.

OFFICER: Then why can't you say what's in it?

CYNTHIA: We don't want to.

OFFICER: Okay, so where did you find it?

ALICE: I found it right there ... right where it is. It was sitting there, alone, all by itself ... no one around.

OFFICER: It's a pretty fancy box. I can't imagine why someone would just walk away and leave it here.

CYNTHIA: I'm sure it wasn't intentional.

ALICE: It's Tiffany's ... the jewelry store.

OFFICER: Ah ... and I suppose it's empty, right?

ALICE: What are you implying, officer?

CYNTHIA: It's not empty.

ALICE: Why don't you open it and see for yourself?

OFFICER: I'll do just that. (*OFFICER picks up the box and opens it, stares at it for a few beats, then looks at the women.*) There's a finger in here.

ALICE: And wearing a diamond ring.

OFFICER: (*looks again.*) A severed finger to be exact.

CYNTHIA: Gee, nothing gets past you, does it, Officer?

OFFICER: I suppose neither of you know who's finger this is?

CYNTHIA: Well, (*holds up her hands*) --it's not mine!

ALICE: Or mine! (*SHE holds up her hands.*) All digits accounted for!

OFFICER: Okay, I'm going to need your names.

ALICE: I'm Alice---Smith.

OFFICER: Smith, huh?

CYNTHIA: Why do you need our names? That box is not ours. We didn't put it there.

OFFICER: As witnesses. There will have to be an investigation. Your name?

CYNTHIA: Cynthia---Smith.

OFFICER: Uh-huh ... I suppose you two are related?

ALICE: No, but Cynthia and I do seem to have a lot in common, Officer. We both like sparkly jewelry, and we recognize a severed finger when we see one.

OFFICER: I'm going to need to see some identification.

CYNTHIA: That figures. (*SHE takes out her wallet from her purse*) In that case, I just remembered, my last name isn't Smith. (*hands officer her I.D.*)

OFFICER: Really?

CYNTHIA: I've recently divorced. I used to be a Smith. That was my husband's name. His last name. Not his first.

OFFICER: You seem very nervous, Cynthia—Kennedy.

ALICE: Kennedy?

CYNTHIA: Nervous? No, I'm not nervous. I have nothing to be nervous about. That ring isn't mine.

OFFICER: I didn't say it was. Although it looks as though it might fit your finger. (*hands her back her I.D.*)

CYNTHIA: Whatever.

OFFICER: What about you Alice SMITH?

ALICE: What about me what?

OFFICER: Your identification?

ALICE: Oh, of course. (*SHE takes her I.D. from her purse and hands it to the officer.*)

OFFICER: Any confessions you would like to make?

ALICE: Confessions? No ... no I didn't even know she lost her finger.

OFFICER: She who?

ALICE: Mrs.---uh ... Mrs. Whosit, who's a fourth digit shy of a full hand.

OFFICER: You seem a little nervous as well— (*looks at I.D.*) --Mrs.--  
Smith?!

ALICE: I'm not nervous! I'm upset! I just discovered a corpse!

OFFICER: It's not a corpse.

CYNTHIA: Tell that to the finger.

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from THE 4<sup>TH</sup> DIGIT by Gary Ray  
Stapp. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please  
contact us at:***

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC**

**P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406**

**Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011**

**[www.brookpub.com](http://www.brookpub.com)**