

# HOT DAMES, HOT LEAD

By Jim Gustafson

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## CHARACTERS

*Note: Since this is a radio play the voice is more important than the physical appearance. The descriptions are for vocal characteristics.*

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| CATFISH KING   | tough sounding                        |
| LOLA   | sexy voice like Kathleen Turner       |
| ANNOUNCER  | stereotype baritone                   |
| BIG BILL MULLIN  | blustery; exaggerated expression      |
| BULLFROG   | Southern twang like "Foghorn Leghorn" |
| RACCOON MONTGOMERY                                     | hillbilly-like                        |
| 1, 2, or 3 FEMALE COMMERCIAL<br>JINGLE SINGERS/READERS | sweet sopranos                        |
| PROFESSOR NOBODSKI                                     | timid and meek                        |
| SOUND EFFECTS PERSON                                   | non-speaking                          |
| ORGANIST   | non-speaking                          |
| STAGE HAND   | non-speaking                          |
| BOBOLINK SOAP GIRL                                     | sweet and lyrical voice               |
| VOICE FROM CAR   | whiny male                            |
| LEROY  | street savvy guy                      |
| VOICE ON PHONE   | excited and stupid sounding           |
| JIMMY THE SHINE BOX                                    | "Brooklyn Punk" accent                |
| VOICE IN ALLEY   | male whispery                         |
| SUNBEAM STEAM IRON<br>ANNOUNCER                        | bright tenor                          |
| SADIE DEAL   | tough and older sounding woman        |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| BIG TUNA              | wheezy sounding, like it's hard to breathe |
| KID                   | small voice                                |
| CRASHIN' ANNIE BURNES | tough but sweet                            |
| CELEBRITY SPOT GIRL   | ditzzy sounding                            |
| SUNSHINE VALLEY MAYOR | boisterous                                 |
| MESSENGER BOY         | small voice                                |
| FEMALE VOICE          | nasal sounding                             |
| GERMAN AMBASSADOR     | haughty with German accent                 |

## **THERE CAN BE DOUBLING AND TRIPLING IN CASTING**

### **SUGGESTED STAGING**

The stage is set up like an "Old Time Radio Studio." There are groups of chairs for the actors to sit on when they aren't reading. Four microphones are on stands. Two are center stage for the "Main Readings." One is set a little to stage right for the "Announcer" and the fourth is near the corner at stage left for the "Commercial Performers." The chairs for the performers are clustered near or behind each microphone.

Behind the fourth microphone stand is an Organ (Façade) with an electronic Keyboard hidden in it. (Optional: A piano can be on stage next to the organ, or the electronic keyboard could be "switched" to the piano mode.)

A relatively large area up stage right is set up for the "Sound Effects" man. This will have a table and all the props and gadgets used to create the sound effects. If the gadgets are relatively spread out you can add more physical comedy as the actor struggles to get the effects in place. This area has microphones as needed to amplify the effects.

Naturally you'll need an "On the Air" light up sign and you could add "Applause," "Say Ohhh!" and "Laughter" light up signs for fun.

## **DIRECTOR NOTES**

*Be aware this is "Theater of the Mind" so the vocal inflection is important.*

### **SOUND EFFECTS**

Since the availability of "Gadgets" for producing sound effects may be limited you can use your imagination for some items. Going on line and "Googling" terms like "Radio Sound Effects," "Creating Old Time Radio Sound Effects," and "Old Time Radio Sound Effect techniques" you can find a number of sites that will explain how to create them. You can also get CD's with hundreds of prerecorded sound effects to supplement the stage effects (with the recorded effects the "Sound Effects Man" goes through the motions" pantomiming as the effect is played through the audio board.

### **MUSIC FOR THE COMMERCIALS AND THE PROGRAM**

The Radio show music is generally single "organ" chords that are played to add emphasis or punctuation to scene or line of dialogue. These would be a major or minor chord which are usually programmed in even an inexpensive electronic keyboard. If your show band director is involved he/she can easily create a score.

The commercial "Jingles" would be "made up/ad libbed" tunes that will vary by the number of "Commercial Vocalist/Actors" cast and the vocal range available. They can be either accompanied by the organ/piano (preferred) or done a cappella.

### **COSTUMES**

Clothes from the 1930's (Actors could dress like their characters but it's not necessary). Announcer in a tuxedo.

### **PRODUCTION HISTORY**

#### **BROADCAST**

WGMU Fairfax VA  
WNCU Durham, N.C.  
El Paso (Don't recall the station)

#### **IN RECORDING**

One Act Audio Theater Productions (In Production)

**LIVE ON STAGE** It's been done four times, but I don't recall where specifically. One was a theater in the Poconos and three other times were high schools . . . in central Illinois, Southern Ohio and Central Florida

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**EPISODE ONE**

**“It All Began Like Every Other Day...”**

*(lonely saxophone/organ blues music)*

CATFISH KING: It felt like one of those mornings after a night of Gumbo, Jambalaya, and a cold drink . . . but the sun had already driven across the sky and parked beyond the horizon . . . I guess I lost another day to the pleasures of “The Big Easy.”

*(SFX-tablets dropping in water glass and fizzing like a “Bromo”)*

The humidity hung in the air and clung to my face like wet fur.

*(SFX-old rotating fan . . . papers rustling)*

Over in the corner of my dumpy office, a \$10.95 fan churned, lifting the police reports off my desk so they stuck to my forearms like wallpaper.

*(SFX-slow soft bass drum pounding like a heartbeat)*

My head throbbed so hard I almost hoped a crazed Cajun would step through my door and put a .38 caliber aspirin between my eyes . . . just to put me out of my misery. I’m Catfish King . . . Private gumshoe . . . A guy who’s paid to crawl around in other people’s dirt so they don’t have to soil their manicured nails. It ain’t a pretty job but somebody’s got to do it. For 125 bucks a day and expenses, I’ll stir the garbage respectable people leave in the wake on their drive to get to the top of the heap in politics, business, or high society. It all began on that hot, muggy August night when *she* walked in . . .

*(SFX-door latch turning . . . door opening. SFX-high heels on a wooden floor . . . segue to sultry music)*

One look and I knew some high-class fat cat wanted the low down skinny on somebody . . . This broad looked like the arm candy you

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find with dude who's got the kind'a bucks it takes to hire a slob like me to do the kind of work I do . . . Catfish King's the name . . . Danger's the game.

*(musical sting)*

LOLA: *(in sexy Lauren Bacall/Kathleen Turner voice)* You Catfish King?

CATFISH: Could be . . . Who's asking?

LOLA: Doesn't matter. I need a shamus to stir the pot for information . . . And the talk is "When you need answers . . . Catfish King's the guy?"

CATFISH: The talk is right!

LOLA: Good . . . My time's valuable . . . So let's get down to brass tacks.

CATFISH: So's mine . . . The meter's running, ah . . . ah . . .

*(SFX-sound of a taxi meter arm being turned)*

LOLA: Just call me Lola and leave at that!

CATFISH: It's your dime, Beautiful . . . Would you like to wet your whistle while we get acquainted?

LOLA: First, you can put your eyeballs back in your head and act like it isn't the first time you've talked to a lady, Hot Shot . . . I got a B.S. from Radcliffe, an MBA from Harvard, and a bad attitude about guys who try to sweet talk me . . . I'm here 'cuz I need the low-down for an up-state politician . . . You got a problem with that?

CATFISH: Government, huh! You're talking about the big league now . . . You got a beef with the "Pork Peddlers"?

LOLA: Maybe . . . Maybe not . . . That's what you gotta to find out.

CATFISH: How high up the political pole do you want me to shinny, Toots?

LOLA: The Senate ought to be far enough.

*(dramatic organ chord)*

CATFISH: Whoa . . . Come on, Sweetheart . . . Walk with me . . . Talk with me . . . *(SFX-door opening)* Share your story about these senatorial shenanigans outside . . . The walls have ears when the topic of politics comes up. I'll hear your story on a stroll on Rampart Street, so's I can see if anybody's tailing ya, if you get my drift.

LOLA: You're a careful man, Catfish King . . . I like that.

*(SFX-street sounds . . . high heels and a man's shoes on a concrete sidewalk . . . cars and people in the background . . . periodically the*

*sound of jazz or “Honky Tonk music” comes and goes as they walk by various bars.)*

CATFISH: Let’s hear what you got, Toots . . . A little capitalizing in the Capitol at the taxpayer’s expense?

LOLA: What would you say if I told you I was the personal secretary of Senator Bullfrog “Bring Home The Bacon” Bodiene? . . .

CATFISH: I’d say, “Nice work if you can get it” . . .

LOLA: Well, I got it and I want to keep it . . . Bullfrog’s a good man . . .

CATFISH: I don’t know if Bullfrog’s good for the USA but, he earned that “Bring Home The Bacon” moniker with the pork he’s plunked here in the home state . . .

LOLA: He’s a wheeler-dealer . . . but he never took a dime for himself . . . He’s the son of preacher man and his books are as honest as the Good Book he reads every night.

CATFISH: So what’s the problem . . . Sounds like Bullfrog’s clean as a fresh diapered baby . . .

LOLA: He’s not the problem . . . It’s his chief of staff, Big Bill Mullin who has me mulling over the problems.

LEROY: *(as voice in distance . . .)* Hey, Catfish . . . Catfish . . .

CATFISH: Big Bill, heh . . . I wouldn’t trust him to count the pennies from a gum ball machine.

LOLA: Well, Bullfrog trusts him with everything and I think something’s cooking.

CATFISH: Talkin’ about cookin’, hold it a second, Toots . . . Leroy . . . You got my package?

LEROY: That’s why I been calling at you, Catfish . . . I got it right here but I’m telling ya . . . You gotta get off the sauce, man it’s gonna kill ya.

CATFISH: Here’s your ten bucks . . . Gimme the sauce and hold the advice . . . Now beat it, bro . . .

LOLA: I heard you were hard case but nobody told me you were a tippler . . .

CATFISH: What are you ta . . . ??? . . . Oh, me an’ the sauce! . . . Wrong kind, babe . . . This is “*Chef Ahmed Jaamel Gumbo’s Hot Sauce*” from my Voodoo Buddy . . . You splash this stuff over a roasted rat and it’ll taste like pheasant.

LOLA: You get all your groceries off the street?

CATFISH: I’ll ask the questions . . . Look, I know Big Bill Mullin’s a skunk but what’s curling your hair about the guy?

LOLA: I think he’s after Bullfrog’s job . . . And Big Bill so low he’s not above doing anything . . . I’m sure he’s brewing up a scandal about the senator . . . You know anything about Bodiene Dam?

CATFISH: Heard of it . . . I read it’s one of the Senator’s pet projects . . .

LOLA: It is . . . Senator Bodiene lobbied to build a dam at the mouth of Taloola Creek.

CATFISH: That piddly little stream . . . It doesn't pass enough water to float a loan. What's a dam going in there for?

LOLA: Jobs . . . Jobs for Sunshine Valley . . . Bullfrog may waste Uncle Sam's money but he wastes it on good causes for his home state . . . He brings the bacon to his own and Sunshine Valley are his people . . . Since the cotton pickin' business moved to Mississippi, the people have been hurtin' there . . .

CATFISH: What cotton pickin' business moved outa that god-forsaken Sunshine Valley? . . .

LOLA: The business of pickin' cotton, you idiot.

CATFISH: Oh *that* cotton pickin' business. So what's snapping your garter about this?

LOLA: I think there's more to it than just a dam project . . . When I asked Bullfrog's chief of staff about it, Big Bill Mullin got his shorts in a knot . . . He told me it's none of my business . . . But around that office, *everything's* my business and Big Bill knows it . . . That's why I think there's more to this than meets the eye. I also overheard Mullin on the phone saying he was gonna take Bullfrog's seat in Congress when "This is over!"

CATFISH: When "What's over?"

LOLA: I don't know . . . That's where you come in. I don't want to see the senator get hurt . . .

CATFISH: Well, if Big Bill wants to stir up trouble for the Senator, he don't have to look too far for a stick . . . You know who Big Bill's brother-in-law is, don't you? Joe Don Jackson . . .

LOLA: Joe Don Jackson? The Attorney General of our sovereign state?

CATFISH: The one and only . . . and he's been Bullfrog's rival since they were in high school together . . . Now this makes an interesting kettle of fish . . . Big Bill saddling up with the Attorney General . . . and it's common knowledge Joe Don's hand is so deep in Raccoon Montgomery's pocket you can't see his cuff links.

LOLA: Wait a minute . . . Raccoon Montgomery? The head of the Cajun Cosa Noestra? . . .

CATFISH: That's right . . . The cracker racketeers . . . A bunch good ol' boys who saw too many Good Fella movies . . . Moonshine . . . Ladies of the night . . . Loan-sharking and gambling . . . These Backwoods Banditos are as stupid as they are crooked. But you put 'em all together they spell *trouble* . . . Tell me, Toots. Does anyone know you're on to something?

(SFX-screeching tires . . . racing car engine, gun fire . . . breaking glass . . .)

Duck . . . Git down . . .

*(SFX-racing car engine . . . machine gun fire, breaking glass . . . more gunfire and racing car fades away)*

LOLA: Holy Camoly! Blood . . . Everywhere . . . You're hit . . . Catfish! . . .  
. Catfish! Speak to me . . . *(hysterically)* Catfish . . . Oh, he's dead  
and it's all my fault . . .

*(dramatic organ chord . . . segue into dramatic music.)*

ANNOUNCER: Hot babes . . . Hot lead . . . They come with the territory  
. . . Is this the end of Catfish King? Is this where we pull the plug the  
on the Case of Bodiene Dam??!! Is Catfish at the end of his  
stringer??!! . . . Or does this Catfish still have eight more lives to  
live??!! . . . After a word from our Sponsor we'll have another exciting  
episode of . . . Catfish King . . . Private Gumshoe.

*(Catfish King Theme)*

## **END OF EPISODE ONE**

### **COMMERCIAL**

*(romantic music)*

FEMALE VOICE: *(seductively)* Another hard day around home? Relax .  
. . . Give in . . . Take it easy because you deserve better. Imagine  
slipping out that housedress and sliding into a steaming, soothing  
pool of bubble filled water. Close your eyes and fly away . . . Away  
to a sun drenched South Pacific Lagoon on an island of your own.  
Feel the warmth as the imported oils of the orient caress your skin .  
. . . The floral fragrance of tropical flowers surround you with every  
bursting Bobolink bubble. A cozy pillow of billowy bubbles snuggles  
around you and embraces you in the way you've longed to be held .  
. . . Every splash of water becomes a forbidden kiss . . . The silky  
smoothness of a bar Bobolink beauty soap nuzzles your neck like  
the touch of a lover. Is this bathing?. . . Or is it love? Bobolink bath  
bars, warm water and your imagination . . . Let Bobolink soap take  
you where you've never been before. A Bobolink girl understands  
that life is short . . . So live it to fullest.

ANNOUNCER: Bobolink Beauty Bars and Bubble Bath Immersions are  
available department stores near you. Bobolink Beauty Products  
make every bath a Flight of Fantasy.

*(pause)*

And now we return to Catfish King in “Hot Dames . . . Hot Lead”

## **EPISODE TWO**

### **“Curiosity Killed the Cat (fish)”**

ANNOUNCER: In our last episode, Catfish King, New Orleans Private Eye was hired by Lola LaRue, the personal secretary of Southern Senator Bullfrog Bodiene. Lola came to Catfish because she feared there was a sinister plot against the Senator . . . A plot hatched by his Chief of Staff, Big Bill Mullin and Raccoon Montgomery . . . The leader of the Cajun Cosa Nostra . . . backwoods bullies of disorganized crime. Lola just told Catfish of her concerns when a hail of gunfire ended our episode . . . and perhaps Catfish King’s career. Let’s back-track a couple of paces and pick up our story as Catfish and Lola stroll down a deserted New Orleans street while Lola spins her tale of intrigue.

*(SFX-street sounds . . . high heels and a man’s shoes on a concrete sidewalk . . . cars and people in the background . . .)*

CATFISH: Now that makes an interesting kettle of fish . . . Big Bill Mullin saddling up with his brother-in-law Joe Don Jackson the Attorney General . . . Everybody knows Joe Don is in cahoots with Raccoon Montgomery and his Cajun Cosa Nostra . . .

LOLA: Senator Bullfrog’s been trying to wipe out dis-organized crime in the state for years . . . But why would the Cajun Cosa Nostra be interested a government project like building Bodiene Dam?

CATFISH: The answer to that will be the key to everything, Sweetheart! Tell me, toots. Does anyone know you’re on to something?

*(SFX-racing car engine . . . machine gun fire . . . breaking glass . . . more gunfire and racing car fades away.)*

LOLA: Oh my goodness! Blood . . . Everywhere . . . You’re hit . . . Catfish! . . . Catfish! Speak to me . . .

*(dramatic organ chord . . . segue into dramatic music)*

LOLA: *(hysterically)* Catfish . . . Oh, he’s dead and it’s all my fault . . .

CATFISH: *(laughing)* Not a chance doll! This ain't blood . . . Those Cajun clowns just blasted my brand new bottle'a Chef Gumbo's Hot sauce and got it all over me . . . Oh-oh, Toots . . . Look out, they're turning around . . .

*(SFX-distant tire squealing and car approaching again)*

CATFISH: Hey, I got an idea . . . We can use this . . .

LOLA: Hey, hey . . . hey! Catfish . . . What are you doing? You're getting that Gumbo sauce all over me.

CATFISH: Easy, Toots, it looks just like blood . . . Now you lay down and hold still . . . Play dead . . . Those slugs had your name on 'em . . . Not mine . . . Make a move and they'll finish what they came for . . . Just keep a lid on the chatter and stay put . . . Let me do the talking . . . I'm gonna tell 'em your ticket got punched.

LOLA: No, Catfish . . . Don't go near them . . . They'll kill you . . .

CATFISH: It's not me they want, sister . . . Close those baby blues and play dead . . . Trust me . . . My hound's under the right tree tonight.

*(SFX-car approaches, screeches to a stop, car engine idling)*

CATFISH: *(shouting)* You killed her . . . You scum . . . She's dead as a doornail . . .

VOICE: You sure!

CATFISH: I better be . . . I'm a doctor . . .

VOICE: Thanks for the diagnosis . . . You saved us an extra bullet . . . Sorry about that, doc . . . *(said softer as though to someone in the car)* Good shooting, Pinky Ring! . . . Hey, Fat man . . . You didn't see nothing, now did you?

CATFISH: Nothing . . . Not a thing . . . I'm not even here . . .

VOICE: That's right, Fatso . . . You ain't even here . . . Let's get goin' and call the boss.

*(SFX-tires squeal and car races off . . .)*

CATFISH: *(under his voice)* You're in big trouble now, slime bag . . .

LOLA: Attempted murder!!! You better believe that spells trouble . . .

CATFISH: You don't get it, Toots. People are getting shot around me all the time . . . It's that "Fat man" remark that put the three-penny nail in his coffin . . . Come on, Sugar, let's get you my place and cleaned up. *(as the ANNOUNCER)* I took Lola home with me for the night . . . I'm sure those jokers would be all over her place like cream sauce on a French waiter's tuxedo. A couple shots of red eye calmed her nerves and put her lights out, pronto. I tucked her in the sack for a

little much needed shut eye. Then I made a couple'a phone calls to get my own scam rollin'. A classy dame on the lamb . . . A touch of scandal . . . A good shootin' . . . Just another day in the "Big Easy" I thought as I closed the book for the night.

ANNOUNCER: Meanwhile, in the Nation's capitol . . .

BIG BILL MULLIN: A little late for you tonight, isn't it Senator Bullfrog?

BULLFROG: I'm just leaving, Big Bill . . . You'll lock up on your way out, won't you?

BIG BILL: Sure, Senator . . . Good night . . . Give my regards to the Missus.

*(SFX-doorknob turning . . . door closing)*

RACCOON MONTGOMERY: I didn't think he was gonna leave . . . The boys should be calling any time . . .

BIG BILL: Come on in, Raccoon . . . Hey, Montgomery . . . Are you sure your Cajun Crackpots can do the job? . . .

RACCOON: A simple shootin' . . . No problem . . .

*(SFX-phone rings)*

BIG BILL: Big Bill Mullin . . . Bullfrog's chief of staff . . . Yeah . . . Yeah . . . It's for you.

RACCOON: Speak to me . . .

VOICE ON PHONE: The "Cat's In the Cradle."

RACCOON: What?

VOICE ON PHONE: The "Cat's In the Cradle."

RACCOON: What?

VOICE ON PHONE: The "Cat's In the Cradle" . . . That's the code.

RACCOON: Code for what?

VOICE ON PHONE: The code for we "We blasted the broad . . . Lola LaRue's pushin' up daisies", Boss. What? . . . Oh . . . Sorry Raccoon, Louie forgot to tell you the code. You know, in case the phone is bugged.

RACCOON: You idiots . . . If the phone's bugged you told the feds we snuffed a chick and you called me by name . . . You're so dumb you dazzle me!

*(SFX-slams the phone down)*

Every one of those clowns is about three doughnuts short of good dozen . . . You know that.

BIG BILL: But they got they job done, right? . . . Gimme that phone . . .  
I'm calling my brother-in law to make sure the Attorney General's  
office kills the investigation . . .

*(SFX-phone Rings)*

Who the blazes can that be?

*(SFX-phone being snatched up)*

Big Bill Mullin . . . Bullfrog's chief of staff . . . Yeah . . . Yeah . . . I was  
just gonna call you, Joe Don . . . Yeah . . . Yea, they're idiots . . . we  
know . . . well, no harm, no foul . . . Yeah, we got lucky this time . . .  
so you'll take care of it.

*(SFX-phone hanging up)*

RACCOON: All taken care of?

BIG BILL: Where did you find that gang of yours? Your *Grits for Brains*  
trigger man called and left a message . . . got that . . . *Left a*  
*message* . . . on the Attorney General's answering machine . . . "We  
whacked the dame . . . Raccoon and Big Bill want you to cover it up."

RACCOON: What do ya want? Ain't none what you'd call the sharpest  
knife in the drawer. They're "Bayou Boys" . . .

BIG BILL: More like Creole Clowns! Anyway, Joe Don got to it first . . . he  
clued in Sheriff Lugnut in Naw'leens so everything's copacetic.  
They're calling it a Mistaken Identity . . . accidental shooting . . . case  
closed.

RACCOON: So Lake Bullfrog and the floating casinos are on . . .

BIG BILL: You bet they are . . . There's nothing to stop us now! Let's  
get out'a here before some sees you.

*(organ music, music segue)*

ANNOUNCER: As day broke half a continent away . . .

CATFISH: *(as ANNOUNCER)* Then next morning I was up with chickens  
. . . and Lola was already making a pot of Java . . . and cleaning the  
kitchen . . .

CATFISH: I didn't think dames like you did housekeeping . . .

LOLA: I knew guys like you didn't . . . This is for self-preservation not  
because I enjoy to working like a domestic. I was afraid your coffee  
would poison me . . . this place is filthy.

CATFISH: I call it "lived in."

*(SFX-door being unlocked, safety chain coming off door)*

LOLA: Hey, Catfish . . . Where you going?

CATFISH: To get the newspaper and check my mail . . .

LOLA: Check your mail? At six in the morning?

CATFISH: (*shouting*) It's already noon in Paris!

(*SFX-footsteps on wooden stairs, apartment mailbox being unlocked and opened*)

(*as ANNOUNCER*) I got my newspaper and checked the mail box . . .  
. . . Good old, Charlie. I knew I could count on him . . . I grabbed  
today's edition of the *N'Orleans Gazette* and climbed the stairs back  
to my place . . .

(*SFX-footsteps on wooden stairs, rubber band being rolled off a newspaper. Rustling of a newspaper being opened and folded*)

(*as ANNOUNCER*) When I opened to the Obits I saw what I needed  
to see . . .

(*SFX-door opening . . . something frying and popping with the sound of dishes and pans being rattled.*)

(*as ANNOUNCER*) The smell eggs frying in the skillet greeted my  
return . . . It's nice to have a dame around the house . . . as long as  
it's a temporary arrangement.

LOLA: Find what you were looking for?

CATFISH: Yep . . . Here, check the bone yard tally on page 31 . . .

(*SFX-paper rustling*)

LOLA: What are you talking about? . . .

CATFISH: The Mortician's sports page . . . the OBITS . . . Miss Phi Beta  
Kappa . . .

LOLA: Are you nuts?

CATFISH: No. But *you're* dead . . .

LOLA: (*shocked*) Criminey, I am dead . . . Senator's Bullfrog Bodiene's  
secretary killed in drive-by shooting . . . She was apparently a victim  
of random violence . . . Catfish . . . I gotta call the paper . . . There's  
been a mistake.

CATFISH: No mistake . . . My buddy at the Gazette wrote the story for  
me.

LOLA: But my parents . . .

CATFISH: Forget about it . . . This is only in the city edition . . . No way this will get to Sunshine Valley.

LOLA: (*surprised*) How'd you know I was from Sunshine Valley?

CATFISH: It's my business to know . . . That's what I do!

LOLA: You're good, Kid. (*pause, then shocked*) Hey, look at this . . . Oh good grief, Catfish, I'm being cremated at noon . . . Why'd you go and do that?

CATFISH: I had to get rid of your body somehow . . . Ashes to Ashes and all that . . .

LOLA: Why did you do this? It's macabre . . . like I don't exist anymore . . .

CATFISH: You don't, Lola. That's the idea. Those punks who shot at ya last night won't be looking for you anymore . . . unless they want an urn. Read on . . .

LOLA: Police Chief Sheriff Luther Lugnut said he'll be personally in charge of investigation . . . Lugnut?

CATFISH: Sheriff Lugnut and Attorney General Joe Don Jackson are joined at the hip . . . This investigation's going nowhere, believe me! But I'll bet the shootin' and this dead end investigation have something to do with Big Bill Mullin and the Bodiene Dam project.

LOLA: They'll never believe this . . . The newspaper will find out I'm not really dead.

CATFISH: They'll believe what I tell 'em . . . and they'll believe this . . .

LOLA: My death certificate! . . . How?

CATFISH: Another friend in low places . . . My man at the morgue . . .

You're history, baby! Past your expiration date! Now I can go to work. Don't leave this place. Don't answer the phone. Don't answer the door.

(*SFX-door opening*)

LOLA: Where are you going?

CATFISH: Out.

LOLA: What are you gonna do?

CATFISH: Something important.

(*musical stinger*)

(*as ANNOUNCER*) When you're needin' the low down in this Delta Town there's only one place to go . . . *The Eight Ball* . . . A run-down pool and billiards dive over by the levee. For the price of a dab 'a shoe polish and hundred buck tip . . . Jimmy, the Shine Box . . . a stool pigeon . . . will sing like a canary. Jimmy's all ears and if it's happening South of the Mason Dixon, he knows about it.

*(SFX-clicking pool balls, pool room, noise, guys cheering, etc.)*

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: What do you need today, Catfish? A little buff and stuff?

CATFISH: Mostly stuff . . . The name Mullin ring any bells?

*(SFX-periodically JIMMY spits and makes the sound of his shoeshine rag “snapping”)*

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Yeah, plenty . . . mostly alarm bells. What's up?

CATFISH: I was hopin' you'd tell me.

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Big Bill Mullin and his no good brother-in-law have been skimming from the State Municipal funds . . . They squirreled away a few million here and there. That what you're looking for?

CATFISH: Jimmy . . . Jimmy, my boy! Common knowledge . . . tell me something I don't know . . . like what are they doing with all that dough?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Before or after?

CATFISH: Before or after what?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Before they get the money laundered by Raccoon Montgomery . . . or after when it's cleaner than nun's habit.

CATFISH: They're mixed up with the Cajun Cosa Noestra?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: They're mixed up *big time*, Catfish . . . *big time!*

CATFISH: You sure about that?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Got it straight from their Triggerman, Pinky Ring.

CATFISH: Pinky Ring . . . Where do I know that name from . . . Oh, yeah.

*(mysterious flashback music; repeat from drive by shooting scene with echo)*

VOICE: Thanks for the diagnosis. You saved us an extra bullet. Sorry about that, doc . . . *(said softer as though to someone in the car)* Good shooting, Pinky Ring! Hey, fat man . . . you didn't see nothing, now did you?

*(mysterious flashback music)*

CATFISH: Now I know where I heard that name. Tell me, what are they doing with the laundered money?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Buying land . . . acres of it . . .

CATFISH: Land? Where? Why?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: No idea, but I know where you can find out . . .  
. Sadie Deals Real Estate over on Pontchartrian Point.

CATFISH: Sadie Deals, huh?

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: You know her?

CATFISH: I heard the name. Thanks, Jimmy! I'm out'a here.

JIMMY THE SHINE BOX: Hey, Catfish . . . you be careful now.

Raccoon and his boys don't cotton to people poking their noses in their dealin's . . . you follow my thinkin'?

CATFISH: I follow.

*(music in dramatic organ chord; SFX-street sounds)*

*(as ANNOUNCER)* After slipping Jimmy a sawbuck, I blew that pop stand. The N'Orleans night was muggy as a wet goat. The stench of fish from the levee rose out'a the ground like night-crawlers. No sooner did I hit the street and . . .

VOICE: Hey, buddy . . . Got a match?

CATFISH: Sure. Here you go.

*(SFX-sound of feet running and the thud of a punch)*

ANOTHER VOICE: Get 'im!

CATFISH: What the . . . oooooomph!

*(SFX-a scuffle, punches, voices with ohs, ahs, ouches, the sound of a gun cocking)*

All right. That's it! Put the artillery away. You want my money, you got it.

VOICE: I don't want your money. I want you to meet my friend, up close and personal. Mr. King, meet Mr. Colt 45.

CATFISH: Nice gun, I'm sure. But I can't see it very good with the barrel pressed on the bridge of my nose.

VOICE: You don't have see nothing . . . as long you can hear, OK . . . and talk . . . OK . . . Now, why were you asking about Raccoon Montgomery and Big Bill Mullin?

CATFISH: I'm a naturally curious guy. What's it to ya?

VOICE: Funny guy, huh? Now let's try this one more time. Why were you asking about Raccoon Montgomery and Bullfrog's Chief of Staff?

*(SFX-sound of a revolver cocking)*

CATFISH: Let's just say I got an inquisitive mind . . .

VOICE: Oppps! Sorry, wrong answer.

*(SFX-gun shot; organ music)*

ANNOUNCER: A point blank shot . . . looks like Catfish King finally met his match when he took on the Cajun Cosa Nostra. With Catfish throttled, will Big Bill Mullin get his plot off the ground? Will Bullfrog Bodiene be run out'a office on a rail? Will Lola LaRue return from the dead to put a monkey wrench in the monkeyshines? After a word from our sponsor we'll have another breath-taking episode of *Catfish King, Private Gumshoe*.

*(Catfish King theme)*

## END OF EPISODE TWO

### COMMERCIAL

#### Sunbeam Steam Iron

ANNOUNCER: *(in a booming "announcer voice)* You're listening to *W-I-S-H Radio* in Cincinnati . . . 840 on the dial. Now a word from one our fine sponsors.

VOICE: Pfffft.

1,2 or 3 FEMALE VOICES: Goes the steam iron . . .

VOICE: Pfffft.

1,2 or 3 FEMALE VOICES: Goes the steam iron . . .

VOICE: Pfffft.

1,2 or 3 FEMALE VOICES: *(singing)* And wrinkles melt away.

VOICE: Pfffft. Pfffft!

CARLYLE: Turn regular tap water into wrinkle removing steam with the new Sunbeam steam and dry iron. Just in time for Christmas, men.

Give you wife or sweetheart a gift every woman wants.

FEMALE VOICE #1: Forget the flowers and the jewelry . . .

FEMALE VOICE #2: I can always buy a pretty dress myself . . .

FEMALE VOICE #3: Nothing says "I love you" like a steam iron.

ANNOUNCER: Discover how easy ironing can be. Designed to fit a woman's delicate hand. Make your man the envy of the office in his wrinkle free Sunbeam Steam Ironed clothes.

VOICE: Pfffft.

1,2 or 3 FEMALE VOICES: Goes the steam iron . . .

VOICE: Pfffft.

1,2 or 3 FEMALE VOICES: Goes the steam iron . . .

FEMALE VOICE: (*singing*) And wrinkles melt away.

VOICE: Pfffft. Pfffft!

ANNOUNCER: The Sunbeam steam and dry iron is available at Woolworth, Kresge and Ben Franklin Five and Dimes all around town.

### **EPISODE THREE**

#### **“Three Rules of Real Estate-Location . . . Location . . . Explosion!”**

ANNOUNCER: When we left Catfish King, Private Gumshoe, he was staring down the barrel of a Colt 45. He had just uncovered an important piece of information that linked the Cajun Cosa Noestra and Big Bill Mullin to a plot to unseat the popular Senator Bullfrog Bodiene. After a visit with Jimmy The Shine Box . . . a reliable stoolie, Catfish was on his way to Sadie Deal’s Real Estate office to get the goods on Crime Boss Raccoon Montgomery and Big Bill. As we pick up our story, Catfish has just been reeled in and is on the verge of meeting his maker.

*(SFX-sound of feet running and the thud of a punch)*

VOICE: Get ‘im!

CATFISH: What the . . . oooooomph!

*(SFX-scuffle, punches, voices with ohs, ahs, ouches, sound of a gun cocking)*

Nice gun, I’m sure . . . But I can’t see it very good with the barrel pressed on the bridge of my nose . . .

VOICE: You don’t have see nothing . . . as long you can hear OK . . . and talk OK . . . Now, why were you asking about Raccoon Montgomery and Big Bill Mullin?

CATFISH: I’m a naturally curious guy. What’s it to ya?

VOICE: Oppps . . . Sorry, wrong answer.

*(SFX-gun shot; organ music)*

Oh, too bad . . . I missed . . . but I'm sure you haven't missed the point of our little discussion, Mr. King. You stay on this investigation and you'll wind up in an urn . . . Just like Lola LaRue.

CATFISH: Say what? I can't hear anything with that dang gun going off by my ear.

VOICE: (*shouting*) I said "Drop the investigation or you're a dead man." Come on, boys, let's get out here.

(*SFX-body dropping*)

CATFISH: (*as ANNOUNCER*) My ears were ringin' like the complaint department phones at the post office, but I heard every word he said. I knew if they were serious about rubbin' me out, we wouldn't have that little dance. You don't "bluff a bluffer" in this racket. At least I knew they bought Lola's fake demise. Now I got an extra pair legs to work with me . . . and with Lola. Them's *great legs* . . .

(*musical sting; SFX-knock on the door*)

CATFISH: Lola . . . It's me . . . Catfish . . . Let me in.

(*SFX-knock on the door*)

Come on, Lola . . . ah . . . Six A.M. is noon in Paris! Nobody'd know I said that but you and me.

(*SFX-lock being opened and chain coming off a door*)

LOLA: What did your find out?

CATFISH: Plenty . . . but the best news is Big Bill and Raccoon believe you're nothing but canned ashes.

LOLA: Ouch . . . How'd you get the "shiner"?

CATFISH: I blocked a punch with my face. Here, now that you're dead, you can step out in disguise. I bought ya some new clothes and make up.

LOLA: What is this? A Mardi Gras costume? And you got enough make up for all four faces on Rushmore.

CATFISH: Just gotta cheapen you up a bit, Toots. Me with a classy broad raises eyebrows. Know what I mean?

LOLA: I can guess. Oh, no . . . hair coloring!

CATFISH: Those blond locks are a red flag, baby. From now on you're a raven-haired dame. Get the new get up on, we're going shopping for real estate. And don't spare the make-up . . . the more the merrier. (*as ANNOUNCER*) While Lola got changed and put on a

new face, I got the location of Sadie Deals Real Estate office and looked for my snub-nose .38.

*(SFX-drawers opening and closing)*

*(as the ANNOUNCER)* This crowd was playing for keeps so I figured a I'd pack a little hardware of my own. *(as himself)* Hey, you about ready? We gotta hit the bricks.

LOLA: I'm ready . . .

*(SFX-door opens . . . sultry music)*

CATFISH: Lordy, Lordy . . . Be still my beating heart. *(as ANNOUNCER)* What a dish! In that tailored business outfit all the assets of this bank were in the vault. But with the fashion statement I bought her, this dame turned out to be 24 carat gold. She was so hot, she scorched the furniture just by walkin' past it.

CATFISH: Believe this! Nobody's gonna mistake you for Lola LaRue.

LOLA: I look like a hooker.

CATFISH: You look great! Totally different . . . how do feel?

LOLA: This will take some gettin' used to. I never wore fishnet stockings. Never had a skirt this high or a blouse this low.

CATFISH: That's what I figured. Come on, *Maggie!*

LOLA: Who?

CATFISH: Maggie. You're my niece.

LOLA: Your niece? Right . . . like anybody's gonna believe that.

CATFISH: My dear, you be surprised how many gentlemen claim to have a niece that looks like this. Let's go. *(as ANNOUNCER)* On the way to Sadie Deal's Real Estate, I told Lola . . . a.k.a Maggie . . . how Big Bill Mullin and Raccoon Montgomery had been laundering state money and buying up land. Why they were doing this was anybody's guess, but I'd bet my mother's tombstone we could get an answer at Sadie's.

*(SFX-phone rings)*

SADIE: Sadie Deal, Relator . . . What? Water in the basement of the house I sold you? Hold on . . . I'll connect you with our adjustor. Let me put you on hold for a moment. *(SFX-click of phone button)* You'll stay on hold 'til your ear falls off, mister!

*(SFX-door opens and bell rings)*

Good afternoon. Lookin' for a bungalow? Townhouse? Love nest?

CATFISH: (*with an accentuated Southern accent*) Howdy, ma'am. I'm Mickey Morley . . . Mickey Morley Used Cars. Probably heard my commercials on the wireless.

SADIE: I think I have, Mr. Morley . . . and the young lady is . . . (*pause*) Your niece.

CATFISH: Shore is. My sister's little girl.

SADIE: I suppose you're looking for something . . . out'a the way. Is that correct?

CATFISH: Not really. I need me a piece 'a land. My buddy, Raccoon Montgomery sent me here. Said you could fix me with something nice. Know what I mean?

SADIE: I know exactly what you mean. You want something on the ridge line overlooking Sunshine Valley.

LOLA: Overlooking Sunshine Valley? There's nothing to look at but a bunch dirt poor farmers.

SADIE: Well . . . that's *now*. But once Bodiene Dam is done and the valley floods, this will be shoreline property on beautiful Lake Bullfrog . . .

LOLA: (*excitedly*) Lake Bullfrog? What are you talkin' a- . . .

CATFISH: (*interrupting*) Don't get excited, honey. You gotta forgive my niece, she thought I was just gonna buy her something out in the woods. Now you spoiled the surprise.

SADIE: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you told her . . .

CATFISH: Well, Sadie, now that you let the cat out'a the bag, you gotta give me a prime lot, understand?

SADIE: Sure, Mr. Morley. Here, look at the map. Plenty of lots have been sold, but as you can see, there are plenty to go around.

CATFISH: Looks like I got here just in time. Most this land's been picked over.

SADIE: But there's not a bad lot in the bunch.

CATFISH: How come there's nothing lower than these spots on the ridge?

SADIE: The lake's gonna rise all the way to there . . . you'll have the beach right at your doorstep.

CATFISH: We ain't gonna have no problems with them black dirt farmers given up their valley land, is we?

SADIE: Not a one, Mr. Morley. Big Bill's gonna take care of that.

LOLA: What about the Senator?

SADIE: Don't worry about Bullfrog, Sweetie. Once that land starts flooding, he'll be knee deep in his own pack 'a alligators. He won't even be able to show his face in Loo-sianna. Let alone run for re-election. An' then Senator Big Bill will take care of us. Now have you found a lot you like?

CATFISH: How about this ‘un . . . seems like a nice spot between those two lots.

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