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FUNERAL FOR A GANGSTER

An Audience-Participation Murder Mystery

by

Eileen Moushey

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FUNERAL FOR A GANGSTER CAST OF CHARACTERS

JOEY "THE LUMP" MARZETTI - Thirties. A very laid-back type. A hood but not a bum. Dressed in pants, and the requisite black shirt/white tie. Suspenders and slouch hat complete the look. He's a bootlegger. Oddly innocent, he also ain't overly bright.

RUBY "FINGERS" MARZETTI - Mid thirties. She's passionate and intense about everything. She's Joey's sister and the manager of the speakeasy, "Ruby's Place" where the funeral is to take place. She's dressed in formal black, with a touch or two of glitz. An ex-show girl, she is street-wise and smart.

FRANKIE "MARBLES" MARZETTI - Early forties. The eldest of the three. He only shows rare glimpses of his own personality, preferring to hide out in various alter egos (Father Francis, Col. F.P. Beauregard

IV, Sir Franklin Bolton of Smytton-Crouch, and Francois Francois, the French mime. His clothes will reflect what 'mode' he's presently in, beginning with a cas- sock.)

LENA MARZETTI - The grieving widow. Twenties. "Bimbo" is the word that comes to mind, although initially th is is not evident due to the modest black dress and heavy black veiling.

SPECIAL AGENT D. FARMER - The FBI/G-man. A straight arrow type. A no-nonsense, not-too-heavy-on-the-sense-of-humor sort. Dressed in a conservative suit and tie.

.....and, present in spirit and corpse....

VITO "THE GUT" MARZETTI - The "Old Man", he's father to Joey, Ruby, and Frankie. After the death of their mother three years previously, Vito married his latest girlfriend, Lena. Despite the difference in their ages, and the fact that Vito tipped the scales at 300 lbs., they seemed happy enough. But then came that fateful evening when Vito was gunned down in front of Lena as he downed his third helping of moo goo gai pan.

PREVIOUS TO THE EVENT

The evening will be advertised as a step back in time to 1928. The location will, for the mystery, be transformed into a speakeasy, "Ruby's Place." It is there that the friends and family of the recently deceased Vito Marzetti will come to pay their last respects. Participants will be encouraged to attend dressed "twenties" and to enter into the spirit of the occasion.

There will be a sign at the main entrance that will read:

AS YOU PASS THROUGH THESE DOORS YOU ARE ENTERING 1928 AND A SPEAKEASY CALLED "RUBY'S PLACE". TONIGHT IS A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR VITO "THE GUT" MARZETTI, WHO WAS GUNNED DOWN LAST WEEK IN A BRITAIN SLAYING. AS A DEAR FRIEND OF VITO'S YOU HAVE BEEN INVITED HERE TO PAY YOUR RESPECTS TO THE FAMILY.

The main lobby of the location will be draped in black and appropriate twenties music will be playing.

There will be large portrait of Vito on display, likewise draped in black with a floral arrangement on either side. The actors will circulate "in character" with the crowd. Costume judging is also done now.

Mystery assistants, identified as Marzetti Mob Members by the black armbands they wear, will also be in evidence.

See Production Manual for planning timetables.

PART I - THE DASTARDLY DEED

Onstage is a small lectern SR, four chairs, a casket UC, and a piano SL. There should be flowers on the casket, and possibly other arrangements in the background. Candles, in tall candelabras also add to the atmosphere. The actors, except for FARMER, enter through the house together and go onstage. RUBY and JOEY sit next to each other, leave an empty seat, so that LENA appears isolated from them. FRANKIE, as "FATHER FRANCIS" goes to the lectern and signals the organist, if one is used.

FATHER FRANCIS: Ah, and wasn't that grand, though. Ladies and gentlemen, on the Mighty Wurlitzer. (He pauses.) Dear friends, tis a sad, sad thing that brings us together in this beautiful place. Vito Marzetti, that darlin' man, was shot down in cold blood last week. T'was a horrible sight, it was. And I know that some of you are thinkin' tonight about the man who killed him. And maybe you're a-thinkin' that the murderin' bastard should be hunted down like the scum he is and blasted away, just as poor Vito was. And don't ya know now we could spend tonight plannin' revenge with hatred in our hearts. We could. We could. But I'm here to tell you, friends, that that is not what Vito would have wanted. What he would have wanted, dear, dear

people, is to be remembered as a man of peace. For after all, who was Vito Marzetti?? Let's be puttin' all thoughts of vengeance aside, for a moment, and ponder that question. Just who was Vito Marzetti? Hmm?? Oh, and sure they'll be those that'll be sayin' he was a cheap hood and ruthless gangster. Or that he was he was a mean son of a bitch and he didn't have a decent bone in his body. And then, of course, they'll be those who say he was.....

JOEY: Um, Father Francis...

FATHER FRANCIS: It's alright Joseph, I'm comin' to the good stuff now. Y'see, Vito Marzetti was all those rotten things. True, he was. Let's not be candy-coatin' him. He was a bum. He was that, but he was more, much more. And now he's gone, we've got to look past all his little flaws to find the REAL Vito Marzetti. The father of Joseph (gestures to him,) and Ruby (gestures toward her,) and, of course, Frankie. Frankie. (He notices the empty chair.) Frankie. Why, Frankie's not here! And where might your brother be? It's a poor son who misses his own father's funeral. (A snort of derision is heard from LENA.)

RUBY: He'll be coming along a little later, Father. (Another snort.)

FATHER FRANCIS: Aach, and isn't it himself's widow, sitting there. Lena, Lena. The poor, sweet, thing. Married three short months before tragedy ended their holy matrimony. Left all alone in the world, little Lena, with only your stepchildren here and your sister for comfort.

JOEY: Yeah, right. Hey, I didn't know ya had a sister, Lena.
(LENA shakes her head "no")

FATHER FRANCIS: Well, sure ya do, darlin'. I saw the two of you meself on several.. But in any case, I was t hinkin.... I'm thinkin' - instead of me standin' up here, goin' on and on about what a grand, darlin' man he was, I think we should be hearin' testimony from you - his cherished family. Aach, but, first, would you be givin' us a song, Ruby girl??

RUBY: You want me to sing now?

FATHER FRANCIS: Sure, and I'm thinking that your father is up there now, listenin'. So sing him a song from the heart, Ruby darlin', sing him one from the heart.

RUBY: (Dubious) Okay, Father, whatever you say. (She goes to the piano and plays and sings a wildly inappropriate song of the period - "It Had To Be You", or some such. As she ends, JOEY is visible affected and wipes his eyes.)

JOEY: Geez, Rube, that was so beautiful. The old man would've peed his pants. He sure did love music.

FATHER FRANCIS: Go on with that thought, Joey-Boy.

JOEY: Well, geez, Father.....sometimes if the old man laughed like real hard or sneezed or somethin', he'd like loose control and....

FATHER FRANCIS: Not that, Joseph. I meant - tell how your father loved music. Tell us all the good things about him.

JOEY: Ya mean, ya want me to talk?

FATHER FRANCIS: Yes, yes, come up here, son. Talk about your father.

JOEY: Me? Talk about the old man?

FATHER FRANCIS: (Gesturing him to the lecturn. He sits down.) Come, come, come.

JOEY: Geez. The old man. Um. (pause)....Well, um, see, I met my dad when I was real young and he....he... .he taught me and my brother and sister about the family business. And he....he gave all of us music lessons. And he showed me the best ways to avoid gettin' spotted by the feds, see,..... so when I'm bringin' the goods in from Canada I don't have to worryI don't have to worry 'bout gettin' my ass shot off, y'know. And, and, the old man, he,.. he taught my brother Frankie how to work a con so's the mark don't even know he's been stung,

see. So....so's uh, that's what the old man was like, okay. Thank you. I mean, Amen. (He bows, selfconscious.) Geez, Fadder, that's all I can think of. Don't make me talk no more, okay??

FATHER FRANCIS: That was just fine, Joseph. Your father would be proud. (He goes back to the podium as JOEY sits.) Now since Frankie hasn't shown up yet, we'll be hearin' again from Vito's daughter, Ruby.

RUBY: What?? I sang, alright. Don't push it, Father.

FATHER FRANCIS: Now Ruby, I know you had your little bit o trouble with your father, but sure you can come up with a few nice things to say....Now come on, girl, let's be at least givin' it a try. (He escorts her to the lecturn and sits down himself)

RUBY: (She looks around) Nice things, huh?? About the old man?? Hey, I may need a few minutes here.

JOEY: Geez, Rube, if nothin' else....Well, he bought you this place, didn't he?? Hey, there wouldn't be a Ruby's Place if the old man hadn't squeezed the guy who used to own the joint.

RUBY: Bought me this place? You make it sound like it was a gift. Wake up, Joey. The old man bought this place for himself and used me to run it and you to supply it. And every week, like clockwork, he'd be around to check the books and collect the "take."

JOEY: Geez, Ruby, ya know he was just holdin' it for us. And we got paid regular. What's your beef, huh?? Geez.

RUBY: All I know is I work my tail off makin him money so he can spend it on her....

FATHER FRANCIS: Now, now, Ruby, darlin'...You're supposed to remember the good things.

RUBY: And she can't even come up with a decent coffin for the old guy. Where'd ya get this one, Lena? What a cheap-lookin' box. I mean, the old man was a skunk but he certainly took care of you. Look at this thing. They'll hafta be careful pickin' it up. The old guy may fall through.

FATHER FRANCIS: Well, considerin' Vito's size, we were thinkin' maybe of not liftin' it at all - just kinda scooti n' it out the back. Otherwise we'll be needin' a few more pallbearers.

JOEY: Yup, I'd say ten or twenty more for sure.

FATHER FRANCIS: But that's for later. Right now, I believe we were waitin' for Ruby to share some of her fond memories of her father.

RUBY: Hey, Father, I'm thinkin', I'm thinkin'. (Pause) Okay, I got somethin. Um... when I was eighteen I got caught pickin' pockets....

JOEY: (To audience) That's how she got the nickname "Fingers", right, Ruby? See, everybody thinks it's cause she can play the piano but it's really cause she can pick a pocket from across the street.

RUBY: You wanta tell it, Joey??

JOEY: Nah, nah. You're doin' okay, Rube.

RUBY: Anyways, the nice thing the old man did was that he.... bought off the judge.

JOEY: (To audience) He didn't hafta do that, y'know.

RUBY: And he always said, "Marzetti's don't do time."

FATHER FRANCIS: Actually, what I think he always said was, "Marzetti's don't get caught."

JOEY: Well, Ruby sure did.

RUBY: Outside of that, I can't remember anything nice the old man did for anybody. He treated Mom like dirt, ran around on her.....

JOEY: Yeah, but he waited till she died 'fore he got married again. I thought that was real good of him.

FATHER FRANCIS: Well, what a touchin' story. Thank you, Ruby, you can be seated. And now, if you think you can, Lena.....

LENA: What??

FATHER FRANCIS: I know it will be hard, but it will help ease the pain.

LENA: Me??? (Pause, and then she will lift back the heavy veil.) Oh, for pete's sake, how long do we gotta do this.... (To JOEY and RUBY) Why the hell couldn't you get another priest?...

JOEY: Aw c'mon, Lena, you promised.

RUBY: Father Francis wanted to do the service. What's the difference, anyway?

LENA: The difference is, if you must know, that a real priest wouldn't go around forcin' bereavin' people to get up and talk about personal type stuff.

FATHER FRANCIS: I know it seems like I'm bein' cruel, darlin', but you've got to trust me. It will help. And besides, all these people are friends. Don't be afraid to cry. Don't be afraid to show your feelings. We all know how much you loved Vito.

LENA: Yeah. Yeah. (She stands and throws herself on the coffin, crying noisily.) Oh, Vito, Vito, Vito!

JOEY: Ah, geez.

RUBY: Careful, honey, you'll get splinters.

FATHER FRANCIS: There, there. Let it all out. (He puts his arm around her.) Now, now. So, do you think you could be tellin' us a little of how you will remember your poor dead husband?

LENA: I'll try. (She goes to lecturn.) How can I tell you all how much Vito Marzetti meant to me? I don't believe that I can. See, I was just a poor, shy, little girl, right out of the convent school (to RUBY'S skeptical look) I WAS, okay. And then I met Vito. Vito, Vito, Vito. It's hard to imagine that I will never see him again. Never. I will never feel his arms around me. I will never watch him eat pasta again. I'll never smell his warm breath. I'll never have to watch him pick his....(she catches herself) Anyway, he was a good man. A good husband. A good provider.

RUBY: I'll say.

LENA: (Ignoring her.) And he treated me just....swell. So, I'm gonna miss him and I thank you all for coming tonight. (She blows a kiss as she sits down.)

FATHER FRANCIS: Thank you, Lena, girl. I know how hard that must be for you. BIMBO. Now, before we move on to the next part....

LENA: What'd you just say??

FATHER FRANCIS: I said we were going to have the TRAMP move on to the next part of the ser.....

LENA: Why you...

FATHER FRANCIS: Lena, darlin, whatever is wrong? Now, calm yourself, CHEAP TRICK, while we...

LENA: Okay, okay. That's it. I went along with this, cause it seemed like the right thing to do and it saved havi n' to dig up a real priest....

FATHER FRANCIS: Now, what could be keeping Frankie-boy? You'd think if the SLUT here could make it to the old man's funeral.....

LENA: You shut up, Frankie. Right now. (FATHER clutches his head.) Yeah, yeah. That's right. You're Frankie. Frankie, Frankie, Frankie....(FRANKIE is increasingly distraught)

RUBY: (Going to him) Stop it, Lena!!

LENA: Frankie is a whacko, Frankie is a whacko.

RUBY: Shut up, shut up. (FRANKIE is now silent and staring ahead.)

LENA: I'll shut up when I'm good and ready. When he's locked up in a booby hatch where he belongs. And then you won't go sneakin' around, spyin' on anyone, will ya, Frankie? When they lock you up and throw away the key?

JOEY: Hey, don't talk that way 'bout Frankie.... He can't help it.

LENA: This may come as a big shock to you, Joe, but I truly do not care if he can help it..... He's a nut, he's always been a nut, and he'll always be a nut. And he belongs with all the other nuts. In the squirrel cage.

JOEY: He wasn't always like this. He used to be as normal as me.

LENA: Ha! I rest my case.

RUBY: Shut the hell up, Lena. Joey's right. It's the old man's fault Frankie's like this! When we were kids, when he found out what a good actor Frankie was, he made him do all those cons. He was the front man, the guy who'd hook the mark.

JOEY: Geez, he was fun to watch.

RUBY: All those different characters. Different accents. But somewhere along the line Frankie got lost. (She pats him on the shoulder fondly.)

LENA: Ruby, when are you gonna quit blamin' Vito for everything?

RUBY: I guess now, Lena, cause, he's dead. And speakin' of that, y'know, I still haven't heard just how it happened.

LENA: What'd'ya mean. He got blasted at Wong Sue's. In the middle of his third order of Moo Goo Gai Pan. I don't wanna talk about it.

RUBY: We're his kids, Lena. We got a right to know what happened. JOEY: Geez, yeah. He was our old man.

LENA: It was horrible. I don't know if I can.

F.P.: Well, honey lamb, you just do your best, alrighty? (He has removed his clerical collar and replaced it with a ribbon bow tie.)

LENA: Oh, hell, who is he now??

F.P.: (Standing and bowing.) Colonel F.P. Beauregard the IV, at your service, ma'am. And might ah be offerin' my condolences to you, and my personal pledge to honor the name of your late husband. Be not afraid, ma'am, to cling to the bosom of your family at a sad time like this....(he attempts to embrace her.)

LENA: Let go of me, you big....

RUBY: Colonel, maybe you ought to come sit over here. I know how much that old war injury pains your leg.

F.P.: Why, thank you, ma'am, for thinkin' kindly of me. (To audience.) A bullet near tore off mah knee at Gettysburg....or was that Vicksburg? Maybe downtown Pittsburgh...

LENA: What a dummy.

JOEY: So, Lena, I thought you were gonna tell us about the old man.

LENA: There ain't much to tell. We went for Chinese and half-way through dinner, this guy shows up and blasts Vito away. I already told you and the police and everybody. The guy was wearing a funny hat and shoes and had on like a shawl and a skirt. I mean, at first I thought he was one of those funny guys, y'know wh at I mean? The kind that want to take off your clothes - but only so's they can try 'em on. The kind that go to ballets when they don't hafta. So anyway, this guy, he shot Vito about ten times with a tommy gun. And after Vito fell face down in the fried rice, he laughed and said something.

JOEY: The old man laughed after gettin shot? Was he somethin' or what??

LENA: Not Vito, the guy in the dress.

RUBY: What'd he say?

LENA: I don't know. He talked real weird, like Frankie doin' one of his accents. Only it wasn't one of those, it sounded more like a cat in a wringer. And then he threw a bunch of weeds on the back of Vito's head and left. I can't talk about it no more!!

RUBY: I knew it!! I warned the old man.

JOEY: What are you talking about??

RUBY: It was Angus "The Scot" McDonald"! Leader of the Highland Mob. That wasn't weeds, Lena. It was McDonald's calling card. (pause) Heather. The Scot has wanted to move in on our territory for a year. Sent the old man a letter offerin' him 2000 bucks for this place. The old man just laughed and farted.

F.P.: (To LENA) Why, you pore li'l thing, you! To have seen somethin' like that!! Well, one thing is for sure!! This McDonald person is no gentleman! Tell us, Magnolia Blossom, were you able to provide the police authorities with a description?

JOEY: Yeah, and what'd he look like, too?

LENA: Well, I, I mean, most of his face was hidden by...um, bagpipes.

RUBY: He had bagpipes, too?

JOEY: Geez. Bagpipes and a tommy gun. Hey, Rube, this guy must be good.

LENA: Uh-huh. And he was blonde And short. And old. At least fifty.

RUBY: What I can't figure is this - how did McDonald know that you'd be there? I mean, the old man didn't eat Chinese that much.

JOEY: Yeah, he always said it didn't fill him up.

LENA: Well, there was a lot to fill y'know. One thing you can say about old Vito, he sure could pack it away. Did you ever see him eat lasagna???

JOEY: Yeah, no wonder the old man had kind of a weight problem. (laughs)

F.P.: (Joining him laughing.) Mah dear boy, ah really don't think you can call tippin' the scales at three hundred pounds, "kind of a weight problem".

LENA: They didn't call him Vito "The Gut" for nothin'. (All three laugh.)

RUBY: Now wait a minute!! Quit changin' the subject and think about it. Vito hardly ever eats Chinese, then a ll of a sudden, one night, with no warning, he goes to Wong Sue's and the Scot shows up and rubs him out. How did McDonald know he was there?? Unless...

JOEY: Unless...

RUBY: Are you thinkin' what I'm thinkin', Joey??

JOEY: (Nodding his head slowly.) I think so.

RUBY: What??

JOEY: (Still nodding) I don't know. What are you thinkin', Rube?

F.P.: She is thinkin' what occurred to me shortly after hearin' about the demise of Mr. Marzetti. He was betrayed. Set-up. Fingered. By someone who knew he would be partakin' his evening meal in an establishment specializing in Oriental cuisine.

JOEY: Geez, who would do somethin' like that? I mean, the old man could be kind of a crud sometim' y'know, but still....

LENA: I think it musta been a coincidence. I mean, maybe this McDonald guy likes Chinese, too. I mean, it could happen. I know this girl, and she went to a fortuneteller and....

RUBY: It had to be someone who knew that the old man was going to Wong Sue's. (She nudges Joey, who at first doesn't get it, then does.)

LENA: Anyway, about a week after she told this fortuneteller all about her boyfriend, who turns up at the hair salon but....what are you all lookin' at me for???

I got a booger hangin'out or somethin'??

F.P.: Ah do believe that you are runnin' first in the Squealer Derby, little lady.

LENA: Whoa, wait a minute!! Just wait a minute, here!! You ain't gonna pin this on me!! It could have been any of you!! Yes, it could. Remember, um, you were all in the room with us when I called the restaurant to make reservations!! I did, I did!!

JOEY: She's right, Rube, I remember her calling. Remember, we was all in the livin' room. You were practicin' piano, Frankie was fiddlin' with his Lincoln Logs, and I was playin' canasta with the old man. I remember 'caus

e I didn't dare look up on account of he used to cheat. And we all heard Lena talkin' to Wong Sue's and tellin' what time and all...

RUBY: What!! What? So what does that mean?? Joey, you think it could be one of us?

JOEY: Nah, but, oh, geez. (An idea occurs.)

RUBY: What. What!! (She leans in.)

JOEY: (Dramatic, hushed tone.) The old man heard her too. D'ya suppose... D'ya think...maybe the old man fingered himself?

RUBY: Please, Joey, I'm gettin' headache.

F.P.: Well, what I want to know is whether or not John Wilkes Booth was acting alone or if all this talk about a conspiracy could have any merit. And ah am still wonderin' if maybe General Sherman didn't get just the tiniest kick out of settin' those fires. And, more to the point, little lady, where is your sister??

LENA: Now what is he goin' on about??

RUBY: He starts to babble right before he slips out of it. (To FRANKIE) Now, listen, Colonel, Lena doesn't have a sister and Booth and Sherman were both...Colonel, colonel....

F.P.: She doesn't have a big, ugly, sister?...No, wait, alright, then, an aunt, maybe. But I saw them. And then I saw General Grant. And they were kissing and touching....(He rambles on as he exits to transform into LORD FRANKLIN.)

JOEY: You saw Lena kissing General Grant? Geez, Lena, you get around.

LENA: He is getting worse. And I am going to see he gets locked up before he hurts someone.

JOEY: He ain't gonna hurt no one! You promised, Lena! The old man promised!! He said if Frankie passed that shrink test, nobody'd ever mention lockin' him up again. So Frankie talked to the doc, okay?? That was the deal.

RUBY: That was the deal, Lena. We did our part. We drove Frankie to that hospital in Maryland so he could talk to that doctor. And you and the old man both promised that if he passed.....

LENA: Okay, okay. If the report comes back and says he's not a complete goofball, I don't care what you do with him as long as he quits following me around and watching me all the time. Gives me the creeps. And nuts or not, he ain't gettin' any of the money.

RUBY: What money?

LENA: Vito's money.

JOEY: You mean, like the money that the old man was holdin' for us??

RUBY: You mean OUR money? The dough that me and Joey and Frankie have been makin' for the past fifteen years and givin' to the old man. That ain't "Vito's money", Lena. You can get that out of your head right now. That belongs to us.

LENA: Well, I beg to differ, but I am his widow and all his lawful possessions belong to me now.

LORD FRANKLIN: (Entering) My dear gull, I hardly think that proceeds from con games, gambling, a nightclub and illegal liquor would fall into the category of lawful possessions.

LENA: Oh, no, not the Limey guy!!

JOEY: Hey, it's Lord Franklin of Dudley-Crouch. (To the audience) He's my favorite. So, your lordship, how goes the royalty scam?

LORD FRANKLIN: Swimmingly, old chum, swimmingly. I say, we are getting into it with the good lady Lena, aren't we? The colonel all but accused her of setting up her own husband for murder. Not nice, what?

JOEY: Yeah, and now she's talkin' about all our money....You remember, Sir Franklin, all them...shillings and sixpences and pounds and stuff.... all the dough you made playing cricket and polo and all....anyway, Lady Lena is talkin' like it's hers.

LORD FRANKLIN: NO!

RUBY: Yes, that is exactly what she's sayin'!

LORD FRANKLIN: Hard cheese!! Sticky wicket!!

RUBY: She seems to forget one thing.

LENA: And what is that, pray tell?

RUBY: There are three of us. And one of you.

LENA: Is that so, Miss Smarty-Pants?? Well, just how are you gonna get the loot. Do you know where Vito kept it?

RUBY: (Looking around) No, I mean, I don't know exactly.....Joey...

JOEY: I don't know nuthin. (They look to LORD FRANKLIN.)

LORD FRANKLIN: Terribly sorry, old man. 'Fraid I can't help you out. (To audience) Feel like such silly pudding.

RUBY: Well, we'll just have to use a little persuasion on stepmother here. (They start to slowly advance on LENA, when from the audience is heard....)

FARMER: You can stop right there. (He comes down the aisle and onto the stage.) I mean it. Hold it right there. (Ad-libs to cover until he's there. Holds out badge quickly.) FBI.

JOEY: Geez, the feds! Hey, I don't know nothin' about no prime Canadian whiskey, okay...

LORD FRANKLIN: Crashing a funeral? I say, that is a bit much!

RUBY: How did you get in here?? What the hell kind of security do we....

FARMER: The name's Farmer, Agent Farmer. The Bureau's got ways, ma'am. The Bureau's got ways.

RUBY: This is a private party and you've got no right to come crashin' in here. And in case you haven't noticed, we've got a funeral goin' on. So you can take your little badge and your flat feet and get the hell out of my club.

JOEY: He ain't got flat feet, Rube. That's the coppers that got flat feet. (To audience) She always gets those two screwed up...

RUBY: Shut up, Joey....Look, Farmer....

FARMER: Joey. That's Joey "The Lump", isn't it. Bootlegger? We've come close to nailing you on a couple of occasions, Lump.

JOEY: Yeah? But, ya ain't. And ya wanna know why?

FARMER: I'll bite.

JOEY: Cuz I'm too smart for you, that's why.

FARMER: A scary thought, Lump, a scary thought.

LORD FRANKLIN: So, old man, to what do we owe the pleasure of your company? Do tell. And then you can just toddle off, eh what??

FARMER: (To LENA) Who does he think he is now??

LENA: I never remember the full name, Lord Franklin of Weenie World or somethin' like that. I just call him the Limey guy.

FARMER: Of course the Bureau knows him as something else.

LORD FRANKLIN: Oooh, the Bureau. I'm getting chills, what say.

FARMER: Yeah, there's a file on him an inch thick. Frankie Marzetti. Frankie "Marbles" Marzetti. Used to be quite the con artist, didn't you, Marbles?? Though lately you've been pretty much out of work.

LENA: Pretty much out of his mind, y'mean.

LORD FRANKLIN: (Suddenly shifting gears) Lady Lena? It was dark but it was you, wasn't it. Of course, I was far away. With Sir Francis Bacon. But he saw you too. Thought you looked a lot like Lillie Langtry.

LENA: He's startin' in on me again. Who the hell is this Lillie Bacon? Is that a slam?

LORD FRANKLIN: With a girl friend, eh, your ladyship? Healthy-lookin' female, from where I stood....

LENA: Frankie, not only are you not playin' with a full deck, but I also believe your porch light is out, your suitcase ain't quite packed, the elevator doesn't go to the top floor, the bus doesn't make a stop downtown.....(FRANKIE starts to "blank out")

RUBY: Just leave him alone, would you, Lena. He's a little confused right now. Lord Franklin, Lord Franklin, are you there??

LORD FRANKLIN: Hi-ho! Still here. Top drawer. What say.

LENA: I really hate the Limey guy.

RUBY: Look, Agent Farmer, this happens to be my joint.

FARMER: You mean, your saloon. Your speakeasy.

RUBY: Coffee house.

FARMER: Don't think the FBI hasn't been keepin' an eye on you, too, Ruby "Fingers" Marzetti. Just cause none of you have a record doesn't mean you are above suspicion.

RUBY: Suspicion of what??

JOEY: Yeah! Suspicion of what??

FARMER: Organized crime. Violation of the Volstead Act. Gambling. Larceny. Theft. Murder. You name it.

JOEY: Murder. Hey, look, Marzetti's don't do murder. The old man had a rule. And it was "No rubbin' out." Leave that to the other gangs. Like the Romano's. And the Capellini's. And Butch Feltzer's mob. They'd slice up their own grandmother for her dentures. And never blink an eye. That's what set us apart. We are a strictly non-violent mob. Okay, okay, so's maybe a little strong arm. In particular circumstances. And, okay, so maybe there had to be a few exceptions.....Hey, sometimes people just don't get the point until the cement started to harden.

RUBY: Shut up, Joey. Look, Fed, you're barkin' up the wrong family. Instead of hounding innocent people, why don't you find the punk that murdered my father. Yeah. Why doesn't the stinkin' FBI find the damn kilt who...killed my old man. But, no, the FBI can't be bothered by a little thing like homicide. It's easier to come crashing into funerals, disturbing grieving families. While out there, right now, is the goddamn Scotsman who gunned down my...my.....pop. (She starts to cry.)

LORD FRANKLIN: There, there. Now, now, chin up, stiff upper, that sort of thing....

JOEY: Yeah, Mister, Ruby's right. Get the hell out of here and find McDonald.

FARMER: I'd be happy too. If I could get a more complete description. But your stepmother didn't get a clear look.

LENA: Them bagpipes is real big.

FARMER: Plus the fact that none of the employees at the restaurant can speak a word of English. And since half of them are illegals, no doubt they won't say a thing if we do get a translator. So, you see, Fingers...

RUBY: Hey, don't call me that. It was a long time ago. Ruby will do.

FARMER: So, you see, Ruby, I do care about your father's murder. And I won't rest until I find Angus McDona ld. But in the meantime, I had to meet all of you. (Grudgingly admiring) See, the Marzetti's....well... they... YOU...have been a thorn in the side of the FBI for fifteen years....

JOEY: (proudly) No shit.

FARMER: And, well, you've become almost a cause with some of us....You're involved in every type of illegal operation in this city and yet so far, no one's touched you. Well, the law anyway.

RUBY: Angus McDonald touched us.

FARMER: Yeah, and you know, you've got to hand it to him. He found a way to reach the Marzetti's. And make it hurt.

LORD FRANKLIN: Personally, I wouldn't have given it all up for the woman I loved. Poppycock, I say.

LENA: What the hell are you talkin' about now, Frankie?

LORD FRANKLIN: Don't know a "Frankie." Know a "Lena" though. Kiss-kiss. (Sings) When a lady loves a lassie, comin' through the rye...

FARMER: What's wrong now??

LENA: Oh, nothin. Ol' Frankie is about to do a presto-chango, that's all. Y'know, Frankie, I cannot wait to read the shrink doctor's report on you

FRANKIE: Doctor. Did not see a doctor. Hate doctors.

LENA: Probably be the shortest report in medical history. "This guy is a loony-bird, a nut-case, a crazy.....Signed, the Whacko Doctor."

FRANKIE: Don't like doctors. Won't go. Did not go. I wanna stay with Ru....

RUBY: But you already saw him, hon. Yes, you saw the doctor, don't you remember, Frankie....Uh..(FRANKIE shakes his head violently.) Um...yes you did...remember...(Frankie tries to talk, she puts her hand on his mouth)...you liked him.....you introduced him to Francoise...(FRANKIE looks up in doubt) That's right.

Francoise was there. And he met the doctor, too. Francoise.

(FRANKIE transforms into FRANCOISE, and dons white gloves. He goes into mime and does the standard ones - walking against the wind, going up stairs, the glass box, etc...interspersed with others that reflect the dialogue.)

JOEY: Ah, geez, not Francoise!

FARMER: Who is he now?

JOEY: He's Francoise Francoise. The French mime.

FARMER: A mime?

JOEY: Yeah. I gotta admit. I really hate it when he does Francoise.

LENA: I really hate all of them. So did Vito. And that's why he decided not to leave him any of the dough. Not too much to spend it on, in the Rubber Rotunda....

RUBY: And just who the hell gave you the right to pass out our money??

LENA: Your money, is it?? (Behind her, FRANKIE, as FRANCOISE is acting out "bagpipe playing, LENA strutting over, the classic mime one-person embrace, etc.) God, he gives me the creeps. Yeah, Ruby. Only now, it's my money. And I'm gonna do just what Vito wanted. And Vito wanted that I should have it.

JOEY: You. But you never did nothin' but sit on your a...

LENA: Yeah? And so what?? It's a cute little a..... And anyway, Vito didn't want Frankie to get it, on account of he'd probably spend it on goofy stuff or give it away or something. And he didn't want Ruby to have it 'cause she got caught by the cops once...

RUBY: Hell, that was fifteen years ago! I was only twen....seventeen years old...

LENA: Yeah, but "Marzetti's don't get caught," remember?

RUBY: So, Frankie doesn't get anything 'cause you convinced the old man he was crazy. And I don't get anything 'cause you kept remindin' him of the one time that I was less than the perfect criminal. How about Joey? He's not a brain trust, but he hasn't been certified. And he hasn't had any trouble with the law.

FARMER: He just hasn't been caught....yet.

RUBY: So, Lena, are you going to share your inheritance with Joey.

LENA: Of course not.

RUBY: Why am I not surprised?

LENA: I'm only doing as Vito wished. And I'm afraid he disinherited Joey as well.

JOEY: He did? Geez, oh man, why?

LENA: 'Cause you kept makin' passes at me. And Vito said he wasn't leavin' nothin' to no one who wanted to boff his wife.

RUBY: Joey!!

JOEY: I never touched her! I never wanted to touch her!! That would've been like (stage whisper.)bugs.

RUBY: Bugs??

JOEY: Yeah. You know. (Whispered.) Insects.

RUBY: Ah, Joey, you mean incest. And it wouldn't have been that. Stupid, yeah. Incest, no.

JOEY: Whatever. All I know is I never laid a finger on her. (To LENA) You know I never did nuthin'.

LENA: Yeah, Joey, I know you didn't. Matter of fact, there were a couple of times I wouldn't have minded. But see, I told Vito you had. And that was enough. (She gestures like a slit throat.) So, you are all out of it.

RUBY: You can't do this to us.

LENA: Watch.

JOEY: Don't cross a Marzetti, Lena. Marzetti's don't forget. Marzetti's take care of their own. A Marzetti angered is ...an angry Marzetti.

LENA: You forget somethin', Joey. I'm a Marzetti, too.

RUBY: You'd better watch your step, Lena. Not to mention your back.

LENA: What? A threat? (Laugh) Really, Ruby, I don't think you're going to do anything. Not with the FBI standin' right next to me. So get the hell outta here.

RUBY: What do you mean? This is my place. This is "Ruby's Place."

LENA: Ever look to see whose name is on the deed, Ruby? All I gotta do is change the name on the sign,...." Lena's Place."

RUBY: Why you little tramp!! Where's our money??

JOEY: This is no fair. C'mon, Lena, don't be a such a bitch.

LENA: Don't call me that!! I was gonna share it with ya, 'cause I do need some help and I thought that maybe if you give me a hand, I'd cut you in. And if you're real nice, I might even let you go to work. For me....

RUBY: Help? What kind of help?

LENA:Oh, you know how Vito loved playing games.....

JOEY: Yeah, he did it all the time. He said it was to teach us all about "takin' turns". Geez, Ruby, remember when he made us do that scavenger hunt?

RUBY: Yeah. What a fun guy.

JOEY: Man, he had us huntin' for about 5 hours. (To audience) After that I learned not to take off my pants at night.

LENA: Well, he's got another game planned. To find the dough.

RUBY: You mean you ain't actually got it?

LENA: No. Okay, solook....he left it in a bus station. In a locker. And he hid the goddam key.

RUBY: (Hooting with laughter.) Vito, Vito, Vito!!

JOEY: Ya had to love the guy.

LENA: So, okay. Here's the deal. You guys are used to figuring out his stupid games. You help me find the key to the locker, and I'll share the dough with you. Ten percent for each of you two, and eighty for me.

JOEY: (Laughing) Geez, Lena, you're alright. What a kidder.

RUBY: Look at her face, Joey. She ain't kiddin. Thirty each for me, Frankie, and Joey. Ten for you.

LENA: Hah! I don't care if you give Marble-Head, here, part of your share. But I ain't givin' him nuthin.

RUBY: I oughta....

JOEY: Wait, Ruby. Look, Lena. (Pause.) How about this.....twenty-five for me, twenty-five for Ruby, and twenty-five for Frankie. Okay? And that leaves forty for you. I mean, what could be more fairer?

LENA: You heard my terms. Take it or leave it.

RUBY: We're leavin' it. C'mon, boys. Wait'll you try to figure out one of Vito's little puzzles, Lena....

LENA: I ain't worried. See, I got the FBI to help. You'll help me, won't you, Mr.... Farmer. Oooh, such an earthy name.

FARMER: Now, ma'am, I'm not sure what the Bureau's regulations are in this case.

LENA: Now, let's not worry about nasty old rules and regulations just now, okay? You help me find that key and then we'll just sit down together and study the guide book.

JOEY: You gonna let her get away with that, Rube?

RUBY: What'dya want me to do, Joe? Shoot her? C'mon. (To FRANKIE) C'mon, Frankie. Oh, I forgot. (She goes to him and gestures going for a walk. They exit "against the wind" stage left).

LENA: (After she makes sure they are gone, she takes a folded sheaf of papers out of her purse and starts to show them to FARMER.) Okay, so this is what he left me. See, you've gotta answer these questions and that'll tell ya where to look for a clue. Hell, he's hidden 'em all over this joint. See, there's a map and.....

(From the wings a single shot is heard. LENA slumps against FARMER, who in actuality will pierce the blood packet on her back. He catches her as she falls, and turns her so the audience can see she's been shot in the back. After she is on the floor, he stands and draws his gun.)

FARMER: All right, come out here!! All of you!! NOW!! Hands up!! Move it!! (The three enter, from stage left All are carrying guns. They stop and stare at the body.) She's dead.

RUBY: Somethin' must be goin' around.

JOEY: Open season on Marzetti's, I guess.

FARMER: I don't expect one of you to confess. But don't forget you are dealing with the FBI here. A very simple examination of the guns will show which one was fired last.

FRANKIE: That so? (He looks at the others and simultaneously they fire their guns.)

FARMER: Smart, very smart. Give me those guns. All of them. (He collects them.) HOSTESS!!! (She enters.) Take these and lock 'em up. (She exits with guns.) I don't know where you got the idea you could mess with the FBI...

FRANKIE: We ain't messin' with the FBI. We're just messin' with Lena. The broad was trouble, buddy. With a capital T.

RUBY: We'll take care of it, Farmer. Maybe a double funeral, what d'ya say, guys?

JOEY: There's no way she's gonna fit in the coffin with the old man. Hell, Ruby, we had to sit on it to get it closed in the first place....

FARMER: Hey, hey. What are you talkin' about?? This is murder!! You can't just pretend it didn't happen.

JOEY: Geez, she's gettin' blood all over the stage. Can we like take her off or somethin'. Suppose someone slips and falls. Could be a lawsuit there.

FRANKIE: C'mon, Joey, give me a hand. Later on, we will put her in the trunk and dump her in Cleveland somewhere.

JOEY: (As he and FRANKIE drag the body offstage.) Ooh, that's good, Frankie. That kinda stuff happens all the time in Cleveland.

FARMER: (Shaking his head) It isn't going to work, you know, Ruby. And, hey, what's with your brother? Who is he now?

RUBY: He's Frankie. I don't know for how long. Could be just a visit. See, he was there all along, Farmer.

JOEY: (Returning onstage) Okay, she's stashed. What's next?

FARMER: I take you all in, I guess.

FRANKIE: Are you not gonna hate to do that, though? I mean, if you take us in, without the dough, well.....it is like you did not really crack the Marzetti mob. You will just have one corpse, and three suspects.

FARMER: You got a better idea, Marbles?

FRANKIE: Well, it's just that if I were you, I would at least want to walk in with something substantial. Like the Marzetti stash. Like dough. Like a locker full of cash. Minus a few thou.

FARMER: What's the scam, Frankie?

FRANKIE: Let us look for the key to the bus locker. Me and Ruby and Joey. Let us just say, that we knew what made the old man "tick." So we will find the key, recover the dough - and you will let us keep enough to start over.

FARMER: And the rest??

FRANKIE: Hey, I do not know. That would be "evidence." I do not know what happens to "evidence."

RUBY: Yeah, I heard that sometimes, sometimes, it gets LOST. So LOST that nobody ever finds it.

JOEY: Geez, is that so? I never heard 'bout the FBI losin' evidence....

ALL: SHUT UP, JOEY.
(HOSTESS enters from wings.)

HOSTESS: Um, I have a certified letter for Mrs. Marzetti. But isn't she...

FARMER: Yeah, yeah. I'll take it.

JOEY: Careful where ya step, little lady.

FARMER: (Handing over the sheaf of papers, taking the letter.) Here. We might as well let everybody here play Vito's game. Can you get photocopies of these, Hostess?

HOSTESS: Gee, Agent Farmer, the photocopier won't even be invented for another twenty years. You must be psychic. (She exits.)

FRANKIE: So, Farmer....Are you going to play along??

FARMER: (Reading letter.) I don't know about that, Frankie. We'll see if one of these folks can come up with the locker key. In the meantime, though, I think you and I better have a little chat.

RUBY: Why? What is that??

JOEY: What'cha got there??

FARMER: It's the psychiatrist report. On Frankie. Or rather, it's a preliminary report. The complete results of his mental examination won't be ready for a while. But the doctor was concerned enough to send Lena a certified letter.

FRANKIE: A....doctor....I did not...

RUBY: (Calming him) Be quiet, Frankie. So...he said Frankie is okay, right? Just an overactive imagination.

FARMER: Here. Read it yourself. (He hands it to Ruby.)

RUBY: (To FRANKIE) It's okay, hon. (She reads.)

RUBY: (As she finishes) What a load of bull!!

JOEY: Geez, what the hell's he mean, SIMPLE?

FRANCO: She's a no-good, this report??

JOEY: SIMPLE!!

RUBY: No, darlin', she's a no-good. (To FARMER) He's Franco Franconi. The opera star.

FRANCO: You want I should-a sing, maybe??

JOEY: Ahh, geez, no.

RUBY: Maybe later, okay, Franco.

FRANCO: You just-a tell-a me when, hokay. I sing-a you one beautiful song. (He starts to hum. Off-key.)

JOEY: That's the biggest problem with Franco. Thinks he can sing.
(HOSTESS enters.)

HOSTESS: Um, Agent Farmer. I have those....what did you call them again?

FARMER: Photocopies.

HOSTESS: Yeah. Photocopies. Anyway. They're ready to go.

FARMER: Fine. Explain to the audience, Hostess. I've got to keep an eye on this group. (They exit.)

END OF PART I PART II - THE CLUE HUNT

Following the actors' exit, the HOSTESS will introduce the next portion of the mystery.

If a full-scale clue hunt is part of the evening, the HOSTESS explains how it will work, including rules. The Production Manual covers how to stage a clue hunt as well as how to eliminate it. The Manual also includes how to incorporate food into the event, whether it's a full meal, or just snacks or dessert. If your event does NOT include a clue hunt throughout the facility, you will need to give out the clues to the teams, give a short break, and collect solutions.

THE CLUES

The participants will, using the puzzles, trivia, and questions on the clue packet sheets, discover the following clues. This will, in turn, lead them to the hiding place of the key to the bus station locker.

1. KEY
2. RIGHT
3. HAMMER
4. WHITE
5. HIGHEST
6. INSIDE
7. STRING
8. DO
9. C NOTE

10. WHERE TO TURN IN SOLUTIONS

The solution sheets ask the following questions:

1. Who fingered Joey "The Gut" Marzetti? How do you know??
2. Who murdered Lena Marzetti? How did you know??
3. Where is the key to the bus station locker?? (Don't go there!! Just tell where it is.)

THE VERY BRIEF SOLUTION SCENE IS NOT INCLUDED IN REVIEW SCRIPTS. IF YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE THE ENTIRE ACTING COPY BEFORE MAKING A DECISION ABOUT PRODUCING, PLEASE CONTACT US:

330-678-3893

mysteriesbymoushey@gmail.com

PROPS/TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

A piano, with lifting lid police tape (to block off the stage area during the clue hunt) a coffin for "Vito". An alternate is an 'urn' for his 'ashes.' A very large urn. stage gun that fires loudly (used off stage) 3 smaller guns (Frankie, Ruby, Joey) letter from Dr. Gephardt bus locker key various changes of costume for Frankie's different personalities

PRODUCTION PACKET

Sample clue hunt, with answer key and flow chart

Blank flow chart so you can design your own

Funeral "readings" that you can have audience members do (optional)

Sample flyer, press release, sign for door.

Sample letter from Dr. Gephardt.

Sample program

Production Manual (It's the same for all shows.)

OPTIONAL

Everything in the Production Packet is available in print format for a small fee, including the Production Manual.