

## Act 1, Scene 1

All the scenes take place in a basement somewhere in the outskirts of New York City. The stage area has a small kitchen, bathroom door, an old couch and chairs with new and old recording equipment, microphones, stands and other devices spread throughout. There is also a sound and props table to one side of the stage. Three microphones stand together to another side, not exactly the look of a true radio broadcasting station but comfortable. There are papers all about, messy, equipment all over and somewhat unorganized. All cast members aside from a change or two remain on stage for both acts. It is important to note the all commercials are reproductions of similar commercial dialogue from this time period.

(Cast slowly filters in as they find a place to sit)

GEORGE Ok... is everyone here?

STANLEY No not yet... Mac...

GEORGE What... Mac, he's late, right?

SARA Right...

GEORGE Why am I not surprised... and Ursula?

SARA She had a nail appointment but should be here,

GEORGE Oh boy...

SARA She told Joe she would be here...

GEORGE Great... we're doing great! We have to get this rehearsal over with, fix just about everything and then run it live on the air to who knows how many thousands of listeners in about (Looks at watch) two hours!!!

(MAC enters)

STANLEY Nice of you to join us (Snotty to Mac, then looks over to George)

MAC Sorry George... I was over at O'Shanigan's getting something to eat.

JOE Yeah right.

SARA Something to eat... ha!

MAC Yeah, that's right... (Defensive)

JOE Come on Mac we all know you drink your dinner.

MAC I was hungry, they had mac and cheese... and... b...

JOE More like beer and cheese...

(Some undertone giggling)

MAC What?

JOE Nothing... (Straightens up)

(Ursula enters with shopping bags)

URSULA I'm here... sorry; hi everyone... broke a nail and you know how those hurt.

BRONSON Darlin' when you hurt... I hurt it... gets me right here.

URSULA Oh... Bro... (Bats her eyes)

GEORGE So we are all here?

FAT Yep.

GEORGE Ok where are the scripts?

STANLEY The scripts...

GEORGE The scripts I left on that table!

STANLEY What? You didn't leave any scripts on that table...

GEORGE Oh... wait a minute, no scripts on the table (Thinking) oh that's right they're still in the trunk.

SARA I'll get them.

GEORGE Ok, thanks (Gives her a key, she starts to exit) Well, Ladies and gentlemen we've made good progress, Fat pick up the pace a little on your lines.

FAT Got it...

GEORGE Also the Camel guys want everyone to smoke their brand so announcers a little livelier please on your delivery.

SARA Ok George (Before she exits)

JOE My throat hurts so will do what I can.

GEORGE Your throat hurts... listen we go live on the air with this tonight... if anything hurts you need to fix it now.

JENNY That not the only thing we need to fix... What about the sound effects?

GEORGE Ok, we definitely have to iron that out at this rehearsal. Ya know, being a rogue radio station like we are in shadows of other radio stations and those gigantic television stations trying to muscle in is no easy task.

JOE Oh don't worry... who can afford those TV tube boxes... besides I'm not too sure they will take any audience away from us.

MAGGIE Right.

GEORGE Sponsors... if we have no sponsors then we will be doomed.

JOE Doomed?

STANLEY Doomed... unless?

GEORGE Unless they come back...

JOE What do you mean?

(Sara returns)

GEORGE If people listen to our show, which I am hoping they do, the sponsor in this case Camel cigarettes will see that it's worth their while to keep us up and running.

STANLEY Yeah then maybe we'll be able to afford to get out of this cold basement into a real radio studio.

URSULA Do I have time to get a cup of coffee?

GEORGE Whatever... (Ursula starts walking)

URSULA Hi Bronson (Smiles as she passes him)

BRONSON Hi babe...

(Joe frustrated looks towards Sara)

JOE What does he mean by babe... She is not a babe, baby, or even available.

SARA Oh pipe down Joe, just because she's your girl doesn't mean she can't say hello to anyone... besides, get yourself into character.

GEORGE That's right getting into character... all of you. That's why I'm calling you and everyone else is for that matter.

STANLEY Calling us what... assholes?

GEORGE No, not yet... what I mean is, calling you by your character name... so please everyone – call each other by your character name... got it?

ALL (Bored) Yes...

GEORGE Glad we are so excited about that... So shall we get started?

SARA I have to pee... (Sara runs to exit)

GEORGE Gee... go ahead, anyone else have any other problems?

STANLEY Well... I... (Interrupted)

GEORGE Never mind! I can only imagine... Sound... are we ready?

JOE Ready.

GEORGE Props?

JENNY Ready... except.

GEORGE Except what?

JENNY I can't find the doorbell.

STANLEY Hold!

GEORGE What???

JENNY Well, what am I suppose to use to ring as a doorbell?

JOE I have a cowbell...

GEORGE A cowbell... great... how do you think a cowbell is gonna sound (disgusted undertone).

MAC It might sound like it is time for dinner.

GEORGE Dinner huh... well, you already "ate", remember? Ok, let's start.

STANLEY Wait... wait... I need to find my page. (Stanley anally turns his pages to the script)

GEORGE Right... we'll wait (Taps his finger)

STANLEY What page are we on? (Whining)

GEORGE That would be page ONE!!! (Pause) Ok, I'm not waiting any longer... go!

## Scene 2

JOE (1<sup>st</sup> ANNOUNCER) - Here comes... THE FAT MAN IN "MURDER IN JADE" starring J. Scott Smart and presented by the makers of CAMEL Cigarettes.

> MUSIC: . . . CAMEL THEME AND OUT.

JOE            More people smoke Camels than any other cigarette!

SARA (2<sup>ND</sup> ANNOUNCER) - Take the Camel thirty-day test -- the sensible cigarette test -- and see how mild, how flavorful, how thoroughly enjoyable Camels are!

SARA            See why more people smoke Camels than any other cigarette.  
(PAUSE)

SARA            There he goes... he's lighting up a Camel cigarette...He's stepping on the scales... > (COIN IN SLOT)

ARTHUR        Weight 257 pounds... (Slow heavy southern accent)

> (CARD EXPELLED)

ARTHUR        Fortune... danger.

> (MUSIC... STING AND OUT)

ARTHUR        Who is it?

GEORGE        Wait a minute... stop. Who is that?

SARA            What do you mean? It's Arthur...

ARTHUR        It's me... Arthur.

GEORGE        Huh... Arthur, right... Arthur, could you try not having such a thick southern accent.

ARTHUR        Well... this is just the way I talk...

GEORGE        Yes I know but we want people to actually understand what you're saying.

MAGGIE        I understand'em just fine (Also heavy southern accent)

GEORGE        Of course you do... you know him. You're married to him!

ARTHUR        No just you wait minute... I'm what you call an in-de-pen-dent man.

MAGGIE Yeah, right...

GEORGE OK Arthur... give it a try.

ARTHUR Oh... OK... I got it.

GEORGE All right, lets pick it up from Sara... "See why more people"...

SARA See why more people smoke Camels than any other cigarette.

(PAUSE)

SARA There he goes... he's lighting up a Camel cigarette...

He's stepping on the scales...

> (COIN IN SLOT)

ARTHUR Weight 257 pounds... (There is no change at all in his voice)

(George throws his arms up and is reserved to the fact there was no change and to let it go)

> (CARD EXPELLED)

ARTHUR Fortune... danger.

> (MUSIC... STING AND OUT)

ARTHUR Who is it?

FAT The Fat Man.

> (MUSIC: . . . FAT MAN THEME IS ESTABLISHED – FADE DOWN AND UNDER)

FAT There's always something mysterious or even baffling about ordinary crimes. In nine cases out of ten the motive is money and generally the person with the most evidence against him is the guilty party. But solving a killing is something else again, and there are all kinds of motives when the crime is murder.

> (MUSIC... STING AND UNDER)

FAT The Bronson Insurance Company specialized in fire and theft. They would insure almost anything but occasionally they got hit and hit hard in spite of the persistence of old man Bronson, president of the company, I'd done a lot of work for them from time to time so I wasn't surprised when I got a call asking me to drop in. But I was surprised when I was told the old man himself wanted to see me.

BRONSON Sit down, Runyun. This is an unusual case, Runyon, and a very important one to this company. (PAUSE) Did you ever hear of Solomon's Rope?

FAT Solomon's Rope...? Uh... oh... oh... The matched jade necklace stolen from the Mavis family about fifteen years ago.

BRONSON Yes. I don't know whether or not you knew it but this company had insured the necklace for three hundred thousand dollars.

FAT Yeah, and you paid off on it.

BRONSON Exactly and if you remember, the Mavis home was robbed by a gang of gunmen led by a man named Jack Kelly.

FAT The first of the Dillinger breed...

BRONSON That's right. The necklace was part of the loot. Less than three weeks later the police trapped the gang, and in the gunfight that followed, killed most of them, including Kelly. The entire loot from the Mavis robbery was recovered except for the necklace Solomon's Rope... that was never found.

FAT I think the police figured Kelly broke it down and got rid of it stone by stone before they closed in with him...

George, shouldn't it be "before they caught him" right there?

GEORGE Yeah Fat... use that

FAT Ok... uh... Kelly broke it down and got rid of it stone by stone before they caught him...

BRONSON I think the police were wrong in their theory.

FAT Why?

BRONSON Look at it this way. Kelly was just a gunman with more nerve than brains. The police were closing in on him. He didn't have much time. He had plenty of ready cash.

Why would he take the trouble to get rid of the necklace stone by stone? I think he liked it hid it some place

FAT Fifteen years is a long time, Mr. Bronson. Why the sudden interest?

BRONSON I'm coming to that... If you remember, there were two members of Kelly's gang who weren't with the rest when the police closed in. One was a little weasel-faced fellow named Tucker Malone.

FAT Oh yeah, I remember... They caught him two days later hiding in a flophouse in Chicago.

BRONSON That's right. And the other missing member was a girl named Kitty Cassidy. They didn't know too much about her and never did catch her. She's still missing.

FAT You think this Kitty Cassidy got the necklace?

BRONSON No. She hadn't been with the gang long and she wasn't Kelly's girl. I don't think she would have known where Kelly hid it. But I do think Tucker Malone might know.

FAT He got life, didn't he?

BRONSON Yes, but his sentence was commuted.

FAT Oh?

BRONSON He was released from prison three days ago.

FAT And now you think he'll go after the necklace?

BRONSON Exactly.

FAT It seems to me you missed a bet in not having somebody pick up his trail when he got out. He might be hard to find by now.

BRONSON I did that purposely. I don't want to arouse his suspicion.

FAT Um... He might have the necklace by now.

BRONSON So much the better... It won't be easy for him to get rid of it. Do you think you can find him?

FAT I can try...

BRONSON Good. Then you'll take the job?

FAT Why not?

BRONSON Oh, and by the way, Runyun, I might add that there is a ten thousand dollar reward posted by this company for the return of the necklace.

> (MUSIC... BRIDGE... the FADE)