

MAE WEST JEWEL ROBBERY

She made scandal stylish

Written and produced by

John F. Barber

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International

Re-Imagined Radio
Season 14, Episode 03

Final draft

MAE WEST JEWEL ROBBERY

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Season 14, Episode 03, RiR #95
Final Draft

Premier broadcast: March 16, 2026

Written, Produced, Hosted by John F. Barber

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Synopsis

Re-Imagined Radio presents "Mae West Jewel Robbery," episode #95, a tribute to Womens' History Month and Mae West as an advocate for women's rights, liberation, and equality. We sample from West's early stage and screen career, a dramatized robbery, and two rare radio appearances to demonstrate West's imitable way of making scandal stylish.

West was outspoken, controversial. A woman who claimed her own sexuality. Fearful of censorship, radio programs avoided West. Her known radio appearances are very few. Her role, other than interviewee, are even more rare. However, throughout her career, West challenged how the status quo thought women should act. Attempts to censor and silence Mae West only increased her status as an international icon.

Credits

Charles Frederick Lindsley as narrator
Sergeant Jesse Rosenquist, L.A.P.D., as Police Dispatcher
Martha Wentworth as Mae West

Color Code

Yellow highlighted text = sound effect(s), either pre-recorded or live.

~~text example~~ = text that could be deleted as needed.

~~Magenta highlighted text with strike through~~ = text deleted for episode timing

MUSIC = pre-recorded

MUSIC = bespoke, created for this episode

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COLD OPEN

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "CALLING ALL CARS"
EPISODE BEGINNING, RACING POLICE
CARS WITH SIRENS, VOICE ON RADIO"

JESSE Los Angeles Police calling all cars.
ROSENQUIST. Attention all cars. Broadcast 69. A hold
LAPD DISPATCHER up. Suspect subscribed as 5 feet 10 or
11 inches tall. Weight about 190 pounds.
Escape in a maroon colored coupe.
License number unknown. The suspect held
up and robbed Mae West, motion picture
actress of more than \$15,000 in cash and
jewelry. That is all. Got get 'em boys.
That's all. Rosenquist.

THEME AND ANNOUNCER

MUSIC: RIR THEME

ANNOUNCER Welcome to Re-Imagined Radio, a program
about sound-based storytelling. With
each episode we explore how dialogue,
sound effects, and music can engage your
listening imagination and promote
storytelling. Here to tell you about
THIS episode is John Barber, producer
and host.

HOST OPEN

HOST Hello everyone. Welcome to Re-Imagined
Radio. This episode, number ninety-five,
is our Womens' History Month tribute.

It's also a documentary about a woman
who controlled her own image, persona,
and sexuality. A controversial star of

stage and screen, she made scandal stylish with her bawdy banter.

A robbery at gunpoint and a high profile court trial brought more attention to our subject. A dramatization based on police and courtroom records was produced by *Calling All Cars*, one of radio's earliest police procedural programs.

However, uncomfortable with our subject, fearful of controversy and censorship, radio executives insisted she be depicted by an impersonator. We sample this program in our episode.

Her other known radio appearances are rare. Perhaps they number less than ten. Roles other than interviewee are even more rare.

We sample two radio skits by our subject. One resulted in a strong letter from the Federal Communications Commission.

Never deterred by controversy, our subject championed women's rights, sexual liberation, and equality in her own inimitable style. She challenged the way the status quo thought women should act. Attempts to censor and silence her only elevated her status as an international icon.

As you may have guessed, the subject of our episode is Mae West. We call this

episode "Mae West Jewel Robbery." It's an interesting story. Stick around and listen in.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

HOST

Our story takes place in Hollywood, motion picture capital of the world.

It's 1932. Mae West is there, working on her first motion picture, *Night After Night* starring George Raft.

West, an American actress, singer, comedian, screenwriter, and playwright is already recognized for portraying sexually confident female characters, with her sultry looks, sensual voices, and bawdy innuendos.

SFX: RECORDED MAE WEST QUOTES

MAE WEST

"When I'm good I'm very, very good, but when I'm bad, I'm better."

"Why don't you come up sometime, see me?"

"I used to be Snow White, but I drifted."

"Well when I'm caught between two evils I generally like to take the one I never tried."

"What's the good of resisting temptation? There'll always be more."

HOST That's Mae West. Called by radio historian Frank Bresee [Bre-ZEE] [QUOTE]"an American institution, a star of stars, a legend in her own lifetime, the Empress of sex and wit." [UNQUOTE] Others call her "Queen of Innuendo." And, she has a penchant for diamonds.

In September, sitting in a car, she's robbed at gunpoint of her diamonds and cash.

But, I'm getting ahead of myself in the telling of this story. Let's back up a bit.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

ACT #1, BROADWAY

HOST Born Mary Jane West in Brooklyn, August 17, 1893, she is known by her nickname, "Mae" throughout her life. Her mother is a corset and fashion model. Her father, a livery stable owner.

Both encourage Mae's interest in entertaining. She first performs as "Baby Mae" in a church social at age five. By seven she is singing and tap dancing in amateur shows, frequently winning prizes in local talent contests. At fourteen she is performing professional vaudeville with the Hal Clarendon Stock Company.

Her Broadway career begins September 22, 1911, at age eighteen, in the Ned Wayburn revue *A la Broadway and Hello*

Paris. As Maggie O'Hara, West performs a song and dance titled "They Are Irish," backed by a twenty-four-person ensemble.

The next morning's newspapers are full of favorable remarks.

SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING 1911

NEW YORK TIMES REVIEW

NEW YORK TIMES (STEVE BECKER) "A girl named Mae West, hitherto unknown, pleased by her grotesquerie and a snappy way of singing and dancing" ("New Skit Shown at Folies Bergere." New York Times.)

SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING 1911

THE SUN REVIEW

THE SUN "Miss Mae West had a song or two that went pretty well and she danced with considerable grace and originality" ("New Follies Show." *The Sun*. Sep. 23, 1911, p. 5; Quoted in Watts, p. 32).

SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING 1911

NEW YORK TRIBUNE

NEW YORK TRIBUNE " ... there were some shining lights in the cast, notably Miss Mae West, who played the part of a wise, flip maid. She danced in Turkish harem trousers in a most energetic, amusing and carefree manner" (*New York Tribune*, 23 Sept. 1911, pp. 25, 29??).

SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING 1911

NEW YORK TRIBUNE REVIEW

NEW YORK TRIBUNE "We applaud Mae West for showing a bit of a sense of nonsense, which is the very latest addition to wit." (Quoted in Watts, p. 32)

HOST She appears with Al Jolson in *Very Violette*, November 20, 1911, and, in 1918, opposite Ed Wynn as Mamie Dyne in Arthur Hammerstein's *Sometime*, where she introduces the "Shimmy" dance to Broadway, and causes quite the stir.

Her first Broadway starring role is as Margie LaMont in *Sex*, April 26, 1926 to March 19, 1927, at Daly's 63rd Street Theatre. West, then age 26, wrote, produced, directed, and appeared in the play under the alias "Jane Mast."

Eleven months after opening, following a pressure campaign by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, Mae West, the cast, and two backers are arrested on stage. *Sex* is closed. West is convicted by a jury of providing a performance that, according to a report in the *New York Times*, [QUOTE] "Tended to corrupt the morals of youth and others"[UNQUOTE] ("Mae West Jailed with Two Producers." *New York Times*, pp. 1, 14).

HOST Twenty-two individuals, including West, face jail time. West could pay a \$500 fine and be done. But she chooses the ten-day jail sentence for its publicity value. When released, April 28, 1927, eight days later--two days dropped from her sentence for good behavior--*The New York Times* reports ...

SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING FROM
1927 NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE

NEW YORK TIMES
(STEVE BECKER)

Mae West, author, producer and star of *Sex*, was released from Welfare Island yesterday after spending ten days in the workhouse as punishment for giving immoral theatrical performances. She announced that she intended to go to Chicago to play in *Sex*, and that she did not think the authorities there would agree with the New York officials who decided that the play was indecent.

The actress declared that she had gathered material for "a dozen plays" during her workhouse term and that she intended to write them.

~~Miss West said her experiences in jail had not been as unpleasant as she had expected, and that she was glad to have received a new angle on life. She announced that hereafter she would devote some of her time to philanthropy, especially in getting jobs for some of the unfortunates whom she met on Welfare Island.~~

~~Warden Harry Schleth of the workhouse said Miss West had turned over to him a check for \$1,000 which she received for a magazine article on her workhouse experiences. The money would be used, he announced, to start a Mae West Memorial Prison Library.~~

~~He denied that Miss West had received any special favors as an inmate. She had~~

~~done as much work as any other inmate, he said; had cared for her own room, dusted the books in the library, mingled with the others in an unpretentious manner and had worn the regular prison garb with the exception of a pair of white stockings she purchased from the commissary ("Mae West Departs From Workhouse." New York Times, p. 27).~~

HOST

West continues to write controversial plays. *The Drag* (1927) and *The Pleasure Man* (1928) are both notable. But *Diamond Lil* is West's biggest success, and the play that marks her theatrical career.

For nine months, April to September 1928, at New York's Royale Theatre, West develops her persona as Diamond Lil, a powerful, independent, diamond-studded woman.

Fast forward to 1932. Mae West is invited to Hollywood by George Raft. He's starring in Paramount's production of *Night After Night* and recommends West for the role of fast-talking Maudie Triplett, a woman with her inimitable presence and dialogue.

**SFX: RECORDED VOICE REPRESENTING
GEORGE RAFT SPEAKING ABOUT WEST**

GEORGE RAFT

We met and worked together in New York vaudeville and stage performances. I knew she'd be the best for the role of Maudie and would bring a lot of attention to the movie.

HOST Although she appears in only four scenes, West rewrites the script to favor her character, and makes her mark as Maudie Triplett, walking into Joe Anton's (George Raft's) nightclub. The hat check woman admires her diamonds.

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "NIGHT AFTER NIGHT"

WEST/TRIPLETT Don't let those guys in. They'll wreck the place. Hey, Gorilla! Come here.

MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL Hello, Maudie.

WEST/TRIPLETT Where's Joe? I gotta see that little rat.

MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL Well, he's pretty busy right now, Maudie.

WEST/TRIPLETT Don't give me that. You give it to me twice over the phone.

MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL Yeah, no, Maudie.

WEST/TRIPLETT No sale, no sale. I'm gonna see him tonight.

MAÎTRE D'HÔTEL Well, you wait right here, and I'll go upstairs and see if he's there.

WEST/TRIPLETT I'll be right up after you. (TO HAT CHECK WOMAN) Oh, honey, how's business?

HAT CHECK WOMAN Fine.

WEST/TRIPLETT You been insulted lately?

HAT CHECK WOMAN My goodness, what beautiful diamonds.

WEST/TRIPLETT Goodness had nothing to do with it dearie.

HOST Her success with *Night After Night* leads Mae West to a starring role in the 1933 Paramount movie version of her play, *Diamond Lil*.

West picks Cary Grant as the leading man which essentially launches his career. In one memorable scene, Grant, the manager of a Salvation Army boarding house, and West, owner and manager of a honky-tonk bar, discuss her more than ample display of diamonds.

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "DIAMOND LIL"

CARY GRANT "I'm sorry that you think more of your diamonds than you do of your soul."

MAE WEST "I'm sorry that you think more of my soul than my diamonds."

HOST In another scene, West brushes off an admirer's litany of her attributes ...

SFX: SAMPLE FROM DIAMOND LIL

ADMIRER "Your hands, your lips, your hair, your magnificent shoulders . . . !

MAE WEST "What're you doin' honey, makin' love or takin' inventory?"

HOST As motion picture successes continue, West continues her independent

lifestyle. She lives alone, with her diamonds, furs, and pet monkey, Revolver, at Ravenswood Apartments, 570 North Rossmore Avenue, Los Angeles, until her death in 1980.

And it's there, in a car, September 28, 1932, that West is robbed at gun point of her cash and diamond jewelry.

West is the latest person associated with a string of jewelry robberies. The earliest robberies were reported in January. Several more occurred in the following months. In each instance, a group of three to four polite and well dressed masked thieves relieve motion picture people of their cash and jewelry.

The Los Angeles Police think these robberies are conducted by an organized group operating with information from an inside person. Someone who knows the movie business community. Knows who has jewelry. Where it is kept. When it might be worn.

But who is this "inside person"?

Biographer Robert S. Bader considers the possibility it's Zeppo Marx, who with his brothers Groucho, Chico, and Harpo forms The Four Marx Brothers, famous vaudeville, radio, motion pictures, and later, television entertainers. They arrive in Hollywood soon after Mae West.

According to Bader, Zeppo needs cash to buy a Hollywood talent agency. Using insurance payments for stolen jewelry might be one way to raise the funds.

It's an interesting story. And if you want to know more, please visit the episode page at our website, reimagined radio [dot] fm.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

HOST

Mae West reports her robbery to the Los Angeles District Attorney Buron Fitts the night it happens. He refers the case to the Los Angeles Police Department.

Their report, released two weeks later, attracts immediate attention.

The *New York Times* reports the robbery, on October 13, 1932.

**SFX: RECORDED VOICE READING FROM
1932 NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE**

NEW YORK TIMES
(STEVE BECKER)

Police revealed today that Mae West, Broadway actress of "Diamond Lil" fame, was robbed two weeks ago of nearly \$20,000 in jewelry and cash.

~~Investigators said that two days after the robbery a telephone call was received by Miss West at her home, informing her that her purse could be recovered in a vacant lot near the centre of Hollywood. She went there and found the purse with her personal papers.~~

Miss West was returning home from a friend's house early in the evening of Sept. 28, when a tall, heavy-set man thrust a revolver into her car as it entered the driveway and obtained the money and jewelry ("Mae West Is Robbed," p. 22).

("Mae West, Stage and Movie Star Who Burlesqued Sex, Dies at 87" *New York Times*, Nov. 23, 1980).

(Thackrey, Ted O. and Kevin Thomas. "From the Archives: Mae West, Epitome of Witty Sexuality, Dies" *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 23, 1980).

HOST

West's stolen jewelry includes a diamond necklace, a diamond bracelet, a diamond ring, and a wrist watch with a diamond encrusted band (Schachter).

West's purse, also stolen, contains \$3,400 in cash recently withdrawn from a bank. When returned, the purse is empty. No cash. No diamonds.

Mae West pushes the Los Angeles police for results, noting her suspicions of her recently hired driver Henry O. Voiler.

Voiler is from Chicago, where he and West met. After arriving in Hollywood, he quickly connects with West, learns that her limousine is being repaired, and volunteers his car and services as her driver (Watts 145, Eells and Musgrove 139).

He is with West, in his car, when she is robbed, the evening of September 28 (Watts 150, Bader 116, Eells and Musgrove 140).

We'll learn more about this when we sample "The Mae West Jewel Robbery" episode of *Calling All Cars*, coming up shortly.

Voiler claims he received a telephone call from the robber, offering to return West's jewelry for \$5,000. She refuses. Voiler later reports a lower, \$3,000 ransom. Which West also rejects (Watts 151, Eells and Musgrove 140-141).

Voiler is held briefly by the Los Angeles Police, but with no evidence to tie him to the robbery he's released and told to leave town. He goes to Chicago, and later, Miami, Florida (Watts 168).

LAPD investigates Voiler's known associates and identifies Edward "Happy" Friedman, a Chicago gangster, as a person of interest.

Arrested, held for thirty six hours, and questioned repeatedly, Friedman admits to the Mae West jewel robbery. He names Voiler as the mastermind, and Morris Cohen, a Detroit gangster, as an accomplice (Watts 182).

Voiler resists extradition attempts and avoids trial until the case is dropped when Friedman recants his earlier testimony, saying his guilty plea was

coerced by police beatings (Bader 296, Watts 182, Eells and Musgrove 141).

Friedman goes to trial. Mae West is determined to testify (Bader 115). Threatening telephone calls and rumors that Chicago gangsters plan to throw acid in her face can not deter her determination. A heavy protection detail of LAPD officers probably helps (Watts 183).

Friedman is charged and convicted of robbing Mae West. (Justia U.S. Law; FindLaw).

Morris Cohen? Disappeared. In the wind. (Watts 182).

**MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME FOR BREAK,
FADE OUT FOR VOICE INTRODUCTION**

THE FUSEBOX BREAK

HOST

This is John Barber. Thank you for listening to "Mae West Jewel Robbery," episode #95 of Re-Imagined Radio. While we prepare the studio for the next part of our episode, let me tell you about "The Fusebox Show." If you're concerned with the state of current events and news, "The Fusebox Show" is definitely for you.

Produced by Marc Rose, Milt Kanen, and Jeff Pollard, each episode features unique conversation and commentary that goes where even late night television

talk show hosts fear to tread. Listen to these examples.

MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME, FADE UNDER
AND OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING

SFX: THE FUSEBOX SHOW TEASER

HOST "The Fusebox Show" is available as podcasts. Learn more at their website, thefuseboxshow dot com.

MUSIC: FUSEBOX THEME, FADE UNDER
AND OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING

ACT #2, CALLING ALL CARS

HOST You're listening to Re-Imagined Radio. Our episode is "Mae West Jewel Robbery."

Press coverage of the robbery and trial creates lots of attention and encourages the story's adaptation for *Calling All Cars*, a popular police radio series with episodes dramatizing police reports and courtroom records.

"The Mae West Jewel Robbery," first heard February 21, 1934, features some detail changes. The Police Dispatcher you'll hear at the beginning of this dramatization is Jesse Rosenquist, a real-life LAPD dispatcher.

The character Dave Brennen replaces real-life criminal Henry Voiler.

The character Ed is Edward Friedman.

The character Sam is, apparently, Morris Cohen.

Martha Wentworth voices Mae West in this program.

The court dates are different from other sources.

Let's listen in.

SFX: CALLING ALL CARS OPEN, CAR
MOTORS, POLICE SIRENS

~~JESSE
ROSENQUIST~~

~~Los Angeles Police calling all cars.
Attention all cars. Broadcast 69. A hold
up. Suspect subscribed as 5 feet 10 or
11 inches. Weight about 190 pounds.
Escape in a maroon colored coupe.
License number unknown. The suspect held
up and robbed Mae West, motion picture
actress. of more than \$15,000 in jewelry
and cash. That is all. Got get 'em boys.
That's all. Rosenquist.~~

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

FREDERICK
LINDSLEY

... it is with pleasure that *Calling All Cars* tonight brings you "The Mae West Jewel Robbery", with Miss Martha Wentworth playing her now famous impersonation of Miss West ... and now we turn the microphone over to Chief James E. Davis of the Los Angeles Police Department, who has a message for you.

CHIEF DAVIS

Good evening, friends. When I became chief of police, there were several crimes on the police records which had

not, I felt, been investigated to the utmost.

To run down these crimes, I selected from the force three officers, Detective Lieutenants S.S. Stone, W.M. Robinson, and E.Y. Kynett, and appointed them special investigators working directly under my supervision.

Among these unsolved cases was the theft of the Mae West jewels. I assigned Robinson and Stone to work on this case, which was, at that time, more than a year old. ~~Although every peace officer in Los Angeles County had worked diligently on this case, nothing had been discovered of any value. Still, I felt that the case could be solved.~~

~~The quickness and dispatch with which Lieutenants Robinson and Stone brought the case to a successful close speaks more volumes than any words I could utter in praise of them.~~

Tonight's dramatization is based completely on the confidential reports of the investigating officers and the court transcript of the trial of David Friedman. It has also been read and approved by the plaintiff, Miss Mae West. I turn now to Frederick Lindsley, who will tell you of the Mae West Jewel robbery.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

LINDSLEY In the latter part of September 1932, May West's automobile is damaged in an accident. She is seriously inconvenienced by the lack of a car. And we find her in her apartment on North Rossmore, talking the situation over with her manager, James Timony.

~~MAE WEST I'll tell you, Jim, it's a nuisance being without a car right now with this new picture startin'.~~

~~JAMES A. TIMONY Yeah, you can rent a car.~~

~~MAE WEST Yeah, and put your life in the hands of any palooka they send along to drive it.~~

~~TIMONY You could use cabs.~~

~~MAE WEST Oh, it's just as bad, and anyway, there's never a cab around the studio when you want one.~~

~~SFX: BUZZER FROM FRONT DESK
TELEPHONE~~

~~MAE WEST See who it is, will you, Jim?~~

~~TIMONY Sure. (SPEAKING INTO TELEPHONE) Hello? Miss West's apartment. Who? They're still in it, I'll see. (TO MAE WEST) It's a Mr. Brennan in the lobby. You in?~~

~~MAE WEST Oh, that's Dave. Sure. Tell him to come up.~~

~~TIMONY (SPEAKING INTO TELEPHONE) Send him up, please. (TO MAE WEST) Hey, who is this guy?~~

~~MAE WEST~~ Oh, you heard me speak of Dave Brennan?
His wife and I were good friends in the
big town.

~~TIMONY~~ Oh, yeah. Seems to me I do remember the
name.

(~~NOTE: Dave Brennan = Harry Voiler~~)

~~MAE WEST~~ Well, he looked me up at the studio
today. Just driven in town. I told him
to come up and see me some time. Well,
Revolver, what's the matter with you?
Hey, Jim, this monkey looks hungry. Did
you feed him?

~~TIMONY~~ Yeah, right on the stroke of seven.

~~MAE WEST~~ Oh, okay. (TO REVOLVER) What is it,
fellow? What are you trying to tell me?
(TO TIMONY) Well, Jim, the Revolver
here, he has more sense than any man
I've ever met. Except for you, of
course.

~~TIMONY~~ Thanks for the exception. After all, I'm
your manager, and that does require some
sense.

~~MAE WEST~~ Yeah, I guess it does.

SFX: DOOR BUZZER

~~MAE WEST~~ Well, that must be Dave, Jim. I'll let
him in.

SFX: DOOR OPENS

~~MAE WEST~~ Hello, Dave. Good to see you again.

DAVE BRENNAN Good to see you, Mae.

MAE WEST Well, I didn't have a minute to talk to you this afternoon. Come on in. Oh, tell me, how's Marge?

BRENNAN Fine as silk, Mae. Wants to be remembered to you and everything.

MAE WEST Oh, gee, that's swell. Oh, Dave, this is Jim Timony. He's my manager. I don't think you ever met. Jim, this is Dave Brennan.

TIMONY How do you do?

BRENNAN Hello, Jim. I'm glad to know you.

MAE WEST Sit down, Dave. Have a cigarette?

BRENNAN Thanks. Gold tips, huh? Doing all right, ain't you, Mae? A little different from the time they closed "Pleasure Man" over in Jersey, huh?

MAE WEST Well, it wasn't doing so bad then, either.

BRENNAN Yeah, you ring the bell every time, Mae. Well, tell me, how's every little thing out here in Hollywood?

MAE WEST Oh, it's okay. I can't complain. Only I'm walking instead of riding these days.

BRENNAN Yeah, what are you talking about, Mae? You walking. (LAUGHS) You turned over in a new leaf?

MAE WEST Oh, don't be funny. A lousy chauffeur of mine wrecked a car the other night, and I fired him. I'm still fixing the car, so I haven't a chauffeur or even a car to put him in.

BRENNAN Gee, that's tough. But say, Mae, I'd be glad to help you out.

MAE WEST What do you mean?

BRENNAN Well, I'm not doing anything out here, just looking the place over. I'll drive you around.

MAE WEST Oh, no, Dave, I couldn't ask you to do that.

BRENNAN Why not? You're welcome to it.

MAE WEST Oh, Jim, that sounds like the answer to a maiden's prayer.

TIMONY Well, anyway, the answer to a prayer.

BRENNAN Okay, then I'm your new chauffeur.

MAE WEST Oh, Dave, I accept with pleasure.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

LINDSLEY So, Dave Brennan, friend, serves as Miss West's chauffeur. In a few days, he's completely familiar with her daily schedule. Then on September 27th, 1932, as he is driving Timony and her along Wilshire Boulevard ...

SFX: CAR ENGINE RUNNING

MAE WEST Hey, Dave, stop here a minute, will you?

DAVE BRENNAN Where's that, Mae?

MAE WEST The shop at the next corner. I wanna see
about a fittin'.

TIMONY Ah, come on, Mae. Let it go till later.
I've got an appointment with that
chatter-writer at the studio. You have a
rehearsal.

MAE WEST Oh, now, Jim, it'll only take a minute.

TIMONY Yeah, I know your minutes. It means a
couple of hours.

MAE WEST Listen you eggs. I'll give you each a
dollar for every minute I'm in here over
ten.

TIMONY That's a bet. Dave, that's the easiest
dough you ever made.

MAE WEST Yeah, if you make it.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, CROSS FADE
TO

SFX: AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC

TIMONY Well, here she comes at last.

BRENNAN Yeah, look at all the bundles.

TIMONY Yeah, what did I tell you? Bought the
place out.

MAE WEST Well, there boys. That wasn't long, was it?

TIMONY Not much. Spent twenty-six minutes in there.

MAE WEST Twenty six minutes? You're screwy.

BRENNAN No, Mae, that's right. Twenty-six minutes.

TIMONY So you owe us each sixteen bucks.

MAE WEST It was worth it. I found some of the loveliest lingerie.

BRENNAN Never mind what you found, Mae. Come on, pay off.

MAE WEST Gee, I can't right now.

BRENNAN Why not?

MAE WEST Well, I haven't got the cash.

BRENNAN Ahh go on, you're a piker.

MAE WEST Ohh, on the level, I haven't any change.

BRENNAN Woman, I don't trust you. Let's see your purse.

MAE WEST Oh, here you are.

BRENNAN Gee, three thousand dollar notes and four hundreds.

MAE WEST Nothing smaller, so I can't pay off.

TIMONY What's the idea, toting that fortune
 around with you, Mae?

MAE WEST I just got it out of the bank. I'm
 sending it east. You know, my mother.

TIMONY Yeah. It isn't safe to carry it around
 like that.

MAE WEST I'm getting the postal order for it this
 afternoon.

TIMONY No, no, you're not. We've got rehearsals
 all afternoon and all day tomorrow, too.

MAE WEST Well, I'll have to carry it with me,
 then.

DAVE BRENNAN (TO HIMSELF) Gee. Three grand and four
 Cs.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, DUCK UNDER
THE FOLLOWING

LINDSLEY The next afternoon, Dave Brennan makes a
 date to meet a friend of his at the
 corner of 6th and Rampart.

ED[WARD
FRIEDMAN] Hello, Dave.

BRENNAN Hello, Ed.

ED This is a pal of mine. Shake hands with
 Sammy. He's one of the boys.

BRENNAN Oh, yeah?

ED Yeah. What's on your mind, Dave?

BRENNAN Listen. Do you want to make a grand?

ED What's the job?

BRENNAN Grab Mae West's jewelry and her dough.

ED Sure. That's worth a grand. How about my pal here?

BRENNAN I'll cut him in for a grand, too.

ED Fair enough. How about it, Sammy?

SAM Well, fair enough.

BRENNAN Okay. Hop in, and I'll take you out to the joint and give you the layout.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

BRENNAN Well, here we are. There's the apartment house where she lives, see?

ED Yeah, but it's gonna be sort of tough making a getaway from that joint.

BRENNAN Wait a minute. You don't have to knock her over in there. Like I've been telling you, I've been driving her around, see? Now, every night after she leaves the studio, her and Jim Timony, that's her manager, and me, we all put on the feed bag together, see? And right on the dot of seven, we pull up here, and Timony goes up and feeds Revolver.

SAM What do you mean? He loads his gat?

BRENNAN No, no, no. Revolver's the name of her pet monkey.

SAM Oh, oh! Oh, I get it.

BRENNAN Now, look here. I drive her up here at seven sharp. I'll pull up by that fireplug across the street, see? Nobody'll be parked by it. There's sure to be a vacant place there.

ED Yeah? Then what?

BRENNAN You guys be parked right here. When you see Timony get out of the car and go into the apartment house, you move in, see?

ED Easy.

BRENNAN Get the rocks and the dough and take it on the lam. I'll meet you at 11 PM at the same place as this afternoon.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

LINDSLEY That night, as is her custom, Miss West returns to her apartment house at seven o'clock and requests Timony to feed the monkey. She waits in the car, intending to go on to the fights. She has been chatting with Brennan about three minutes, when she notices a man, coat collar turned up around his face, hat pulled low, swagger across the street toward the car.

MAE WEST Hey, Dave. I don't like the looks of this guy coming across the street.

BRENNAN Who? Oh, him. Just some drunk, I guess.

MAE WEST Maybe. But what's that he's got in his hand?

BRENNAN I don't know. It looks like a handkerchief.

FRIEDMAN It's a stick up. Hand over the poke.

MAE WEST AND
BRENNAN What?

FRIEDMAN I said, "Hand over the poke." Come on. Give it to me. Now give me the bracelet. Quit stalling.

MAE WEST Oh, don't get in a hurry.

BRENNAN Take your time, buddy, you'll get it.

MAE WEST Oh, there you are.

FRIEDMAN Now, that necklace. Come on, make it snappy. Good. Now I'll have those rings.

MAE WEST Well, you haven't overlooked anything, have you?

FRIEDMAN (TO MAE WEST) No, I can't think of anything. Can you? (TO BRENNAN) Now, listen, Mug, start this car, keep on going, and don't look back.

MAE WEST Okay, okay.

SFX: AUTOMOBILE ENGINE STARTS, CAR
DRIVES AWAY

MAE WEST Hey, Dave, stop.

BRENNAN He said to keep on going.

MAE WEST I don't care what he said, stop right here. I'm going to try to get his number.

BRENNAN All right.

MAE WEST The big mug.

BRENNAN Well, he's liable to turn the heat on you, Mae. He sounded tough to me.

MAE WEST Oh, he's nothing but a hoodlum.

BRENNAN Well, did you see anything? No, I couldn't get the number. It's a coupé, that's all I made out of.

TIMONY (APPROACHING) What's the matter, Mae? What's the idea of standing here in the middle of the street. Anything wrong?

MAE WEST Oh, there's plenty wrong. Some mug just turned a rod on me and lifted my jewelry and that dough I was carrying.

TIMONY Well, come on, let's report this to the police right away.

BRENNAN Say, listen, Mae... I... I wouldn't do that.

MAE WEST Yeah, why not?

BRENNAN Well, if you get the bulls on this job, you may never see the rocks again. I

tell you, these gun men are tough monkeys.

TIMONY Well, what did you propose doing?

BRENNAN Now, listen, you leave this thing to me for a few days, will you?

MAE WEST Why? What could you do about it?

BRENNAN Well, I have some connections back east. Might do some good out here. Let me look up some guys and maybe I can get the stuff back for you.

MAE WEST What do you say Jim?

TIMONY Well, if you think you can reclaim the stuff go to it Dave.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

~~LINDSLEY Four hours later Dave does reclaim the stuff, for himself.~~

~~BRENNAN (LAUGHING) Well, boys, that was one of the neatest jobs I ever saw pulled. Nothing messy, you know. Clean from start to finish.~~

~~ED Thanks, Dave. Here's the stuff.~~

~~BRENNAN Let me see. Ah, swell.~~

~~ED Wait a minute. What about our cut?~~

~~BRENNAN No, I'll pay you off in a couple of days.~~

SAM ~~Yeah, well, why not now? You got three grand notes there.~~

BRENNAN ~~Hey, you don't want to try to change a thousand-dollar bill with every bull in town looking for them. the way they may be tomorrow, do you?~~

SAM ~~Well, no.~~

BRENNAN ~~Now, I'm trying to stall Mae from reporting it to the cops, but she might jump out of line. Now, you fellas just leave this all to me, and I'll pay you guys off day after tomorrow.~~

SAM ~~Well, okay, Dave.~~

FRIEDMAN ~~Say, Dave.~~

BRENNAN ~~What?~~

ED ~~Hadn't you better return the ice?~~

BRENNAN ~~Why?~~

ED ~~Look, Dave, those rocks are her business. She looks like a good dame to me. We got a grand a piece of her dough. Ain't that enough?~~

BRENNAN ~~Yeah, but there might be another ten grand in sparklers there. Say, you don't expect me to turn that back, do you?~~

ED ~~Look, Dave, it's none of my business. I done the job for you, and you're gonna pay me off. What you do with the rocks is your own business. But if I was you,~~

~~I'd turn 'em back. Geez, the dame's gonna make a picture soon, and she's gonna need 'em.~~

~~BRENNAN Yeah? Well, uh, maybe you're right.~~

~~ED Sure I am, Dave. Give 'em back to her.~~

~~BRENNAN Okay, pal. I will.~~

~~MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION~~

~~LINDSLEY The next morning, Timony and Miss West are discussing the robbery in her apartment when the phone rings.~~

~~TIMONY I'll answer it, Mae. Hello.~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE I want to talk to Miss West.~~

~~TIMONY Who's speakin'? This is her manager.~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE Well, you'll do. About that hold-up last night...~~

~~TIMONY Oh, yeah. (TO MAE WEST) Get a load of this, Mae. (TO VOICE ON TELEPHONE) Well, what about it?~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE I just wanted to tell you where you could find the purse.~~

~~TIMONY Fine. Where is it?~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE Well, you go down Rossmoor from the apartment to Rosewood Avenue.~~

~~TIMONY Yeah?~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~Then you turn to the right.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~Yeah?~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~Well, in the middle of the block is a white garage, and behind the garage is a pile of lumber, and under the lumber, you'll find the purse.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~Well, that's fine. Where is this Rosewood Avenue? I'm a stranger here in Los Angeles you know.~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~It ain't far from your apartment. This block, down Rossmoor.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~What's that? I'm a little deaf.~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~I said, this block, down Rossmoor, from your apartment.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~Yeah, I see, and, yeah, you said something about a garage.~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~Yeah, I said the purse is behind the white garage in the middle of the block, under a pile of lumber there.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~Yeah, yeah, well, thanks. Who is this speaking?~~

~~TELEPHONE VOICE~~ ~~Hey mug, you think I'm nuts. I'm doin' you a favor as is telling you where you can find that purse.~~

~~TIMONY~~ ~~Yeah, I know, but I'd like to ... Hello? Hello? (TO MAE WEST) He hung up on me. Did you get that, Mae?~~

~~MAE WEST Oh, most of it. What's the idea of all the stupid questions and that crack about being deaf?~~

~~TIMONY Yeah, I just stallin' him until I could remember his voice if I ever got a chance to hear it again.~~

~~MAE WEST Oh, smart boy, Jim. You ought to be a cop. You got the figure for it, anyway.~~

~~TIMONY Yeah, that's, uh...~~

~~MAE WEST Well, they left a purse for me, huh?~~

~~TIMONY Yeah.~~

~~MAE WEST Oh, I wonder if there's anything in it.~~

~~TIMONY Well, let's take a walk over there and find out.~~

~~MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION, DUCK UNDER AND OUT.~~

~~LINDSLEY Miss West and Timony, follow Friedman's directions and recover the purse under the lumber pile, but it is empty. Two weeks pass, and Brennan's daily promises to contact the jewel thieves come to naught.~~

~~Finally, Miss West, advised by friends in New York, contacts Lieutenant F. L. James of the police gangster squad and makes a confidential report of the holdup.~~

~~James devotes weeks of his time to the case. The sheriff's office and the district attorney's investigators also work on it, but no substantial clue is discovered.~~

Months pass. The Maywest Jewel robbery becomes another unsolved crime.

Then, James E. Davis is appointed chief of police. Shortly after taking office, he calls Detective Lieutenants Stone, Robeson, and Kynette into his office for a conference.

DAVIS

Boys, beginning today, you three are to work out of this office as special investigators directly under my supervision. You will be relieved of all routine duties, and I want you to spend all your time on certain cases which haven't been cleared up yet.

~~There are a bunch of robberies that have been hanging fire. For one reason or another, no arrests have been made, and no substantial clues turned up. You know the way I feel about such a state of affairs.~~

~~I have yet to see the perfect crime. There is no case that can't be solved. It's up to you boys to prove that I'm right.~~ The first case I want you to go to work on is that Mae West jewel robbery. Go out and get the men that did that job and bring them in here. We'll put them away for a while where they can't bother anyone.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

LINDSLEY Detective Stone and Robinson studied the investigation report from the officers who had originally worked on the case, and then planned their criminological strategy.

~~OFFICER A Well, it's clear from these reports that only two people knew Miss West was carrying that dough around with her.~~

~~OFFICER B Yeah, but remember, she says here that she thinks maybe somebody spotted the diamonds at the fight.~~

~~OFFICER A Ahh, that doesn't mean anything. The first thing the stick-up man said was, "Hand me the puke." The only thing in the purse he wanted was the money.~~

~~OFFICER B Yeah, that's right.~~

OFFICER A Now, two people knew about that money, Timony and Brennan.

OFFICER B Yeah, and Timony's out. He's been her manager and trusted friend for years.

OFFICER A Right. So that leaves Brennan, who, after all, was only a casual friend. Let's work on that angle.

OFFICER B Holmes, your deduction is astounding.

OFFICER A Elementary, my dear Watson. Elementary.

OFFICER B Well, all right. Let's get a line on this Brennan guy.

MUSIC: FOR TRANSITION

LINDSLEY The investigation of Brennan's acquaintances limits itself finally to Edward Freedman as the man most closely resembling the general description of height and weight given in Miss West's report.

Freedman, having been booked on a previous charge, the police records include his picture and fingerprints. Stone and Robeson take Miss West, the mug of Freeman, for identification.

OFFICER A Well, is this your man, Miss West?

MAE WEST Oh, let me see now. Oh, he's sort of dark and handsome, isn't he?

OFFICER B Well, what about it? Is he the guy?

MAE WEST Oh, I can't tell for sure. You see, he had his hat pulled down and his coat collar turned up, so his face was pretty well hidden. But if I could hear his voice or see his hands, why, then I'd be sure.

OFFICER B What do you mean, see his hands?

MAE WEST Well, he had short, pudgy hands. That was the one thing about him that impressed me.

OFFICER A Well, we'll run this guy down and let you get a look at his hands.

MUSIC: TRANSITION, DRAMATIC MUSIC

LINDSLEY

Stone and Robeson set out to run down Freedman, but they are blocked when they discover that he's out of town.

A couple of weeks pass, and then an anonymous telephone call informs them that he's returned. For several days, they cruise the neighborhood of 6th and Dunsmuir, where Friedman lived without spotting his car.

Then on Thanksgiving Day, accompanied by their wives to avert suspicion, they once more visit the place. This time, they are successful in locating Friedman's coupé parked on 6th Street. For two hours, they wait, parked nearby. And then at last a man comes out of an apartment house and approaches the car.

They recognize him from the picture in the mug book as Friedman. As he gets into the coupe, Robeson walks up to the right side and Stone closes in on the left side of the car.

OFFICER

Open that door.

FRIEDMAN

What's the big idea?

OFFICER

We're from the detective bureau. Get out.

FRIEDMAN

What's the rap?

OFFICER

We want you for the Mae West robbery.

FRIEDMAN

It's a bum beef.

~~OFFICER~~ ~~Come on. Get out of the car.~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~I'm coming, you big flathead.~~

~~SFX: FIGHT BETWEEN FRIEDMAN AND THE
DETECTIVES~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~All right. All right. I'll go.~~

~~ROBERTSON~~ ~~Set the braces on him, Bill.~~

~~WILLIAM STONE~~ ~~Okay.~~

~~ROBERTSON~~ ~~All right, let's go.~~

~~LINDSLEY~~ ~~Stone and Robertson take Freedman to the
university police station where they
question him.~~

~~OFFICER~~ ~~You know Dave Brennan?~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~No.~~

~~OFFICER~~ ~~We know you do.~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~Well, so what?~~

~~OFFICER~~ ~~We want that jewelry back.~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~That lousy jewelry. Brennan promised to
return it to Mae West. If he had, I
wouldn't be here now.~~

~~OFFICER~~ ~~What did you get for that job?~~

~~FRIEDMAN~~ ~~All I got was a grand.~~

~~OFFICER~~ ~~It's hardly worth it, was it, Freedman?~~

~~FRIEDMAN Well, I need the dough. But it was a cryin' shame to take that dame's rocks.~~

~~OFFICER Well, what are you gonna do about it now?~~

~~FRIEDMAN I'll take my rap, and I'll take that double-crossin' Rat Brannan to the pen with me.~~

MUSIC: DRAMATIC TRANSITION

LINDSLEY Having obtained Friedman's full confessuib, Lieutenant Stone calls Miss West and informs her that they have a suspect in custody who has confessed.

Miss West asks him to bring the man over to the apartment at once. She and Timony greet them outside the apartment house.

STONE Miss West, this is Mr. Freedman, the suspect I told you about.

FRIEDMAN I remember Miss West from the night I held her up.

MAE WEST Oh, yeah. I remember your voice now. This is the man, all right, Lieutenant.

~~STONE Well, what would you say, Mr. Timony?~~

~~TIMONY Sounds like him to me, but I'd have to hear his voice on the phone to be sure.~~

~~ROBERTSON Well, I guess we could arrange that, too, Mr. Timony.~~

MAE WEST ~~Listen, Lieutenant,~~ I'd like to talk to Mr. Friedman alone. Mind if we get into the car? It's kind of cold standing out here.

OFFICER Sure, go ahead.

SFX: CAR DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE

MAE WEST Well, here, pal. What was the big idea?

FRIEDMAN Listen, Miss West, I'm sorry about the whole thing. I really am. If I'd known you were so regular, I never would have agreed to do it.

MAE WEST Well, it's all very nice to hear, but how about them diamonds of mine, huh?

FRIEDMAN I don't know where they are. I got a grand for the job, and I was through. Brennan took the rocks.

MAE WEST Oh, so Brennan was in on it, eh?

FRIEDMAN Sure.

MAE WEST Oh, that's the limit. And I call that guy a friend, I guess I'm just a chump.

FRIEDMAN I made Brennan promise to return the diamonds.

MAE WEST Oh, you're good at moving mountains, too?

FRIEDMAN I wanted to come and tell you about it a lot of times. If I could have gotten the jewels back for you, I would.

MAE WEST Well, you're not a bad guy, Friedman. I don't know, but I feel kind of sorry for you. But that double-crossing Brennan, if I could get my hands on him...

FRIEDMAN You and me both.

MUSIC: TRANSITION

LINDSLEY ~~The long arm of the law reaches out for Brennan, and he is arrested in Chicago.~~ Friedman is indicted by the grand jury on December 4 on two counts of robbery, the Mae West job and a prior holdup. On January 24th, 1934, Friedman goes on trial before Judge Harry Sewell.

Day after day, the courtroom is packed as Mae West gives her testimony. On February 2nd, the jury is given its instructions and retires.

At 1 a.m. on February 3, the jury files back into the still-crowded courtroom.

SFX: WALLAH, ALL SPEAKING
INDISTINCTLY

JUDGE SEWELL Gentlemen of the jury, have you reached a verdict?

JURY FOREMAN (OFF MIC) We have, Your Honor.

JUDGE SEWELL Read the verdict, please.

JURY FOREMAN (OFF MIC) We, the members of the jury, find the defendant Edward Friedman guilty as charged in the indictment of robbery in the second degree.

~~SFX: WALLAH FROM FRIEDMAN AND
OTHERS IN THE COURTROOM.~~

~~VOICE Stand back there.~~

~~VOICE Get some water someone.~~

~~MAE WEST Well, what seems to be the matter, Jim.~~

~~TIMONY Friedman has fainted.~~

~~MAE WEST Awww, tough guy, huh? Just a poor
hoodlum. He can dish it out, but he
can't take it.~~

~~MUSIC: TO CONCLUSION~~

~~LINDSLEY Judge Sewell sentenced Freedman, for
from two years to life, in San Quentin
Penitentiary. He appealed his case, and
the appellate court confirmed the
judgment. Stubbornly, he carried his
fight to the state Supreme Court, but
that august body refused to review his
case, and Freedman must serve his time.~~

Dave Brennan, instigator of the plot, was arrested in Chicago, jumped a \$10,000 bond and traveled to Miami, Florida, where he was arrested again. Although Captain Stone traveled all the way to Miami to bring back his man, the governor of Florida ruled that as Brennan was under bond in Illinois he would have to be extradited from that state. So the fight for extradition goes on.

~~We the police have performed our duty and discharged our obligation to Miss West and to society in apprehending these criminals. But how quickly they can be locked behind prison bars is a question that can only be answered by those who manipulate the red tape of the law.~~

MUSIC: TO CLOSE

SFX: JESSE ROSENQUIST CLOSING

ROSENQUIST

Los Angeles police calling all cars, attention all cars. Cancellation of broadcast 69 regarding a hold-up. The suspect described in this broadcast is now in custody. That's all. Rosenquist.

HOST

That was "The Mae West Jewel Robbery," an episode of *Calling All Cars*, the police procedural. William Robson, who went on to Columbia Workshop, produced and directed the episode which used police and court records to tell the story. I hope you enjoyed listening.

MUSIC: RIR THEME FOR BREAK

THE RIR BREAK

MUSIC: RIR THEME. ESTABLISH, THEN FADE OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING.

HOST

This is Re-Imagined Radio, a program about the power and shared experience of sound-based storytelling. There's nothing to see, but everything to hear. With each episode, we explore classic

and contemporary audio drama, reexamining radio's rich storytelling traditions and reintroducing listeners to forgotten or overlooked works that continue to resonate today. Here are some examples from previous episodes.

SFX: RE-IMAGINED RADIO AUDIO

TRAILER

HOST

More information about listening opportunities, including our YouTube channel, is available at our website ... reimagedradio DOT fm.

MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, THEN

DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING

EPILOGUE

HOST

Due to her risqué reputation in theater and motion pictures, Mae West is restricted from radio during the 1930s to avoid censorship issues.

However, there ARE a few radio appearances by West, and two are especially interesting.

On December 12, 1937, West appears twice on *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*, a weekly variety program heard on NBC Radio. In her appearances West pushes the limits of 1930s morality further than comfortable for listeners, prompting the Federal Communications Commission to issue a statement about radio's morality code.

West's first appearance is the nine minute "Garden of Eden" sketch, written by Arch Oboler. She plays Eve to host Don Ameche's Adam. Ventriloquist Edgar Bergen and his dummy Charley McCarthy voice the snake. This is considered West's most historic radio appearance. You can listen and follow the transcript at the episode page at our website, reimaginedradio [dot] FM.

Mae West's second skit on *The Chase and Sanborn Hour* is "Mae West versus Charlie McCarthy." Let's listen in.

SFX: SAMPLE FROM "MAE WEST VS. CHARLEY MCCARTHY," THE CHASE AND SANBORN HOUR

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, at last the long-awaited meeting of Siren Mae West and Casanova Charles McCarthy has arrived. This is a romantic battle of the century. The dramatic moment that millions have been looking forward to. Tension is running high and so are the bets. The odds are Mae West five, Charlie McCarthy three. There's some talk that Charlie will weaken. They say no man can resist her. But there are others who feel that Charlie will vanquish the vampire. Wait a minute, wait a minute, last-minute flash. There's been a drop in the odds. Mae wears four, Charlie McCarthy four and a half. Let's get a word from the challenger, Charlie McCarthy. What do you, what have you got to say, Charlie?

CHARLIE It looks like a tough fight, man, but I think I'll win.

ANNOUNCER Why do you say it's a tough fight?

CHARLIE Well, my opponent's in great form. She's had lots of training.

ANNOUNCER What do you think of your chance of winning?

CHARLIE Well, I've had some great fights in the East.

ANNOUNCER What do you think of West?

CHARLIE Mighty pretty country, mighty pretty.

ANNOUNCER Well, Charlie's never been in better condition. He's a fashion plate with his midnight blue full dress suit, top hat and monocle and a blue white butterfly tie and dress shirt.

CHARLIE Yeah, it's P.K. P.K. tie and shirt. Yeah, shot with gravy.

ANNOUNCER And now a word from the champion. Mae West. We've heard so much about you, Miss West. Won't you say a word?

WEST Well, all I've got to say is where there's smoke, there's fire.

CHARLIE Wow. Boy, she burns me up.

WEST There's nothing I'd like better than the aroma of burning wood.

CHARLIE I wonder if she means me.

EDGAR BERGEN Better watch out, Charlie. Say, Charlie, do you smell that perfume?

CHARLIE Yeah.

BERGEN Isn't it ravishing?

CHARLIE Yes, it is. It's ravishing. It's weakening. So help me I'm swooning. What is it?

WEST Why, it's my favorite perfume. Ashes of men.

CHARLIE Ashes of men, holy smoke. She's not gonna make a cinder out of me.

EDGAR BERGEN Well, Don, there's been a great deal of talk but very little action so far.

ANNOUNCER Right you are, Edgar. Miss West, this is the famous Charlie McCarthy.

WEST Hello, short, dark, and handsome.

CHARLIE Hello, tall, blonde, and terrific.

BERGEN Charlie, that's no way to talk to Miss West. You hardly know her.

CHARLIE I know it, Bergen. I'm a cad. I hate myself.

WEST Oh, listen, Charlie. Are these your keys?

CHARLIE Oh, thanks, Mae. Did I leave them in the car?

WEST No, you left them in my apartment.

CHARLIE OH, OH. Looks like we're going to have a white Christmas. Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells.

BERGEN Charlie, Charlie, where did you leave those keys?

CHARLIE I, I, I, I, I, I

BERGEN Where'd you leave those keys.

CHARLIE I, I, I, I, I, I, I'm telling you ...

WEST Ahh, he ahh left them on my dresser. So what? Charlie, why don't you walk out on Bergen? What's holding you?

CHARLIE Well, he is. Eh-h-h. You better tell him, Mae.

WEST Well, if you wanna know, he did come up to see me.

BERGEN Oh he did! And what was he doing up there?

WEST Well, Charlie came up and I showed him my etchings (AUDIENCE LAUGHTER) and he showed me his stamp collection.

CHARLIE There you have it, Bergen. There you have it.

BERGEN So that's all there was to it. Just etchings and a stamp collection?

CHARLIE He's so naive.

WEST So that's what's the matter with him. Come here, honey, closer, so we can talk intimately.

CHARLIE Yeah, well, if you don't mind, I think I'd better keep my distance.

WEST Well, I don't like long-distance conversations, so come here. I thought you were gonna have a nice long talk Tuesday night at my apartment. Where did you go when the doorbell rang?

CHARLIE Well, I tried to hide in your clothes closet, but two guys kicked me out. So I went out the back door.

WEST Don't tell me you went out through the French windows. I'm on the third floor, you know.

CHARLIE Oh, so that's what it was, the French windows, huh? I was gonna say you were pretty skimpy with those back steps.

WEST Oh, you look pretty good to me, Charlie ...? Come here.

CHARLIE But I thought you only liked tall men.

WEST Oh, that was my last year's model. This year I'm on a diet.

BERGEN Oh, so that's why. You're on a diet. Tell me, Miss West, have you ever found the one man in your life that you could really love?

WEST Sure, lots of times.

CHARLIE Oh, I see. Could you even like Mr. Bergen?

WEST Oh, Mr. Bergen? Well, of course. He's very sweet. In fact, he's the right guy. Confidentially, you'll have to show me a man I don't like.

CHARLIE That's swell. Bergen's your man. You know, he can be had.

WEST On second thought, I'm liable to take him away from you. I don't want you to see him.

CHARLIE Well, if you take Bergen away, I'm speechless.

WEST You ain't afraid I'll do you wrong.

CHARLIE Well, now that you ask ... I ...

WEST Or are you afraid I'll do you right.

CHARLIE Well, I'm slightly confused. I need time for that one, Mae.

WEST That's all right. I like a man what takes his time. Why don't you come up home with me now, honey? I'll let you play in my woodpile.

CHARLIE I'm not feeling very well tonight, I've been so nervous lately, I think I'm gonna have a nervous breakdown. Wait, there I go. Ahh.

WEST So, good time Charlie's gonna play hard to get, but you can't kid me, you're afraid of women. Your Casanova stuff is just a front, a false front.

CHARLIE Not so loud, Mae, not so loud. All my girlfriends are listening.

WEST Oh yeah, you're all wood and a yard long. You weren't so nervous when you came up to see me in my apartment. In fact, you didn't need any encouragement to kiss me.

CHARLIE Did I do that?

WEST Oh, you certainly did. I got marks to prove it. Splinters, too.

CHARLIE Oh, that's too much. This is too much.

WEST Well, get this. I don't need you. I got all the gentleman friends I want. Why, I got men for every mood. Men for every day of the week. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. A good man Friday, after a good man Saturday. I change my men like I change my clothes and you ... you ...

CHARLIE Mae, Mae you're not walking out on me are you?

WEST I've got a reputation at stake. No man walks out on me. They might carry them out but they never walk out.

CHARLIE I'm mad about you ... I love you ... I've acted like a fool.

WEST That wasn't action. Come here. I'll show you how to act.

CHARLIE Mae, Mae! Don't be so rough. To me, love is peace and quiet.

WEST That ain't love, that's sleep.

CHARLIE Cut it out, Mae ... Help me ... May ... Ameche, help me.

WEST Oh, call on [Don] Ameche. Call Bergen ... call everybody. I don't need any help.

HOST The second interesting radio appearance by Mae West is her December 5, 1949 guest appearance on *Chesterfield Supper Club*, hosted by Perry Como.

Como and West talk and sing together, and perform a skit based on Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." West performs a commercial for Chesterfield cigarettes that defies description. Let's listen in.

**SFX: FADE THE FOLLOWING SAMPLE UP
UNDER ANNOUNCER'S DIALOGUE. WHEN
ANNOUNCER FINISHES TALKING FADE UP
FULL JUST BEFORE COMO SPEAKS**

SFX: SAMPLES FROM DEC. 5, 1949
CHESTERFIELD SUPPER CLUB, PERRY
COMO AND MAE WEST.

SFX: ENTHUSIASTIC AUDIENCE APPLAUSE
FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION OF MAE WEST.

COMO Oh, it's good to see you, Miss West.

WEST Oh, you're not bad to look at yourself.

COMO (LAUGHTER) Well, thank you. You know, you look, you really look wonderful in that beautiful dress. And those diamonds.

WEST The dress warms them up and the ice cools them off.

COMO Yes. You know, that's to give a guy pneumonia. But what a wonderful way to go.

WEST Well, there's something that's got a kind of a pungent odor around here.

COMO Oh, that's me. It's a new cologne I'm wearing called "My Crime".

WEST That's you. Certainly is.

COMO Well, I'm sorry.

WEST Why don't you try some of mine?

COMO What's yours called?

WEST Panther Passion.

COMO Panther Passion?

WEST Yeah, one wisp in you leave.

COMO I'm afraid that's a little too powerful for me.

WEST Well, all you need is a little drop behind each ear.

COMO Okay, I'll try some.

WEST Wait. How's that?

COMO Hey, that's... that's not bad at all.

WEST Just what the bottle says. Guaranteed to bring the wolf to the door.

COMO I'm... I'm... I'm no wolf. I'm a perfect gentleman.

WEST Oh, which are you? Perfect? Or gentleman.

COMO Well, I'm not a...

MITCHEL AYERS Say, Perry, how about introducing me?

COMO Oh, sure. Miss West, I'd like you to meet Mitchell Ayers.

AYERS Hello, Miss West.

WEST Oh, Mr. Ayers.

COMO He's a big one, isn't he?

WEST Yeah. To bad I'm on a diet right now.

AYERS Say, Perry, I think I'd better get back to the orchestra. It's getting kind of warm over here.

COMO Okay, Miss.

WEST He's the kind you got to keep in a home freezer.

MARTIN BLUNT Hey, hey, Perry, how about me?

COMO Oh, of course, Miss West, this is Martin Block.

WEST Mr. Block?

BLOCK Hello, Miss West. What do you say? How about a date sometime?

WEST A date? I'll have to put you on my waiting list.

COMO Look, you'll have to excuse Mitch and Martin, but men will be men.

WEST Oh, I wouldn't want them to be anything else.

COMO Well, let's talk about you, May. This is a real event, having you here on radio,

WEST And I'm glad it was you that asked. You know, your voice has always fascinated me.

COMO Well, it's nice to hear you say that.

WEST I buy all your records, but I can't keep them very long.

COMO Well, why not?

WEST Well, after I listen to you sing...

COMO Yeah, yeah, yeah

WEST ...and I take the record off the
 phonograph, the wax melts.

COMO But maybe you have too much steam in
 your apartment.

WEST Steam in my apartment?

COMO I see what you mean, Mae, and I'm also a
 very great fan of yours. I saw you in
 your hit show "Diamond Lil," and you you
 were wonderful.

WEST Thank you.

COMO You know, Mae, you not only did some
 fine acting in "Diamond Lil," You did
 some pretty terrific sinning ...
 singing.

WEST Oh, oh, I see what you mean.

COMO So how about doing a song for us?

WEST Well, I'd rather hear you sing. I told
 you, your voice fascinated me.

COMO Well...

WEST And when I get fascinated, anything
 might happen.

COMO Okay, the Fontaine sisters and I will do our version of "I Wanna Go home with You."

WEST Oh, Swell!

COMO Oh, but wait a minute. Wait a minute. I forgot. The three girls aren't here. So it looks like you'll have to take their place. Would you mind, Mae?

WEST Not at all. I've taken the place of three women before.

COMO Okay, give us a downbeat. Ah, Mae, you wouldn't want to take, especially on such a lovely night, you wouldn't want to take a ride in a car, would you?

WEST No.

COMO You wouldn't want to go down to the corner and have an ice cream cone, would you?

WEST No. Say, what are you leading up to, honey?

COMO (SINGING) I want to go home with you.

WEST It's a little early, isn't it?

COMO (SINGING) I want to go home with you.

WEST Just like baseball, a man is safe at home.

COMO (SINGING) I want to meet the family.

WEST I live alone.

COMO (SINGING) I'm sure to tell the truth of me, I want to go home. Where do you--

WEST what's the matter? Did you lose the key?

COMO (SINGING) Nobody else will do.

WEST Do what?

COMO (SINGING) Yes, goodnight at your front door. Makes me love you more and more.

WEST Have you ever tried kissing in the revolving door?

COMO (SINGING) I wanna go home with you.

WEST A man in the house is worth two on the street any time.

COMO (SINGING, CONCLUDES) Oh, I wanna go home with you. (APPLAUSE)

COMO Ah, hey! You know, that was a lot of fun.

WEST Oh, here comes that Casanova again.

COMO Oh, you mean Martin? Yes. He looks like he's really got a winner, too.

WEST Terrific, if you like girls. I happen to like the opposite sex.

COMO So I've heard.

WEST In fact, Perry, you being in that category makes me want to do things for you.

COMO Well, now is your chance because right here is where you and I are going to do "Romeo and Juliet."

WEST Umm ...

COMO All right, Martin, will you set the scene?

MARTIN BLOCK (MUSICAL FANFARE) Chesterfield Supper Club presents "Romeo and Juliet." starring Mae West and Perry Como, produced by Mae West, directed by Mae West, and approved by Mae West, from an idea by William Shakespeare.

COMO What soft, what light through yonder window breaks? It is the sun, and Juliet is the sun.

WEST Oh, Comeo. Wherefore art thou, Comeo?

COMO Down here in yonder orchard, below your balcony.

WEST Why don't you come up and see me sometime?

COMO But Juleit, the orchard walls are high and hard to climb.

WEST All right, forget the balcony. We'll go and meet on the mezzanine.

COMO Ah, yes, but can we smoke in the mezzanine?

WEST At a time like this, you think of Chesterfields, huh?

COMO Juliet, fair Juliet, let me hear thine voice once more.

WEST OK.

COMO She speak. Oh, peak again, bright angel.

WEST I may be bright, but I ain't no angel.

COMO Juliet, I love thee.

WEST Not an original statement, but I like it.

COMO Dear Juliet...

WEST Shh, quiet, Comeo. I hear some noise from within my room.

COMO Maybe 'tis yon mouse in your room.

WEST I shall go and see.

COMO Do not fear, Juliet, whether it be man or mouse.

WEST Well, if it's a mouse, I'll call for help.

COMO Oh, blessed, blessed night. I'm afeard being in night. All this is but a dream. Ah, what a dream.

WEST Hey, Comeo.

COMO Yes, my dear?

WEST 'Tis almost dawn. I better not have thee hanging around my balcony.

COMO I whilst depart immediately. My mule train awaits.

WEST Oh, parting is such sweet sorrow. But if I know my men, I shall be glad. He'll be back tomorrow,

COMO and now I go, Mrs. Juliet.

WEST Oh, don't go. Baby, it's cold outside. Why not come in and have some hot chocolate? Very hot.

COMO Yea and verily. Now wait a minute, Mae. Shakespeare kept the two lovers apart.

WEST Well, would you rather do it his way or mine? (LAUGHING). Come on in.

COMO All right.

MUSIC: UPBEAT

COMO Hey, that was really wonderful, and before you go, I'd like you to give us a little advice.

WEST Advice? Advice about what?

COMO Well, about selling Chesterfields.

WEST Oh, if it's about Chesterfields, okay.
Well, I say, Chesterfields are mmm, mmm,
mmm.

COMO Now, what do you mean Chesterfields are
mmm, mmm, mmm,

WEST mmm, much milder, mmm, much better
tasting, mmm, much cooler smoking.

COMO Mmm, you're so right.

WEST Why, every man I know smokes
Chesterfields, and that's a lot of men.

COMO What about the women? Women smoke
Chesterfields, too, you know.

WEST The women? Well, that's your department,
ahh. So long. Thanks a million.

COMO So long, Mae, and thank you very much
for being with us.

**MUSIC: RIR THEME, ESTABLISH, THEN
DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING**

HOST CREDITS

HOST This episode of Re-Imagined Radio,
number ninety-five, is called "Mae West
Jewel Robbery." It's both a tribute and
a documentary, connected by diamond
jewelry, about Mae West, star of stage
and screen, who throughout her career
spoke out for women's rights,
liberation, sexuality, and equality in
her inimitable style. Her approach
challenged the way the status quo

thought women should act. Attempts to censor and silence Mae West only elevated her status as an international icon. With her persona, wit, and bawdy innuendos, she made scandal stylish. Thanks for listening.

**MUSIC: RIR THEME, UP BRIEFLY, THEN
DUCK UNDER THE FOLLOWING**

HOST

Re-Imagined Radio is produced in collaboration with The Electronic Literature Lab at Washington State University Vancouver.

Episodes of Re-Imagined Radio are broadcast and streamed by partner community radio stations KXRW-FM (Vancouver), KXRY-FM (Portland), and KNOM-AM (Nome). If you or your community radio station would like to help, contact us through our website, reimagined radio [DOT] fm.

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Re-Imagined Radio acknowledges the debt
we owe to previous and contemporary
radio artists and we hope our curation
and stewardship of their artifacts and
efforts demonstrates our sincerity.

That's all. Thank you for listening.
John Barber, producer and host.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, THEN DUCK
UNDER THE FOLLOWING

ANNOUNCER CLOSE

ANNOUNCER

This is a production of Re-Imagined
Radio. To learn more, visit our website,
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punctuation) DOT fm.

Please join us for another episode of
Re-Imagined Radio as we continue our
exploration of sound-based storytelling.

MUSIC: RIR THEME UP, AND TO END.