

MIXED NUTS

A Marx Brothers Adventure

By Corey M. Sprague

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STORY OF THE PLAY

This play is written in the tradition of the great Marx Brothers movies and plays of the '30s and '40s. The not-so-famous lawyer Julius P. Milksop (*Groucho*) is defending Luigi and Adolph (*Chico and Harpo*) in court. They turn the courtroom into a circus of hilarious gags. The two are on trial for stealing jewelry from the famous Buckwalter estate. (*Mrs. Buckwalter is a Margaret Dumont-type.*) The stage directions for this play could never be complete, so it is up to each production to come up with business, bits, gags, etc., to fill in the gaps, thereby making each production unique.

Made into an award-winning motion picture short.

About 30 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 1 w, 2 flexible. In order of appearance.)

BAILIFF (May be a male or female role.)

JUDGE (May be a male or female role.)

LUIGI PARANELLI: Defendant.

ADOLPH: Another defendant, Luigi's brother, never speaks.

BENNETT: A greedy lawyer with a thin moustache.

MRS. BUCKWALTER: A large, haughty woman.

JULIUS P. MILKSOP: Defense attorney.

SETTING

The scene is a courtroom sometime in the mid-1930s. The judge's bench is angled at USR with the prosecution table USL and the defense table DSL. The witness stand is USC and the bailiff's desk is DSR.

MIXED NUTS A MARX BROTHERS ADVENTURE

(AT RISE: The BAILIFF is seated at his desk keeping himself busy. At the prosecution bench, MRS. BUCKWALTER, a very large, wealthy, and haughty woman, is seated. Seated next to her is MR. BENNETT, a greedy lawyer with a thin moustache. At the other bench, backs to us, sit LUIGI PARANELLI [Chico] and ADOLPH [Harpo]. The JUDGE enters.)

BAILIFF: *(Stands.)* All rise. *(THEY stand. The JUDGE sits.)* This court is now in session. Judge Wilbur A. Larson presiding. The case of Buckwalter versus Paranelli and Paranelli. The charges are: Breaking and Entering, Burglary, and Assault.

(ALL but LUIGI sit.)

JUDGE: How do you plead?

LUIGI: It's-a not true!

JUDGE: And what about your brother?

LUIGI: Oh, he-a no speak.

JUDGE: That will make it rather difficult for him to testify, then, won't it?

LUIGI: Naw, he'll be a silent witness.

(ADOLPH honks a horn.)

JUDGE: Well Prosecution may open. Mr. Bennett?

BENNETT: Thank you, Your Honor. Your Honor, the prosecution will prove before this court that the two accused did enter my client's home on the evening of the twenty-first and burglarized her estate of some very valuable merchandise. *(HE hands the JUDGE a list.)* I should like to submit this list of stolen articles.

JUDGE: Very well, thank you. Mr. Paranelli ?

LUIGI: It's-a not true!

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JUDGE: Does your counselor have anything to say?

LUIGI: Oh. He's not here yet.

JUDGE: Well, where is your lawyer?

(Offstage, the SOUND of screeching tires followed by a crash is heard. MILKSOP's voice can be heard offstage.)

MILKSOP: *(Offstage.)* Get out of my way! Out of my way, you idiot. I've got to get to court!

LUIGI: That's him now!

(JULIUS P. MILKSOP [Groucho] enters in a dark tux.)

MILKSOP: Whose gray convertible is that parked out front?

JUDGE: Why, mine.

MILKSOP: Well, we're sharing the same parking spot. Now then, let's get down to business. Ah, Mrs. Buckwalter, so nice to see you again.

LUIGI: Hello, Boss.

JUDGE: Are you this man's attorney?

MILKSOP: That s right. Julius P. Milksop, ATT., D.A., B.A., M.A., and S.O.B.

JUDGE: Mr. Milksop, have you any opening remarks?

MILKSOP: I sure do, but I'm not the kind of guy that would say them to your face.

JUDGE: Mr. Bennett, you may proceed.

BENNETT: Thank you, Your Honor. I should like to call Mrs. Buckwalter to the stand.

MILKSOP: I object!

BENNETT: You object?!

MILKSOP: Yeah, well so do I.

BENNETT: On what grounds?

MILKSOP: *(Looking down.)* Why, on this ground. The witness is obviously a minor one and can have no bearing on this case.

BUCKWALTER: *(Stands.)* Well, I never!

MILKSOP: Your Honor, I take it all back. She has much more bearing than I thought. *(Sits.)*

JUDGE: Mrs. Buckwalter, will you please take the stand.

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(MRS. BUCKWALTER gets up and goes over to the witness stand.)

JUDGE: Bailiff, will you swear in the witness?

MILKSOP: *(Rising.)* Here, here. We'll have no swearing in this court!

JUDGE: Mr. Milksop, will you please just be seated!!

MILKSOP: Thank you.

(Milksop is seated. BAILIFF swears in Mrs. Buckwalter.)

BENNETT: Now then, Mrs. Buckwalter, will you please tell the court as much as you remember of the night of the burglary?

BUCKWALTER: Certainly, I was just retiring to bed when I heard a noise downstairs—

MILKSOP: I object!

JUDGE: On what grounds.

MILKSOP: On the grounds of all that's fair.

LUIGI: Oh, you mean the fairgrounds, eh Boss? *(He laughs.)*

JUDGE: *(Banging his gavel.)* Order! Order!!

MILKSOP: I'll take a ham and cheese.

LUIGI: Make that two.

(ADOLPH honks.)

LUIGI: Make that three.

JUDGE: One more outbreak like that and I'll have to fine you for contempt of court.

MILKSOP: Don't be silly; I love this little old court.

JUDGE: Mr. Bennett, will you continue?

BENNETT: Yes, Your Honor. Mrs. Buckwalter, will you answer the question?

BUCKWALTER: Certainly. As I said, I heard this noise downstairs and when I went to investigate it, I saw those two going out the back door with all my valuables. When I tried to stop them they insulted me.

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BENNETT: Are you certain it was them, Mrs. Buckwalter??

BUCKWALTER: Yes, most definitely.

BENNETT: Your witness, counsel.

MILKSOP: Mrs. Buckwalter, will you state your age for the court?

BUCKWALTER: Well, I ...

MILKSOP: Just answer the question.

BUCKWALTER: Well, I'm forty-eight

MILKSOP: Your Honor, I demand that Mrs. Buckwalter be tried for perjury. Now then, Mrs. Buckwalter, where were you on the night of the eighteenth??

BUCKWALTER: Why, I was at home with guests.

MILKSOP: Oh, is that where you were. I was wondering what happened to you.

BUCKWALTER: Well, I never—

MILKSOP: Oh, yes you did!

JUDGE: Mr. Milksop, you try my patience.

MILKSOP: I don't mind if I do. You must come over and try mine sometime.

JUDGE: Mr. Milksop, will you please continue your questioning?

MILKSOP: Certainly. Mrs. Buckwalter, are you married?

BUCKWALTER: I'm a widow.

MILKSOP: I should have guessed. Tell me, did you drive him to death or did he die of natural causes?

BUCKWALTER: Mr. Buckwalter died by electrocution. Ten thousand volts went through him.

MILKSOP: My, that certainly is shocking. And speaking of electricity, you've always been a little revolting yourself.

BUCKWALTER: What??!

MILKSOP: Don't be alarmed. By the way, what time is your alarm set for?

BUCKWALTER: Mr. Milksop, just what are you trying to say?

MILKSOP: I'm trying to say that you're beautiful but I just can't bring myself to do it.

JUDGE: Mr. Milksop, this is a court of law.

MILKSOP: Oh really? I thought it was a court of milk.

JUDGE: (*Rising.*) Mr. Milksop ...!

End of Freeview

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