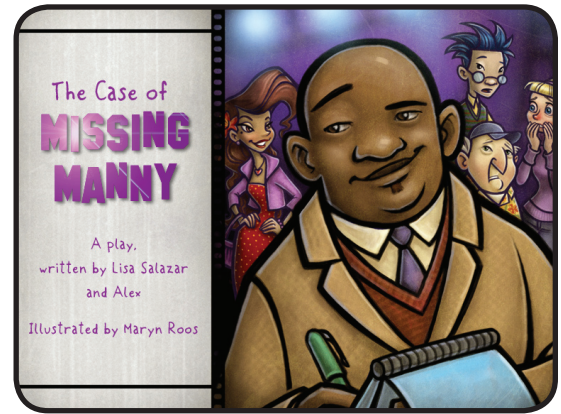


# The Case of Missing Manny

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## Cast of Characters

**Detective Ace**, a smart detective

**Carmen Starr**, a beautiful actress

**Bob**, a stylish costumer

**Bonnie**, a sneezing supporting actress

**Barney**, a grumpy cameraman

*Scene 1: Detective Ace's office. He is working on the Case of the Bottle Bandit, someone who steals bottles of expensive perfume. The phone rings.*

**ACE: Hello?**

**VOICE: Ace! Ace! You have to come right away! He's gone!**

**ACE: Slow down now. Who's gone? Come where?**

**VOICE: To the movie set. Manny's missing!**

*Scene 2: The set of a pirate movie. Detective Ace enters.*

**ACE: Now what's going on here?**

*A beautiful woman walks toward Ace, wiping her eyes.*

**CARMEN: I'm so glad you're here. It's terrible. Just terrible. My own costar—missing! Maybe I'll be next.**

**ACE: Calm down. So Manny's your costar. Can you describe him for me, Miss—?**

**CARMEN: Carmen. Carmen Starr. Well, he has nice green eyes, a loud voice, and stands about 2 feet tall.**

*Ace looks surprised.*

**CARMEN: Oh, I didn't tell you? He's a parrot.**

**CARMEN:** He was taken last night here on the set. The good news is the movie camera was left on by mistake, so we caught his kidnapper on tape.

**ACE:** Well, if you already know who did it, why did you call me?

**CARMEN:** That's the bad news. The camera ran out of tape just as Manny was naming his kidnapper!

*Carmen plays the film, and we see Manny say to a shadowy figure, "I should have known it would be you, Bah--!"*

**ACE:** Bah, huh? Get me a list of everybody on the set whose name begins with the sound "bah." This case is starting to stink!

*Carmen looks at Ace, startled.*

**ACE:** Well not you, Miss Starr! You smell quite nice.

**CARMEN:** Why, thank you. I always do.

*Scene 3: Costume shop. There are costume pieces and mannequins everywhere. Ace interviews Bob, a young man with stylish hair and cool glasses.*

**ACE:** So, Bob, you made all the costumes for this movie. Is that correct?

**BOB:** Yeah. Another pathetic pirate movie. Whoopee.

*Ace raises his eyebrows.*

**BOB:** Don't get me wrong. I love Manny. Him and that cute little eye-patch. But I hate pirate movies! What's the matter with space movies? I'd do anything to make some cool alien costumes!

*Scene 4: Bonnie's dressing room. Bonnie, the supporting actress, has long blonde hair, swollen eyes, and is allergic to everything.*

**BONNIE:** I didn't do it! Manny and I were almost costars! That is, until I found out I was... ACHOO!

**ACE:** Allergic to feathers? Seems like a good reason to get rid of a parrot.

**BONNIE:** Sure, it would have been nice if Manny were a fish instead, but it couldn't have been me. I was on vacation all week. I just got back today!

*Scene 5: Backstage. Ace interviews Barney, the short, stubby cameraman, while Barney cleans the camera lens.*

**ACE: So, Barney. Have you always wanted to be a cameraman?**

**BARNEY: No way! I wanted to be the director, but they hired me as a cameraman instead. They were headed for trouble.**

**ACE: So that's why you got rid of the main character?**

**BARNEY: Hey! That ain't fair. It wasn't me. Besides, why would I have left the camera on if I was planning to steal the bird? It just don't make sense.**

*Just then, Carmen walks by. Both men nearly fall over.*

**BARNEY: calling out behind her, That's quite a strong smell you got there, Miss Starr.**

*Ace laughs, and then stops. He thinks for a minute and then...*

**ACE: That's it! I know who did it! Barney, gather everybody together and meet me back here in five minutes!**

*Scene 6: Backstage, five minutes later. Bob, Bonnie, and Barney stand nervously, and Carmen looks excited.*

**CARMEN: So, Ace! Did you figure out which one of these crooks took my precious Manny?**

**ACE: I sure did. It wasn't Bob. Or Bonnie. Or Barney. No, someone else had an even better reason to keep Manny quiet.**

*The three suspects look relieved. Carmen looks around, confused.*

**CARMEN: Well, then who took Manny?**

**ACE: You did, Miss Starr.**

*Carmen looks at the others and tries to escape through the exit. Bob stops her.*

**BOB: You're not going anywhere, Carmen.**

**ACE: Or should we call you, the Bottle Bandit?**

*Bob, Bonnie, and Barney gasp.*

**BONNIE: She's the Bottle Bandit? The one who keeps stealing expensive per-per-per-CHOO! Perfumes?**

**CARMEN: Untie me! Nobody calls me a bandit! Nobody!**

**ACE:** I found this newspaper clipping about the Bottle Bandit hidden under Manny's cage. He must have discovered her identity, so Carmen had to get rid of him before he told the police.

**CARMEN:** You have no proof!

**ACE:** No?

*Ace empties out Carmen's purse, and perfume bottles and parrot feathers fall out.*

**ACE:** In the film, Manny wasn't saying Bob, Bonnie, or Barney. He was calling you the "Bottle Bandit."

**BARNEY:** So, Bottle Bandit, where's the bird?

**CARMEN:** *defeated,* At the city zoo. I told them he went crazy, so they'd ignore everything he said. They were happy to get a talking parrot. I was happy to put him behind bars.

**ACE:** And now, you'll be the only one behind bars. Now that we know where to find Manny, the Case of the Missing Manny—and the Case of the Bottle Bandit—is closed.