

(A Day in) The Life of Pie.

A song lyric based play-noir by Christopher Plumridge and Morey Norkin.

Notes:

In the unlikely event, anyone is daft enough to produce this play, the playwrights bear no responsibility for the copyright of all the many song lyrics contained within!

All song lyrics must only be said, resist the temptation to sing them. Or else.

Make efforts for all scenes in John Pie's office to appear black and white.

All dialogue in bold is said directly to the audience.

Characters:

P.I. John Pie. Ex-cop turned private investigator. Sharp, wise, tired, stubbly chin, wears a fedora etc.

Kay: X's daughter. Pretty, sultry, plays a Saxophone in a pretty, sultry way.

Dame Disneeee: X's first ex-wife. Dizzy, Dame-ish, Daft and devastating.

Broadway Broad: X's second ex-wife. Beautiful, Bountiful, Broadway singer. Loves the stage, bright lights and feather boas.

Bartender John: Works at the bar, friend of John Pie, gets him his drinks for free.

Lady Lyric: X's third ex-wife. Glamorous ex-showgirl, wears a leotard, high heels, feathers in her hair – always.

X: Does not appear in this play due to being dead.

Shoeshine Ex-Cop: Not required unless you have a group member who wants to have a non-speaking cameo in the show, you know the sort. If used must look like a shoeshine man, or a very sooty version Dick Van Dyke in Mary Poppins. This role is totally optional and wholly not recommended.

Scenes:

Pie's office, a park, backstage of a theatre, a bar. Make effort with Pie's office, keep the other scenes simple, fluid.

P.I. John Pie sits at his desk in his office, smoking, drinking, smoking some more and drinking some more too. It's all black and white. A sign in the window reads backwards: Pie, John Pie, Private Investigator. Moody saxophone tunes play. Monday evening.

Pie: It was a day like any other, but not like a Sunday, not easy like a Sunday morning or lazy like a Sunday afternoon. No this was like a Monday, blue, manic. I sat alone in my office, listening to moody saxophone tunes on the radio, thinking about when Lily was here. Oh, my precious Lily, all around my office are pictures of Lily, Lily oh Lily! Then something kicked me out of my melancholic mood, a shadow in the hall, a tap on the door, a note slipped under. I pondered, weak and weary, who *was* this tapping at my office door? Here I opened wide my door, darkness there and nothing more! (at this point Kay slides in through the door unseen by Pie, she carries a saxophone.) I picked up the note, B minor I believe, so I hummed it back to my desk. I read the letter in a female voice, for this must have been written by a lady.

Kay: *(unseen by Pie, she speaks the words in the letter as Pie reads)* "Dear Mr Pie, John Pie. PI. I write to you in a desperate rush so please forgive me if I slur my words. You will have heard of my Papa, X. My poor daddy is now an ex X. Yes, he's been murdered! The cops have drawn a blank on the case, all they ever do is draw on cases! Even the police dogs came up with no leads. I need you to find out who killed my dear Daddy, my precious Pop, my porky Papa! There's a lot at stake, Pie. In your drawer under your desk, between your Colt 45 and your copy of Playboy, January 1979, you will find ten thousand bucks in a crisp white envelope. I snuck in while you were melancholy and listening to moody sax. Let me fill you in so far...."

Pie: It was a long letter, I skipped a few pages.

"and that's why I called my puppy Gonzo! Anyway, Mr Pie, John Pie. PI. I have for you a clue as to who might have taken the life of my poor Papa, X. DD. You need to find DD, she holds the key to this I'm sure. I'll speak to you next time you read this let...."

Pie: I broke off the letter and stopped talking like Kay. DD? DiDi? Who is DD? Dee Dee? D'Dee? Now I was beginning to sound like the Jaws theme tune, this was no help. Then it suddenly clicked, so I reset my jaw and sat back with a smile and a Cuban cigar. Dame Dizney, Dishnee, Disknee? You have to be careful how you say it if you don't want to be slapped with a heavy lawsuit! Yes, she was an ex of X, but why, why would she want to kill X? I called an old friend at the force who gave me the number of this dashing dame. A few moments later I treated myself to a bourbon, more of my cigar and some extra melancholy sax.

(Kay starts to mime-play the sax. Fade to black out, fade up to see Pie at the amusement park.)

Pie: It was a short night. (Pause.) She said to meet her at the amusement park. I've got a ticket to ride, but she's not there. OK, Pie, shake it off. Where's that Dizzy Dame? Was it Dizzy? Sounds like Dizzy... Oh wait, here comes someone. Get a load of that! What am I feeling? My heart says unzippidie-doo-dah but my head says always let your conscience be your guide. I keep asking them, what should I do? What do I get? Crickets!

DD: You must be Pie. Is that a gun in your pocket or are you just glad to see me?

(Pie shifts uncomfortably.)

DD: I see it's a small... world... after all.

Pie: You must be Dame Diz...

DD: Diss...

Pie: Diz...

DD: Diss..

Pie: Dissney.

DD: Dissneeee!

Pie: Let it go, let it go... How about if I just call you Princess? **She wasn't like a regular dame. She was different. Classy. Cool. Almost like a princess. An ice princess.**

DD: *(to the audience)* **I'm beautiful! Powerful! Dangerous! Cold!**

Pie: And modest. And you weren't supposed to hear that. I need to ask you a few questions about the murder of your ex, X.

DD: Be my guest.

Pie: Is there someplace a little more private we can talk?

DD: We can sit in a tea cup. Or a flying elephant?

Pie: I seen about everything when I see an elephant fly. Here we are then. Why don't you make yourself... comfortable? Take off your crown and have a seat.

DD: **Don't let them in, don't let them see!**

Pie: Excuse me?

DD: Hei ho!

Pie: Oh, hi. Let's get to it, shall we? I think you should know we've dusted X's pad for fingerprints. It would be a shame if yours turned up.

DD: **Someday my prints will come... and then what?**

Pie: Now, when did you last see X?

DD: Oh so many years ago. We lived in the deep south, but we had to move away from the Mississippi mud, Pie.

Pie: I see. Were you in love with X?

DD: He was a sweet potato, Pie. **So many things to tell him, but how to make him see the truth about my past? Impossible!**

Pie: I need you to stop talking to the audience and focus on me. Where did you first meet X?

DD: On the path unwinding in the Circle of Life.

Pie: I know that joint. A place where highbrow and lowbrow mingle in secret. Hard to imagine a sweet dame like yourself in a dump like that.

DD: Ingonyama nengw' enamabala.

Pie: You know the password so it must be true. Well, that's all the questions I have for now. Do you have a chauffeur driven limo waiting for you?

DD: No I prefer walking around on those, what do you call 'em?

Pie: Uh, feet? If I have more questions, how can I get in touch with you?

DD: When you meet temptation and the urge is very strong, give a little whistle. Not just a little squeak. Pucker up and... blow.

Pie: I will. I **blew. Hard.**

DD: One more thing, perhaps you need to find BB?

(She exits.)

Pie: She was gone, vanished, like an old oak table. Had I been mizzled, misled? Dizzy... Dissy... Dissneeee Dame. She doesn't seem like the murdering type. But that's just the type to commit murder. Well, it's off to work I go. Who is BB? Baby? Bibi? Beep beep beep I headed backwards back to my office and picked up the letter from Kay. *(Whom he still hasn't noticed. He reads...)*

Kay: "Ah, you're back, so how did you find Dame Dissneeee? She's a dippy dame if ever there was! But did she do it, Pie? Don't let her get into your head, stay humble, Pie. *(she starts playing sax again)*

Pie: I was muddled, cuffuddled, confused and unamused...it had been a long night trying to piece this together, all I had was K in the wrong place, and only two more attempts to get it right, I added an S and left K to the end, then it all started to make sense, the picture in the jigsaw started to shine through. Then I cracked it! SLICK !

Finally I had solved today's Wordle. Now, I needed to concentrate on the case of the mystery of X ..
...

This Kay was some chick, some broad, I must change my listening habits. This X was some player. I headed into town where I found the shoeshine man from my old days in the Police Squad. A few bucks in his polish stained hands and he soon spilled the beans. BB – Broadway Broad of course! I felt sorry for him so treated him to some beans on toast in the nearby café. He soon led me to Broadway Broad. This broad was to be found on Broadway, currently starring in a show called BLAMING IT ALL ON THE NIGHTS ON BROADWAY. Time to feel the beat of dancing feet on the avenue I'm taking you to, 42nd street. I flashed my badge and flashed my smile and flashed my jacket to the chick on the stage door and soon found myself inside her, there, backstage I mean! This PI still has his charms. As I made my way backstage I was overwhelmed by the smell of sweat and cheap perfume. It reminded me of my childhood. Chorus boys in their sequin tights and feather boas gave me the eye. If my friends could see me now! I finally made my way to Broadway Broad's dressing room. I could tell it was hers by the star on the door. And the sign that said Broadway Broad's Dressing Room. The door was slightly ajar but mostly it was a door. I peeked in just in time to catch her changing out of her costume. What a looker! I could swear that everything she had was absolutely real.

BB: I'm afraid not. Had the bingo-bongos done. Did the nose with it. All that goes with it.

Pie: You weren't supposed to hear that.

BB: Children will listen.

Pie: You're no child. You're a ... a... female, feminine, girly, womanly...

BB: Dame? I'm nothing like a dame. Champagne?

Pie: I get no kick from champagne.

BB: You sure? I don't pop my cork for every guy I see. Cocaine?

Pie: I'm sure if I took even one sniff it would bore me terrifically too.

BB: Pie, is it? You're a real cutie, Pie. I get a kick out of you.

Pie: Maybe you and I can take in a matinee sometime.

BB: A matinee, a Pinter play, perhaps a piece of Mahler's. Let's go to the Big Apple, Pie!

Pie: I'll drink to that. But now you're talking a lot of do-re-mi.

BB: Fa-so-la-ti-do.

Pie: Pleasantries aside, I'm here because you're my main suspect in the murder of X. I got a tip from your friend, Maria. **I bluffed.**

BB: Have you met my good friend, Maria? The craziest girl on the block!

Pie: She didn't sound crazy when she said you killed X in a jealous rage!

BB: He had it coming! He only had himself to blame!

Pie: That sounds like a confession to me.

BB: Krup you!

Pie: You have your friend Maria to thank.

BB: Maria! Maria! How do you solve a problem like Maria?!

Pie: I've heard the way to handle a woman is to love her.

BB: That's what simple folk do, so I'm told.

Pie: Oh, listen, sister! You mean...

BB: I've never been in love before.

Pie: But I thought you were one of X's exes?

BB: He took my cherry, Pie. He slept a summer by my side, but he was gone when autumn came.

Pie: Sounds like you need a little Christmas now. This seems like an open and shut case of acting in a jealous rage.

BB: I also do comedy!

Pie: I don't understand you. What did you feel when you saw X lying there in a pool of blood?

BB: I didn't do it, Maria did!

Pie: Looks like your friend, Maria was right about you.

BB: Maria! Maria! Ave Maria! I'll never stop saying Maria! I have to go.

Pie: Not so fast.

BB: Very well. But I didn't kill him, Pie. Even all through my wild days, my mad existence, I kept my promise.

Pie: What did X do?

BB: He kept his distance. Have I said too much? There's nothing more I can think of to say to you.

Pie: Well, if you think of anything, do give me a call.

BB: So what happens now?

Pie: Don't ask anymore.

BB: Excuse me while I go and mince, Pie.

(Pie returns to his office, as he walks in Kay has been sleeping in his chair, she jumps up quickly, grabs the sax and continues playing, still Pie does not see her.)

Pie: It had been a long day, a long night, so long I didn't even notice when one had become the other. It can be hard to tell when you live in black and white. All I know it had been a hard day's night and I'd been working like a dog. I had to get back on track, I had to find the passage back to the place I was before. Such was the life of Pie.

(pause, takes a swig of black coffee)

Pie: I picked up the letter from X's daughter, Kay, to see if I could decipher any more clues as to why anyone would want to take the life of X. I remember the last time I had a clue, it was Colonel Mustard in the kitchen. Or was it Professor Plum...ridge? I digress. *(reading the letter)*

Kay: "I drove my VW from NYC to DC to C Y X had been made an X." *(Pie puts down the letter, Kay continues to play sax.)*

Pie: So many letters in one letter, did this Kay live on Sesame Street? This was making no sense. Broadway Broad gave me no hope, no clue, she just seemed to be in a life of her own, no Broad like her, on or off Broadway could take the life of a fellow man, not even a woman. I was making no sense. I needed colour, I needed time away from my black and white office. I picked up a picture of Lily, my first true love, Lily Oh Lily! *(Kay plays 'Lily Was Here' by Candy Dulfer)* This picture was taken of Lily and I backstage at the Emmy's, she can be seen fraternising with Hollywood stars and I'm in the background with the rock band REM, that's me in the corner. There! Just behind my beautiful Lily, stands Lady Lyric, X's third ex! It's all coming back to me, coming back to me now! I needed to track down Lady Lyric, better known in these parts as The Lyric Lady. This ex of X was extremely exquisite, extravagant, eccentric. An ex-showgirl with an axe to grind. So I knew I had to be extra careful, keep my actions exemplary. But this generation X PI was excited to finally meet Lady Lyric!

(walks out of his office and into 'colour' lights up to brighten the scene.)

Pie: I headed into town, down town, the light's so much brighter there, you can forget all your troubles, forget all your cares. Maybe, just maybe I'll bump into Lady Lyric, may luck be a lady tonight!

I winded my way down to Baker Street, another crazy day, maybe I'll drink the night away. I turned down Fifth street, my mistake, it was positively Fourth Street. I parked outside a seedy little joint called 'The Seedy Little Joint'. Just the kind of bar where everybody knows your name. Inside it was full of bums, bums on seats, bums not on seats, down 'n outs, drunks, former police colleagues, the worst bums. Then I saw a familiar face, John at the bar is a friend of mine, gives me my drinks for free.

Bartender John: Man what are you doin' here?

Pie: Looking for someone.

Bartender John: Aint we all? What can I get ya?

Pie: One bourbon, one scotch and one beer.

Bartender John: Ah, like that is it?

Pie: What the hell, it's five o'clock somewhere!

Bartender: Coming right up.

Pie: I took my drinks at a table near the piano. The piano man asked for requests, so I downed my bourbon and said:

Pie: Play me a song you're the piano man, I'm not really sure how it goes, but it's sad and it's sweet, I knew it complete, when I wore a younger man's clothes.

Pie: Just as he began playing something sad and sweet the door swung open, there she stood in the doorway, in sweet summer sweat. Lady Lyric herself, looking lady like, lyrical, lovely and luscious. I could tell she was an ex showgirl, high heels, stockings, leotard, feathers protruding from above her backside and up out of her hair. You notice these subtle signs when you're a dick. She sauntered up to the bar and took a stool, so I sauntered up to the bar and took a stool.

Pie: Lady Lyric?

LL: Say my name, say my name, as if no one is around you.

Pie: Can I get you a drink?

LL: Do you like Pina Colada? Getting caught in the rain?

Pie: No to both. But I'll get you a drink none the less. This one's on me, John at the bar is a friend of mine, gets me my drinks for free.

LL: Yes, you've already told the audience that. Is it all just a case of history repeating?

Pie: Hey Lady, you weren't supposed to hear that. Anyway, Please allow me to introduce myself.

LL: Are you a man of wealth and taste?

Pie: The name's Pie, John Pie, I'm a PI. PI John Pie.

LL: You seem a little jumpy, John Pie.

Pie: I'll cut to the chase, when did you first meet X?

LL: I was working as a waitress in a cocktail bar....

Pie: Go on.

LL: He picked me out, shook me up.

Pie: Sounds a bit rough.

LL: Oh he was, but he turned me into someone new.

Pie: When was this?

LL: When I was younger, so much younger than today.

Pie: So he made an impact on you?

LL: He was an American, Pie. On our first date he drove me in his Chevy to the levy.

Pie: Was it dry?

LL: No, it had been raining. Why does it always rain on me?

Pie: I've no idea.

LL: Is it because I lied when I was seventeen?

Pie: So it was a wet night?

LL: Yes, it might as well have rained until September.

Pie: So after that night you became lovers?

LL: Oh yes, he took my cherry, Pie. Yes, mine as well. You see, when a man loves a woman, he can't keep his mind on nothin' else.

Pie: True.

LL: And what the world needs now, is love, sweet love.

Pie: I was taken in by this lady, like she took me in and gave me breakfast. But I had a job to do, I had to find answers for Kay, OK. It was no good. I have the attention span of someone without an attention span so I looked her up and down, then up and down again, then again but this time down and up. Then I looked her side to side to give my neck a rest. She soon picked up on this.

LL: Why d'wanna make those eyes at me for?

Pie: I can't take my eyes off you.

LL: I'm just too good to be true?

Pie: You said it.

LL: Stop right now, thank you very much.

Pie: I remembered the chase and how I was going to cut right to it....

Pie: So why did you kill X?

Pie: Well if there ever was a chase to cut to, I cut to it right there. When you're a PI it's good to cut right to the chase, otherwise the chase cuts you, cuts you right up and before you know it you're in the gutter, cut right up, with no answers and no chase.

LL: Wow, you really cut to the chase on that one! You're no chicken, Pie. *(beat)* After we married he bought a big house, a really big house in the country.

Pie: I have a dream about buying some land, give up the booze and the one-night stands.

LL: Don't speak, I know just what you're sayin'.

Pie: Go on.

LL: It was a beautiful big house, not just a cottage, Pie. Fields surrounded it, lots of sheep and some shepherds, Pie. Life was so much easier, with two cats in the yard, life used to be so hard.

Pie: Tell me more, tell me more. Did you get very far?

LL: You're very handsome you know, when the moon hits your eye. Let's share a big pizza, Pie.

Pie: That's a Morey.

LL: You're a real lamb, Pie.... Kiss me, beneath the milky twilight. *(she leans over and kisses Pie.)*

Pie: You took the words right out of my mouth.

LL: It must have been while I was kissing you. Let's dance! Put on your red shoes and dance the blues!

Pie: I can't dance, I can't talk, the only thing about me is the way that I walk.

LL: I bet that you look good on the dance floor!

Pie: I don't know if you're looking for romance or.....

LL: Oh you sugar, Pie! I love you!

Pie: This was getting out of control. She said she loves me or was she just being kind?

LL: Or is he losing his mind? I'm leaving soon, on the midnight train to Georgia.

Pie: When will I see you again, when will our hearts beat as one?

Pie: And just like that she was gone. Woo Woo. I made my way back to the office. As I approached I heard the sound of saxophone music. Did I leave the radio on? I opened the door and what to my wondering eyes should appear...? Wrong story. It was Kay! I heard she had a style and so I came to see her and listen for a while. No! Snap out of it, Pie! Don't let her cast her spell on you!

Kay: Too late, Pie! I had you running all over! Like a band on the run! Running on empty! Chasing down every phony clue I left for you. All to buy time so I could plan my getaway!

Pie: So it was you, K!

Kay: You're one sharp cookie.

Pie: No, cookies are blunt and round. Crumbly.

Kay: I rest my case.

Pie: Y K? Why murder your own father?

Kay: Because of you, Pie! I love you! But my father didn't approve. He said if I didn't forget you, he would cut me out of his will and leave everything to his exes! I thought there was always something between us, Pie.

Pie: It's true, I wanna hold your hand.

Kay: That's it?

Pie: Well... You were just seventeen. You know what I mean?

Kay: Stop! In the name of love, before you break my heart!

Pie: **Maybe I could think it over.**

Kay: Too late! My time has come. I'm leaving with or without you.

Pie: If it really was U, K, I don't C Y U R still here? What about your getaway? And how did you get in here?

Kay: I came in through the bathroom window. You really need to clean up your John, Pie. I was hoping you would forgive me and run run run run runaway with me.

Pie: Where?

Kay: Brazil.

Pie: Brazil! Why?!

Kay: I'm originally from Ipanema.

Pie: Aaaaahhhhh. **I would go loco, down in Acapulco, if I stay too long.**

Kay: Whaddaya say, Pie? Feel like flying down to Rio?

Pie: You know you're something special and you look like you're the best. Oh Rio!

Kay: But then I'm sure you know it's just for you.

Pie: I'll take my chance cause luck is on my side or something.

Kay: Really, Pie?!

Pie: Sorry kid. I'm afraid this is the end of the line. And so we face the final curtain.

Kay: Poor poor pitiful me! Where will you take me?

Pie: To police headquarters

Kay: What is it?

Pie: A big building with police chiefs.

Kay: Let's not go there.

Pie: But I have to kid, I'm sorry

Kay: I meant let's not do that joke... heaven know's we've stolen enough song lyrics, we've no need to put in film or TV quotes.

Pie: True, let's go.

(Lights dim slightly as Kay takes up the saxophone)

Pie: Poor kid. She pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. During her trial she kept screaming Crazy on you! Crazy crazy on you! And they believed her. They gave her a nice padded cell where she plays the same melancholy tune all day on her sax. Melancholy Baby. Time to file this case away. Right between my Colt 45 and my copy of Playboy, January 1979.

End of Play.