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Dramatic Publishing

My Gun Is Pink

Murder mystery comedy by
Jeffrey Goffin



My Gun Is Pink

"I fell in love with it the first time I read the script."

(Lynn Ingram, Sumrall, Miss.)

"Our little drama class has greatly enjoyed working
with *My Gun Is Pink*."

(St. Edward School, Seattle, Wash.)

Murder mystery/Comedy. By Jeffrey Goffin. *Cast: 3m., 11w.* Babe Archer, private investigator, is a female Mike Hammer, Magnum and Matt Houston rolled into one. She's tough, fearless and smart. Her partner, the cops and the "hoods" are all female. The only males are the kind of roles usually played by women on TV—Babe's adoring secretary, her partner's "steady" and the filthy rich dupes of the crooks. It's a play designed for fun for all—the director, cast, crew and audiences. *My Gun Is Pink*, a detective comedy, is a rarity—a good play with a predominantly female cast. With a playing time of 50 to 60 minutes, it may be presented as a full evening's entertainment (perhaps with an intermission at the end of Scene 5 or 6) or on the same program with another short play. The play was commissioned by Central Memorial High School of Calgary in Canada as a solution to the problem of finding a play with a predominantly female cast. It is a spoof of detective movies and TV shows with a playful peek at the women's liberation movement. *My Gun is Pink* provides suspense and action for all age groups. *Unit set. Place: Hollywood. Time: 1940s. Approximate running time: 50 to 60 minutes. Code: MN6.*

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My Gun Is Pink

My GUN

is PINK

A Detective Comedy

by

JEFFREY GOFFIN

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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(MY GUN IS PINK)

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ABOUT THE PLAY

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Babe Archer, Private Investigator, is a female Mike Hammer, Magnum, and Matt Houston rolled into one. She’s tough, fearless, and smart. Her partner, the cops, and the “hoods” are all female. The only males are the kind of roles usually played by women on TV—Babe’s adoring secretary, her partner’s “steady,” and the filthy rich dupes of the crooks.

It’s a play designed for fun—fun for the director, cast, crew, and audiences.

MY GUN IS PINK

Cast of Characters

(11 women, 3 men)

Babe Archer, Private Investigator

Angel Stark, her partner

Liz King, Inspector, New York City Police Department

Price, Constable/Policewoman

Drummond, Constable/Policewoman

Lou, bartender at the Lazy Ace

Bradshaw, conspirator

Hauptmann, conspirator

Karvanskya, conspirator

Chang, conspirator

Wilma, a hired gun

Wayne Reiley, international playboy } *played by the*

Colin Reiley, his twin brother } *same actor*

Vernon Hopkins, secretary for the Stark and Archer Agency

Ashley Du Pont, singer at the Lazy Ace

NOTE: The cast size may be reduced by doubling the following roles:
Drummond/Chang, Lou/Bradshaw, Angel/Wilma, and Price/Karvanskya



PLACE: New York City

TIME: The Hollywood '40's

Originally produced in May, 1984, by Central Memorial High School, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, under the direction of David Cormack.

MY GUN IS PINK

[A unit set is suggested so that the action may flow from scene to scene with minimum interruption (3- to 5-second blackouts). See Production Notes, page 26, for suggestions]

Scene 1

[Night. The stage is totally dark. Sound of RAIN. We hear a passing CAR pull to a halt. A CAR DOOR opens and closes. A VOICE is heard, "Hey Stark!" ANOTHER VOICE, "Yeah?" A GUN fires three times. Quick FOOTSTEPS, the CAR DOOR opens and closes, and the CAR races off. RED LIGHTS of a police car fade in. Stage LIGHTS fade in. The scene is a nondescript street corner. A WOMAN'S BODY lies sprawled face down. CONSTABLE PRICE and CONSTABLE DRUMMOND consult with INSPECTOR KING. BABE ARCHER enters]

PRICE. *[To Archer]* What do you want here?

ARCHER. I'm Babe Archer. Inspector King called me.

PRICE. Oh. Okay. Over here.

KING. Hello, Babe. I figured you'd want to see it before we took her away.

ARCHER. Thanks, Liz. What happened?

KING. Got her right through the pump with this. *[Holds up a revolver in a handkerchief]* It's a Webley. English, isn't it?

ARCHER. Yeah. A Webley-Forsbey forty-five automatic, eight shot. They don't make them any more. How many gone out of it?

KING. Just three.

ARCHER. *[As the CONSTABLES take away the body]* Let's see. *[Surveys the scene]* Er, shot right here, huh? Standing like you are, facing the street. The killer stood here. That it?

KING. That's it. The blast burnt her coat.

ARCHER. Who found her?

KING. Woman on the beat.

ARCHER. Anybody hear the shot?

KING. Somebody must've. We just got here. You wanna go have a look at her before we take her away? *[Gestures to the ambulance off stage]*

ARCHER. No. You've seen everything I could.

KING. Her gun was still tucked away on her hip. Hadn't been fired. Her overcoat was buttoned. I found a hundred dollar bill in her purse and thirty-some bucks in her pockets. Was she working, Babe? [*BABE hesitates, trying to decide how much to tell*] Well?

ARCHER. Yeah. She was looking for a guy named Reiley.

KING. What for?

ARCHER. We wanted his shoe size. Don't crowd me, Liz.

KING. This Reiley character. Was it Colin Reiley?

ARCHER. Yeah, what of it?

KING. I hope you got your money in advance.

ARCHER. What are you getting at?

KING. Just this: Reiley was shot down in front of Maxine's Bar and Grill about an hour ago. Eight slugs in him. I just finished cleaning up over there when the call came in about Angel.

ARCHER. Are you sure it was Colin Reiley?

KING. Colin Reiley. Grubby rich kid from uptown.

ARCHER. You sure it wasn't his brother, Wayne? His twin brother?

KING. Just what did this Reiley fella hire you gals for?

ARCHER. I'm afraid there's not a lot to go on, Liz. It started about a week ago. [*Focus shifts to the Stark and Archer Office as ARCHER moves into a FLASHBACK. ARCHER relaxes behind her desk. Enter VERNON*] Yes, sweetheart?

VERNON. There's a guy who wants to see you. His name's Wayne Reiley.

ARCHER. A customer?

VERNON. I guess so. You'll want to see him, anyway. He's a knockout.

ARCHER. Shoo him in, Vernon darling, shoo him in.

VERNON. [*Turning back to the outer office*] Will you come in, Mr. Reiley?

REILEY. [*Entering*] Thank you.

ARCHER. [*VERNON closes the door behind him as he exits*] Won't you sit down, Mr. Reiley?

REILEY. Thank you. I'm looking for a good, reliable private detective, Miss Archer. I'd like to hire you. Your agency, that is.

ARCHER. Suppose you tell me about it from the very beginning. [*Offers pack to Reiley*] Cigarette?

REILEY. No thank you, Miss Archer, I don't smoke. Well, I'm trying to find my brother. My twin brother, that is. His name is Colin. But he looks quite a bit like me. We're twins, you see. Identical, even.

ARCHER. That's very nice Mr. Reiley, but . . .

REILEY. But I haven't seen him for almost three weeks. He's missing, you see.

ARCHER. Missing?

STARK. *[Enters]* Who's missing? *[Sees Reiley]* Oh, excuse me.

ARCHER. It's all right, Angel. Come in. Mr. Reiley, my partner, Angel Stark.

REILEY. How do you do?

ARCHER. Mr. Reiley's looking for his twin brother, Colin. Is that right?

REILEY. Yes, that's right. He's my twin. Identical even. And I'm looking for him, you see. That's right too. At least I was looking for him. I want you to look for him now, too.

ARCHER. Ah, right. Well, do you have any clues as to your brother's whereabouts?

REILEY. I'm not certain, but I think he's been kidnapped.

ARCHER. Kidnapped?

STARK. Why is that?

REILEY. Well, you see, Colin and I are the heirs to the Reiley estate. Perhaps you've heard of it? It seems that Mummy was into all sorts of business ventures. Colin could tell you more about it all than I could. I never was very interested in the family business, you see. But, I don't know where Colin is, so I guess you'll have to wait to hear more about that.

STARK. So you feel there is ample motive for a kidnapping, what with you two being so very wealthy?

REILEY. Oh, heavens, yes.

ARCHER. But what is it that makes you think your brother's been kidnapped?

REILEY. Well, you see, Colin has always led a wild life but recently he has been keeping company with some rather questionable types. Really seedy characters. Took him out to dingy little spots. Kept him out till all hours. Took advantage of his good nature. They were nothing but a bunch of parasites, you see. Spending his money, stringing him along.

STARK. And you feel that these friends of his would go so far as to kidnap him to extort money?

REILEY. Definitely.

ARCHER. How long has Colin been missing?

REILEY. It was three weeks ago Thursday.

ARCHER. What happened?

REILEY. Well, you see, he didn't come home.

ARCHER. Where had he gone?

REILEY. Out with those horrid friends of his. He never told us where they went.

ARCHER. And you've had no word of Colin since that night?

REILEY. Not a thing. And I'm so worried. I just know something awful has happened. I just know it.

STARK. Now, now. There's no need to get upset.

ARCHER. Can you tell us the names of some of Colin's friends, or where we might find them?

REILEY. He spoke so little of his activities.

ARCHER. Oh.

REILEY. But there was one. A woman named . . . Bradshaw. Yes, that's it. He spoke of her several times, you see. Said she had "connections"?

ARCHER. Do you have any idea where we might find her?

REILEY. No, I'm sorry, ladies. I'm afraid I'm not very helpful.

STARK. These things always seem so difficult at the start.

ARCHER. We can begin making inquiries immediately. I'm sure we'll find her.

REILEY. But you must be careful. I'm deathly afraid of this woman named Bradshaw. What she might do.

ARCHER. You just leave that to us. We'll know how to handle her.

STARK. I'll get right on this, Mr. Reiley.

ARCHER. That's all right, Angel, I can . . .

STARK. But you're busy with the Koschuk business, aren't you?

ARCHER. That's nearly wrapped up. I . . .

STARK. Nonsense, Babe. I can devote my full attention to Mr. Reiley. I don't want to drag you away from urgent affairs.

REILEY. Oh, thank you. . . . Er, oh, yes. *[He brings out a pocket book and counts out several large-denomination bills]* Will that be enough? *[ARCHER and STARK grin at him]* Thank you.

STARK. *[Showing him to the door]* I'll be in touch. Good-bye.

REILEY. Thank you so much.

ARCHER. Good-bye.

STARK. *[She begins to count quickly through the money]* They're right enough.

ARCHER. What do you think of him?

STARK. Oh, he's sweet. Maybe you saw him first, Babe, but I spoke first.

ARCHER. Ah, right. [*The FLASHBACK FADES OUT and ARCHER moves back to join the Inspector*] That's the way it all started, Inspector, KING. So?—is that all you can tell me on this Reiley business?

ARCHER. Just about. I was out of town on another case until yesterday. That's when Mr. Reiley showed up at the office again. [*The FLASHBACK FADES IN again. ARCHER returns to the office where REILEY and STARK are seated*]

STARK. Do I understand you correctly?

REILEY. Yes. I wish to dispense with your services.

ARCHER. [*To Stark*] But I thought that you still hadn't found him?

STARK. That's right, Babe. But Mr. Reiley informs me . . .

REILEY. Colin has come home, so your services are no longer required.

ARCHER. This is quite a surprise.

STARK. It certainly is.

REILEY. [*Holding out money to Stark*] I trust that this will cover the remainder of your expenses?

ARCHER. And then some.

STARK. But did he just come home all of a sudden?

REILEY. Precisely.

STARK. And may I ask where he was for the past four weeks?

REILEY. No, you may not. And now, ladies, if you'll allow me, I'm afraid I have other pressing matters to attend to. Thank you. Good morning. [*He exits*]

STARK. But, Mr. Reiley . . . Well, how do you like that?

ARCHER. Seems fair to me. Maximum income for minimum effort.

STARK. It just doesn't wash with me. I looked everywhere for that kid for a whole week and suddenly he just walks in off the street? Something's fishy here.

ARCHER. Forget it, Angel. The little brothers have a spat and Colin runs away from home. After a while he cools off, gets bored and comes home. It's as easy as that.

STARK. I don't know, Babe. It just doesn't sit right with me. Where was he?

ARCHER. [*She walks back to King as the FLASHBACK FADES OUT*] And that was the last I heard about Mr. Reiley until tonight.

KING. Do you think Angel let it drop?

ARCHER. Not if I know—knew Angel. She tried for a whole week to find Colin and she came up empty. That irked her. I'd bet my petticoat she tried to find out what happened.

KING. Do you think she found out?

ARCHER. *[Picking up Stark's hat]* I think she got pretty close. *[LIGHTS fade for a brief (5-second) blackout]*

Scene 2

[ARCHER enters her office. She looks haggard. She flops down behind her desk and stares at the door. The door opens and VERNON enters]

ARCHER. Morning, darling.

VERNON. Hello, Babe. You look like hell.

ARCHER. Been up all night, Vernon.

VERNON. Trying to figure out what to do?

ARCHER. Yeah. My partner's dead. It's up to me to get the crooks responsible. *[VERNON lights a cigarette and places it in Archer's mouth]*

VERNON. That's what the cops are for, Babe. Leave it to them.

ARCHER. I keep trying to tell myself that, Vern. Somehow it doesn't wash. I owe it to Angel to get them myself.

VERNON. Don't do it, Babe.

ARCHER. You almost sound worried, mister.

VERNON. I am, Babe. This could be a dangerous game you're playing . . .

ARCHER. And you're afraid I might get hurt?

VERNON. *[Turning away from her]* You know how I feel about you, Babe. If anything ever happened to you . . .

ARCHER. I can take care of myself.

VERNON. *[He looks at her intently and smiles]* You better, Miss Archer. You just better. *[ARCHER grins]* So what are you going to do? *[The sound of a MACHINE GUN is heard and the wall behind Babe is riddled with bullets. VERNON dives to the floor. ARCHER freezes in her chair. Sound of a CAR racing away is heard]* Babe! Babe, are you all right?

ARCHER. Right as rain, Vernon darling. *[Looks at the wall behind her]* I oughta know better than to take an office on the ground floor.

VERNON. We might have been killed!

ARCHER. That was the idea, sweetheart. I guess I won't be able to let Angel's murder drop.

VERNON. You think it was the killer?

ARCHER. It wasn't Avon calling. Vernon, I'm gonna need everything you can give me on that Reiley case—everything Angel was working on. And any other files that you think might be of use. People who might have had it in for Angel, folks she didn't get along with, any shady connections she had. And you better go through her desk, too. If anything looks like it doesn't belong, I want to know.

VERNON. Sure thing, Babe. I'll get right on it. But why the Reiley case? I thought that was closed?

ARCHER. The police found Mr. Reiley in front of a bar last night with a couple of slugs in him. I don't think it's just a coincidence.

VERNON. Okay, Babe. [*ARCHER rises and puts on her hat*] Where are you headed now?

ARCHER. Gonna check out that dive Angel used to hang out in, the Lazy Ace.

VERNON. That seedy joint?

ARCHER. Yeah. Maybe one of her friends can tell me something.

VERNON. Be careful, Babe.

ARCHER. [*Grins, puts out her cigarette, and adjusts her hat*] See you later, good-lookin'. [*She exits. LIGHTS fade for a brief (5-second) black-out*]

Scene 3

[ARCHER enters the Lazy Ace Bar. A big, burly woman, LOU, is behind the bar. The dark figure of a woman (WILMA) seems to follow Archer but remains in the background]

LOU. What can I do for you, Myrt?

ARCHER. The monicker's Archer, Babe Archer. For starters you can give me a beer.

LOU. [*Pouring the beer and setting it in front of her*] Sure thing. Anything else?

ARCHER. You knew my partner, Angel Stark. She used to come in here pretty regular.

LOU. Sure thing. I knew Angel. Tough break about her, eh? Getting rubbed out like that.

ARCHER. Yeah, tough break.

LOU. You're a private eye too, eh?

ARCHER. That's right, and I'm trying to track down whoever did it.

LOU. Glad to help. Angel was a straight gal, y'know? On the level. The mug oughta get the chair for it.

ARCHER. Uh, right.

LOU. So what can I do for you?

ARCHER. When was the last time you saw her?

LOU. Yesterday. Came in about six o'clock and left about nine.

ARCHER. And walked right into the killer. Did she ever say anything about the case she was working on?

LOU. Something about two brothers? A couple of mugs with money to burn?

ARCHER. That's the one.

LOU. Yeah, I remember. *[The LIGHTS change to indicate a FLASH-BACK. ARCHER steps out of the picture as STARK steps up to the bar]* Twins, eh? And real lookers you say?

STARK. Yeah, those Reileys have a lot of class, Lou. They have more money than they know what to do with.

LOU. And a real hunk, right?

STARK. Y'know, they own most of this town. Hotels, nightclubs, office buildings. They even have factories and warehouses down by the docks.

LOU. But he's a real dish, am I right?

STARK. Well, I'm not complaining, Lou. *[They laugh]*

LOU. *[LIGHTS change back. STARK returns to the shadows as ARCHER resumes her place at the bar]* That's about all she said to me.

ARCHER. Know anyone else who could tell me about it?

LOU. I might.

ARCHER. Keep going.

LOU. Well, y'know, Miss Archer, I don't make much money working here.

ARCHER. Would twenty bucks help your memory any?

LOU. *[Snatching the bill from ARCHER's hand and stuffing it in her shirt pocket]* Maybe Ashley can tell you something.

ARCHER. Ashley?

LOU. Ashley Du Pont. He sings with the band most nights. Him and Angel, well, they had kind of a thing going, y'know?

ARCHER. I get the picture. He around here?

LOU. Right over there. *[Gestures to a table in darkness until now]*

You better go easy on him. He's taking it kind of hard. Angel's murder, y'know?

ARCHER. Right. *[She heads over to Ashley's table]* Mind if I join you?

ASHLEY. Why not? Why should I mind?

ARCHER. I think you and I should get to know each other better.

ASHLEY. Ha, that's a good one, sister. I haven't heard that line for a while.

ARCHER. It's no line, Mr. Du Pont. I mean it. My name is Babe Archer.

ASHLEY. *[He looks at her uneasily]* You're Angel's partner.

ARCHER. Right.

ASHLEY. I guess you're trying to find out who did her in?

ARCHER. Right again.

ASHLEY. *[Looks around uncomfortably]* I don't know anything about it.

ARCHER. I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. Angel might have mentioned something to you that could help me.

ASHLEY. I don't think so. She never talked about her work.

ARCHER. Is that so? Funny that she'd discuss her case with Lou over there and not say a word to you.

ASHLEY. Yeah, funny thing.

ARCHER. You wouldn't be trying to hold out on me, would you, Mr. Du Pont?

ASHLEY. Why would I do that?

ARCHER. I don't know. It just seems that for someone so close to Angel you're not very helpful.

ASHLEY. *[Gets up from the table]* I have nothing more to say to you, Miss Archer. Please excuse me.

ARCHER. Hold it, buddy boy. Maybe I'm way off base here—but you meant quite a bit to Angel. Didn't she mean anything to you? Don't you care that someone left her lying in the street with a belly full of lead?

ASHLEY. What do you want from me?

ARCHER. I want you to help me.

ASHLEY. I can't, I tell you. I just can't.

LOU. Say, Miss Archer, I just thought of something.

ARCHER. Yeah?

LOU. I remember Angel saying that Reiley was mixed up with some political organization, or cult, or something.

ARCHER. Do you remember what it was called?

STARK. *[The LIGHTS change for FLASHBACK. STARK steps up to the bar]* “The Friends of People.”

LOU. Who are they, Angel?

STARK. You got me. Could be a sewing circle for all I know.

LOU. Sounds like a bunch of Commies, Angel.

STARK. Yeah, I guess it does. I’ll find out tonight, though. I’m going to a meeting.

LOU. A meeting? I’ll bet you’ll have to call everybody “comrade.” *[They laugh. The LIGHTS change back. STARK disappears]*

ARCHER. The Friends of People, eh? And she even went to a meeting? *[Crosses to Ashley’s table]* Sound familiar, Mr. Du Pont?

ASHLEY. Yeah, she went to their meeting. A couple of days ago.

ARCHER. Just like Angel not to mention it to me. She never was very big on politicians. How can I get in touch with these pinkos?

ASHLEY. That I don’t know, Miss Archer. She never said where she went or who she talked to.

ARCHER. Lou, did Angel ever . . . *[ARCHER freezes as she turns back to look at Lou. ASHLEY screams. LOU lies forward on the bar with a large knife sticking in her back. ARCHER coolly crosses to Lou, surveying every detail. She checks for a pulse]*

ASHLEY. Is she, is she . . .

ARCHER. Yeah. A real professional job. She never felt a thing.

ASHLEY. This is your fault. All of your snooping around. Why couldn’t you just leave well enough alone! *[He rushes out]*

ARCHER. That’s murder number three. I guess I’m onto something. *[LIGHTS fade for a brief blackout]*

Scene 4

[ARCHER returns to the office. She sits at her desk and begins going over the files that VERNON, standing by the desk, has gathered]

VERNON. There’s an awful lot of stuff here that I can’t account for.

ARCHER. Angel must have come up with more than I thought.

VERNON. But so much of it seems entirely pointless. All of this about the Reiley Estate. And then there’s all these names. And what’s this list of numbers?

ARCHER. That’s a list of dates. Day, month, and year.

VERNON. It would help if we knew what we’re looking for.

ARCHER. It's just like doing a jigsaw, Vern dear, eventually the pieces fall into place. It just takes longer sometimes.

VERNON. I'll say one thing for the Reileys, they sure throw around a lot of money. Look at all of this stuff they own.

ARCHER. What kind of stuff?

VERNON. Mainly real estate. All over the state. Pretty strange to me. Come to think of it, how could Angel have found out about all this?

ARCHER. She had her connections, darling. Can you make out what Angel's written here, Vern?

STARK. [*LIGHTS up on Stark, apart from the others, writing in a notebook*] March 23rd, eleven o'clock, The Friends of People. [*She looks up thoughtfully, nods knowingly. LIGHTS down on Stark*]

VERNON. Friends of People?

ARCHER. They're a bunch of radicals that Reiley got mixed up with. Ashley wouldn't tell me anything about them so I better go and have a talk with them myself. The address is down near the docks. Strange place for a political get-together. [*As she heads for the door:*] Looks like we're in business, sweetheart. [*She exits. Brief blackout*]

Scene 5

[ARCHER arrives at the waterfront. The night is gloomy. A FOG HORN is heard. She glances around to see if she is alone. WILMA has been watching closely from the periphery. She looks away quickly to avoid Archer's gaze. ARCHER studies her for a moment. WILMA starts past Archer as if wandering away. ARCHER steps in front of Wilma, blocking her way]

ARCHER. You going to tell me why you been following me or are we gonna keep playing hide and seek?

WILMA. What?

ARCHER. C'mon, sister. I spotted you outside the office yesterday and you been following me ever since.

WILMA. What do you think you're doing? Kidding me?

ARCHER. I'm almost certain I saw you at the Lazy Ace. I'm sure the police would love to ask you a few questions. Maybe you saw someone stick a knife in Lou the bartender?

WILMA. I don't know what you're talking about but keep it up and you're gonna get it plenty.

ARCHER. People lose teeth talking like that. If you want to hang around, you'll be polite.