

MUSIC Cue # 1 **OPENING THEME**

ANNCR The first Nighter Program, a copyrighted feature coast-to-coast, presented by Campana, the makers of Solitaire, the new cake make-up and Campana-Balm, the famous hand lotion.

MUSIC **End of opening theme**

MR FN Theater time. Broadway’s buzzing with excitement and eager to await an opening night performance at the little theater off Times Square. And there’ll be a crowd of on-lookers and autograph seekers on hand at the entrance to greet the celebrities who always attend the premier on the Great White Way. So, let’s not miss a minute of the excitement. It’s just a short walk around the corner. Will you join me?

SFX Cue # 2 *street sounds (under narration)*

MR FN There are lots of uniforms in the crowd tonight at Broadway and 42nd street. Shall we ... cross the street here?

SFX *(street sounds continuing)*

MR FN And here now is the Little Theater off Times Square.
(street sounds out)

USHER Have your tickets ready, please! Have your tickets ready, please! *(not as loud)* Good evening, MR First Nighter. The usher will show you to your box.

MR FN Thank you, we’ll go right in.

MUSIC Cue # **3** *(theater orchestra)*

MR FN Well here we are. And every seat is taken. I’m sure they’re notices that tonight’s play is a thriller, packing plenty of excitement in every scene, with a bit of a surprise coming up at the very end. The title is “The Chinese Gong” and was written by Arch Oboler. Topping an all-star cast is our popular leading lady, Barbara Luddy, and opposite Miss Luddy is her guest leading man, Olan Soule. The play is pure fiction, of course, and does not refer to real people or actual events. And now, before our first curtain, let’s listen to our First Nighter Orchestra.

MUSIC Cue #4 *orchestral interlude*
USHER Curtain. First curtain.

MR FN There's the signal for first curtain, the house lights are out and here's the play.

JOHN Well ... well when do we eat?

EVELYN John!

JOHN Well, this is a dinner party, isn't it?

EVELYN John, will you behave yourself? We're waiting for MR Wilton. He was unavoidably delayed.

JOHN Well, I wish he'd hurry up. I'm hungry. What a room. Looks like a Chinese junk shop.

EVELYN John! How can you say such a thing? The Wilton's have one of the finest collections of Chinese art in this part of the country. I think this room is simply fascinating.

JOHN Fascinating? Huh! I think this is nothing but junk. What! Look at this thing. What's it good for?

EVELYN Now John, that's a genuine Chinese Gong. Chances are it's twice as old as you and I put together.

JOHN Looks like a tin soup plate to me. Wonder what it sounds like?

EVELYN John, don't you dare strike that gong.

JOHN Well, why not? We can't hurt it.

SFX Cue #5 *Gong*

EVELYN Now you've done it.

JOHN By George, that has a nice tone. Just listen to it.

EVELYN John!

SFX **Cue #6 Gong**

JEAN Oh, my God, no! Don't do that!

JOHN Huh-huh. Huh-huh-huh. Oh, it's you, Mrs. Wilton. I thought you were out of the room.

EVELYN Sorry, my dear, I told him not to strike it.

JOHN Well, will someone please tell me what harm there is in striking a gong?

JEAN None whatsoever, Mr. Clark, but ... you see this doesn't happen to be an ordinary gong.

JOHN What do you mean?

JEAN This gong is ... Oh, here comes Bob.

BOB Hello, everybody. Sorry I'm so late.

EVELYN Good evening, Mr. Wilton.

BOB Hello, Evelyn.

JEAN I'm so glad you came, Bob. Mr. Clark was just asking about the gong.

BOB That reminds me. Did someone strike that gong before I came in?

JEAN Yes, dear. Mr. Clark struck it. Twice. I stopped him before he hit it a third time.

BOB Good.

JOHN Say, what is all this? Is there something wrong with me or with the gong?

BOB Oh, everything’s all right, Mr. Clark. Just a little ... eh ...family superstition, that’s all. You see this gong is a ... Oh, well, let’s forget all about it.

JOHN Forget it nothing. Young man, I want to know what this is all about.

EVELYN Yes, please tell us. It sounds simply fascinating.

BOB Look here, Jean, you tell the story. I don’t tell it very well.

JEAN Alright, Bob. Shall we sit down?

JOHN Yeah, yeah, sure.

JEAN Well, the story of the gong begins in Shanghai. Bob and I went there on our honeymoon. It was almost ten years ago. We very young and very much in love. And our stay in China would have been simply perfect if it hadn’t been for certain man who decided that he was in love with me. We’d met him on the boat. His name was Count Renikov.

EVELYN A Count! Oh, how fascinating!

JOHN Don’t interrupt!

JEAN Well, the Count’s attentions to me became more and more insistent, till ... finally Bob decided to take matters into his own hands. One night, without my knowing about it, Bob went to see Renikov, to demand that he stop annoying me. The Count was staying at the same hotel that we were.

MUSIC *Cue #7 transition*

SFX *Knocks on door – door opens*

WONG Yes, please.

BOB Is Count Renikov in?

WONG What name, please?

COUNT *(off mike)* Who is it, Wong? *(coming on mike)* Well, well, if it is not the bridegroom himself. Come in, Wilton, come in. Heh. **(SFX: door closes)** This, eh, is an unexpected pleasure. Here. Here. Take this chair by the window.

BOB Thank you.

COUNT Wong! Wong! Now where did he go? Wong!

WONG Yes. Yes please, Count.

COUNT There you are, eh? **(SFX: slap)**

WONG Uh!

COUNT That will teach you to come the first time I call you. Now then. No callers, Wong. I do not want to be disturbed while I am visiting with Mr. Wilton. Understand?

WONG Yes, please.

COUNT Ah, you may go. *(shouts)* Go on! Get out! *(pause)* Hah. Well now, Wilton, and to what do I owe the pleasure of this little visit?

BOB I'll be as brief and to the point as I can Renikov. I came here to ask you to stay away from us.

COUNT You ... you want me to stay away?

BOB Yes. On the boat we couldn't help ourselves. We had to endure you. And on the way to Shanghai we want you to leave us alone. Do you understand?

COUNT Eh, heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, ha. *(heavy breath intake)* Oh, I understand better than you think, my young friend. Oh, ho, ho, ho. So, you are jealous, eh?

BOB My own feelings have nothing to do with this. I'm here because of my wife. You're annoying her Renikov. I want you to stay from her.

COUNT Yah, hah, ha, ha, ha, ha, hah. So, I am annoying the little American woman, am I? Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh, hee. It is most amusing. Heh, heh, heh.

BOB It won't be so amusing if you persist in play the Don Juan.

COUNT (*scoffs*) Ah!

BOB Great Scot, man. Can't you see when you're not wanted? My wife doesn't want your hand kissing or cheap compliments. Shanghai is full of women who would appreciate your expert Continental love making. Why not do it to them?

COUNT You are insulting, sir!

BOB And you're annoying. I've been as patient with you as I could possibly be. I'd have thought an old man like you would have more sense.

COUNT (*angry*) That is enough! You will go! Tomorrow I shall speak to the little one myself. I will tell her ...

BOB (*interrupting angrily*) You annoy my wife again and I'll hit you so hard I'll jar you ancestors.

COUNT You... you threaten me?

BOB Yes, Renikov. I threaten you. What are you going to do about it?

COUNT Hah! I will report this threat to the authorities.

BOB Report and be hanged! I'm warning you for the last time. Stay away from me and stay away from my wife!

MUSIC *Cue #8 bridge*

SFX *Door closing*

JEAN Is that you, Bob?

BOB Yeah.

JEAN Wha... Where have you been? I've been waiting for you for hours.

BOB Sorry, dear. Had some business to attend to.

JEAN Bob! You didn't go to him?

BOB Well...

JEAN Oh, Bob, you didn't!

BOB Yes, I did. I've stood all I can from that hand-kissing four-flusher.

JEAN What did you do?

BOB I told him to leave us alone from now on.

JEAN Oh, Bob, you didn't!

BOB Certainly I did. (pause) Oh. Gosh, Jeannie, now you're not going to be angry at me, are you?

JEAN Angry at you? Oh, Bob, I've never been more pleased in all my life.

BOB Well, I...

JEAN That big ape. He might have been God's gift to women on the Volga, but he certainly is the pest of Shanghai to me.

BOB Well, I guess I settled that. I'm sure he won't spoil our honeymoon any more.

JEAN Spoil our honeymoon? Oh, Bobby, how could anyone spoil that? I love you so.

BOB And I love you.

JEAN Oh, Bob, I'm so happy. This is the most glorious honeymoon a woman ever had.

BOB Mmm. It has been great, hasn't it?

JEAN If it would only stay like this. Forever.

BOB Mmm. You mean here? In China?

JEAN No, you silly. I mean so terribly, terribly in love.

BOB We will stay in love, Jeannie. I'm going to see to that.

JEAN Yes, Bob, you see to that no matter what happens.

BOB Jean, the trouble with you is you've been cooped up in this hotel room too long. Come on now. Get dressed and we'll go places.

JEAN Oh, no Bob, I'd rather stay in.

BOB Stay in nothing. Do you realize we've been in Shanghai almost a week and you haven't even bought a souvenir?

JEAN Haven't I?

BOB You know dog gone well you haven't. Gosh, Jean, that isn't normal behavior for a woman. Come on now. Get dressed and we'll go shopping. I'll buy you anything ... anything at all. From a Chinese pagoda to a chop suey factory.

MUSIC **Cue #9 end of act one**

MR FN *(over the music)* The curtain comes down on act one in the little theater off Time Square.

VOICE *(over music following announcer)* Smoking in the outer lobby or downstairs, please.

ANNCR From Hollywood to New York and right across the country, girls and women everywhere are saying:

WOMAN Goodbye winter, hello springtime. I'm changing my complexion. Yes, I'm facing the world with a fresh Solitaire complexion, because I love its

soothing smoothness, its springtime color tone. And when it comes to hiding freckles and small skin blemishes, Solitaire is just too clever for words. I know too, when I use Solitaire, my makeup will look fresh and faultless for hours and hours without re-doing. So won't you join me in a beauty salute to springtime? Greet Easter with one of the most important changes you can make in your appearance. A thrilling, exciting change in your complexion duty. Once you try Solitaire, Compana's new cake makeup, you'll want to start everyday with the long, lingering, loveliness of a Solitaire complexion. For night-time base, Solitaire will give you a bewitching charm that you never dreamed possible.

ANNCR And is Solitaire kind to you skin?

WOMAN Adorably kind because Solitaire has a rich Lanolin base that helps prevent skin dryness.

ANNCR Alright ladies, isn't that a challenge to match the new season's loveliness with a new loveliness of you own. Ask for Solitaire cake makeup in any one of six flattering shades. And remember, Solitaire gives you a big compact: three inches in diameter for only sixty cents. There's also a handy twenty-five cent trial size. Insist on Solitaire cake makeup, containing Lanolin. A product of Compana.

MUSIC **Cue #10 before Act two**

USHER Curtain. Second curtain.

MR FN And now we have the second act of the Chinese Gong.

SFX **Cue #11 bell clang**

JEAN But Bob, we simply have to buy something. We've gone over practically every thing in the old man's shop.

BOB Yeah, but his prices, Jeannie. I bet he doubled them as soon as he saw us coming.

JEAN Shhh! Here he comes.

SUN-TAI Everything in our place is priced to sell. Hand carved. Good jade. No glass.

JEAN Oh, they're beautiful!

SUN-TAI Bery cheap. Fifty dollah.

BOB Fifty dollars? Now look here, MR Sun-Tai, We'd like to do business with you, but get this straight. We're not millionaires. Not by a long shot.

SUN-TAI Too much money?

BOB Well, that's the general idea. Yes.

SUN-TAI All lite. Twenty-five dollah.

JEAN No. Really, Bob, I don't want this Jade at any price. Eh, listen, MR Tai, what we would like is something we can take home with us and use around the house. A vase or a lamp. Something of that sort.

SUN-TAI Yes, ah. I know. Ah. Look. See. Bery fine vase. Very old ...

JEAN No, wait. This gong. How much is it?

SUN-TAI No! No gong!

BOB Yes, yes gong. If Mrs. Wilton wants that gong, she gets it. How much?

JEAN Oh, wait, Bob, I want to hear the tone first. *Cue #12 (gong)* That's beautiful.

BOB That's all right. Hit it again. *Cue #13 (gong)*

JEAN Oh, I want this gong, Bob.

BOB Shhh! Not to enthusiastic. He'll want a million bucks for it. Come on, now, it's my turn. Let me hit it.

SUN-TAI No, no! No more!

BOB What? You mean you don't want me to hit it again?

SUN-TAI No, no! No hit. One time ... all lite. Two time ... all lite. Tree time ... no good!

JEAN You mean its bad luck to hit the gong three times?

SUN-TAI Yes, Missy. Bad luck! Bery bad luck. Yeah. Terrible ting happen.

BOB Alright, what’s the bad news? How much?

SUN-TAI You want buy?

BOB Sure want buy. How much?

SUN-TAI Fifteen dollah.

BOB Sold! Jean, the gong’s yours.

JEAN I’m ... I’m not too sure I want it now.

BOB Why? Because of what he said?

JEAN Um-hm.

BOB Aw, forget it. It’s just one of those silly superstitions. Come on Mr. Tai, wrap it up. We’re taking it with us.

SUN-TAI All lite, Mister. But don’t forget. Don’t never hit gong tree time ... one day. Bad luck, mister. Bery bad luck.

MUSIC **Cue #14 Transition – Chinese type music**

JEAN Whew! You big baby. Will you please get away from that gong?

BOB That thing intrigues me. Let me just swat it again and see what will happen.

JEAN Oh, Bob, you don’t really think anything would happen, do you?

BOB Well, don't forget what the old man said. (*imitates MR Tai*) “Don't do tree time one day. Bery bad luck. Terrible ting happen, Mister. Terrible ting.”

JEAN Ha, Bob, wouldn't you be embarrassed if you hit it and the hotel caved in.

BOB Yeah, and me in my pink pajamas.

JEAN That would be terrible all right. Heh, heh. Well, go on. Hit it.

BOB Eh, you mean hit the gong?

JEAN Certainly. Maybe we'll start a nice exciting earthquake. Or don't they have earth quakes in Shanghai?

BOB Uh ...

JEAN Well, what are you waiting for?

BOB Well, I was just thinking ...

JEAN Bob-by! Don't tell me you've lost your nerve.

BOB Oh, gosh, Jean, it isn't a matter of nerve, but ... I was just thinking ... after all, this is the Orient, and ... funny things do happen.

JEAN Oh, you big baby. Give me that mallet.

BOB Well ...

JEAN So, hold on to your hat because I'm going to give this gong the single third stroke if it's the last thing I do. Here goes.

SFX **Cue #15** *gong*

BOB You did it!

JEAN Certainly I did. Well, when does the excitement start? When ...

SFX (interrupts) **Knock (pause) knock (pause) knock**
JEAN Bob!

BOB I'll ... go see who it is.

SFX *Footsteps – then door opens*
BOB Yes? What?

POLICE (Chinese accent) Mister Robert Wilton?

BOB Yes.

POLICE I am from Shanghai police department. You will come with me, please?

BOB But ... but why?

POLICE I have here warrant for your arrest. You are charged with the murder of Count Nicholas Renikov.

MUSIC **Cue #16** *bridge*

JEAN (distraught) Oh, isn't there something I can do?

LAWYER I'm afraid not, Mrs. Wilton. All we can do is wait.

JEAN Oh, and Bob in that filthy cell. (sob) I can't bear it any longer.

LAWYER Please try to control yourself, Mrs. Wilton. You make it very difficult.

JEAN I ... I'm sorry.

LAWYER As your lawyer, I assure I have done everything possible ... but ... well, to speak bluntly; the law must take its course.

JEAN But Bob didn't kill Renikov. I know he didn't.

LAWYER Of course he didn't, Mrs. Wilton, (pause) but I assure there is nothing further I can do. We can only wait.

JEAN Wait! Wait! I’m going crazy waiting. Day after day in the hotel room. How come I can’t see him anymore? Why won’t the believe Bob. He wouldn’t kill that man. Everybody knows he wouldn’t.

LAWYER Unfortunately, Mrs. Wilton, the evidence in the case indicates otherwise. Well ... now please understand me. I’m not saying that I believe the evidence, but ... there it is. And it’s quite damning, to say the least. You husband was overheard quarreling with Renikov. He threatened the man with bodily harm. Unless he ceased his, might I say unwelcome attention to you?

JEAN But that doesn’t prove anything.

LAWYER No, perhaps not, but a few hours later Count Renikov was found murdered; a knife in his back. And on that knife were the fingerprints of your husband.

JEAN Ohhh!

LAWYER I assure you I am telling you the facts, Mrs. Wilton. Your husband’s fingerprints were right there on the handle of the dagger. I saw them there myself.

JEAN But... but... but that’s impossible.

LAWYER Quite. And yet it’s the very evidence that will put a noose around his neck.

JEAN *(sob)* Oh, no! *(sob)*

LAWYER Oh, I’m sorry.

JEAN *(sob)* But ... in best of faith, now I know, Bob will hang unless we do something. I know he will.

LAWYER Those fingerprints on the dagger. I tell you it’s almost as if some power of evil had put them there. As if some ... supernatural ...

JEAN *(sobs)*

LAWYER Why, Mrs. Wilton, what’s the matter?

JEAN I ... I just remembered ...

LAWYER What? Speak up, child.

JEAN But ... it was nothing. Nothing at all.

LAWYER I must say you gave me a bad turn for a moment there. Your face went so white, I wondered what was wrong. I say, you’ve had a pretty rough time of it, haven’t you. Look here, my child, why don’t you appeal to the American Consul again? Perhaps he can do ...

JEAN (*interrupting*) I just came from the Consulate.

LAWYER Well?

JEAN He ... he says there’s nothing he can do.

LAWYER Yes. I expected that. Count Renikov was a very influential figure in Chinese nationalistic circles. Munitions, you know. If American authorities try to interfere... Well ... all sorts of international complications might arise.

JEAN International complications! What do they mean to me! It’s just Bob I want.

MUSIC **Cue # 17** *transition music with bell clanging*

POLICE (*Chinese accent*) You have ... three minutes. In there, please.

SFX **Cell door sliding**

JEAN Bob!

BOB Oh, Jean.

JEAN Oh, Bob, what have they done to you? You look so white.

BOB No, I’m all right. Really I am. Oh, my darling let me hold you close.

JEAN Oh, Bob, what’s happened to us? We were so happy.

BOB It’s that gong, Jeannie. That confounded Chinese gong.

JEAN Oh no, Bob, that can’t be it. It ... it just happened that’s all.

BOB I’m half crazy with worry. Tomorrow they’re going to try me for murder. Jean. Me. Bob Wilton. Murderer.

JEAN Bob, please.

BOB I’m sorry, dear. These weeks in this filthy hole, and ... I’m just not myself, I guess. Oh my darling, what a horrible honeymoon I’ve given you.

JEAN Oh, Bob, please don’t say that. Those days we had together. Let’s not forget them. Glorious days. And then we’ll have them all over again, I know we will.

BOB Yes, Jean, we will. I’m going to be brave. As brave as you are. It’s the one thing that’s kept me sane all these horrible weeks. Knowing that you were outside – waiting for me.

JEAN Yes, Bob, I’m waiting for you. I’ll always wait, darling.

MUSIC **Cue # 18** *End of act 2*

MR FN *(wait four seconds after start of music)* And so the curtain comes down on the second act at the little theater just off Times Square.

USHER Smoking downstairs or in the outer lobby, please.

ANNCR Everywhere you go, women are doing extra work subjecting their hands to extra punishment. Yet, have you noticed how some women keep those busy hands well groomed? Soft and youthful looking.

WOMAN You can do it too by choosing Original Campana Balm when work and weather threaten to make your hands look coarse and unlovely. Beginning tomorrow, use Original Campana Balm before you start work. It’s

protection against dirt and grime. And be sure to use it every time after your hands have been in water, also, to help bring back the adorable smoothness that you loses when you scrub frequently with soap and water. Original Campana Balm acts so quickly and with such positive results, that you too will soon be calling it the before and after lotion. Remember that smooth, protected, un-chapped hands add to your efficiency, bolster your morale, and please the man who holds them.

- ANNCR Lack of certain basic ingredients, for a while, caused a shortage of Original Campana Balm. We're happy to say that these ingredients are again available, and your dealer can now obtain supplies of Original Campana Balm. If he does not have it, ask him to order it from his wholesaler.
- WOMAN If you prefer a lighter lotion, ask for the new Campana Cream Balm, the creamy lotion with Lanolin.
- ANNCR Be sure you get either the Original Campana Balm in the green and white carton or the new Campana Cream Balm in the yellow and white carton.
- USHER Curtain. Last curtain.
- MUSIC** **Cue #19** *begin act 3*
- MR FN First Nighters are in their seats, ready for the last act and there goes the curtain.
- GIRL Excuse, please.
- JEAN Yes, what is it?
- GIRL The honorable Sun-Tai want to see you, please.
- JEAN No. No, I don't want to see anyone today.
- GIRL He say must. Please, missy.
- JEAN Ah, show him in who ever he is.

GIRL Thank you, please. You come in, please.

SUN-TAI Yeah.

JEAN What is it? What can I do for you, Mr. Sun-Tai?

SUN-TAI You member me, please, Sun-Tai?

JEAN No, I ... I'm afraid I don't ... Oh, yes I do. You're the old man in the antique shop.

SUN-TAI That lite. I sell you ... gong.

JEAN Yes, you ... you did sell us the gong, didn't you.

SUN-TAI Yeah. I sell. Good.

JEAN What is it you want? I ... I don't want to buy anything.

SUN-TAI Sun-Tai no come sell.

JEAN Then what do you want?

SUN-TAI Mistah Wilton ... he very much trouble, no?

JEAN Yes.

SUNG-TAI T-lial (trial) tomorrow looking bery bad. No?

JEAN Yes. Very bad.

SUN-TAI Mistah Wilton ... no kill that man.

JEAN No. No, of course he didn't. Please go away. I'm very, very tired. Please, some other time.

SUN-TAI No. No wait. Please. I help.

JEAN You can't help us. No one can help us. No one. (*begins to cry*)

SUN-TAI Please, missy, no cly (cry). I help. Mistah Wilton good man. Renikov evil. I know.

JEAN Please go now.

SUN-TAI No missy, please listen. Sun-Tai bery old man. He know many ting. He know Mistah Wilton no kill man.

JEAN But what good would that do? They're trying my husband for murder tomorrow and neither you nor I nor anyone else can stop them.

SUN-TAI Oh, yes, please. Sun-Tai stop.

JEAN What do you mean?

SUN-TAI Sun-Tai know who kill evil one.

JEAN You ... You know who killed Renikov?

SUN-TAI Yeah. I know.

JEAN Who? Tell me. Who?

SUN-TAI My son.

JEAN Your son killed Renikov?

SUN-TAI Yeah. My third-born one. Wong ... Renikov servant. Renikov evil man. He beating Wong many time. Wong ... kill him.

JEAN But ... but my husband's fingerprints were on the knife.

SUN-TAI I know. Wong tell me. Mistah Wilton come talk Renikov. Mistah Wilton very angry. He pick up knife on table ... no glove. Put knife down. Go away. Wong wear kitchen glove. No show on knife.

JEAN I see. Bob handled the knife when he was talking to Renikov but in his anger didn't realize it.

SUN-TAI Yeah, hah, hah.

JEAN And when Bob went away, when Renikov hit your son, your son stabbed him. And since your son was wearing gloves, only Bob's fingerprints appeared on the knife.

SUN-TAI That lite.

JEAN Oh, but what's the use. The police will never believe that.

SUN-TAI Oh, yes. Police believe. See. Wong lite every ting down. On paper. See.

JEAN You mean that's a confession?

SUN-TAI Yes, please. Wong lite everyting. Chinese. Police is sorry.

JEAN But ... but I don't understand. Your own son. They'll hang him.

SUN-TAI Nah! No hang Wong. Wong good boy. China so big. Wong go fah way.

JEAN But, why ... why are you helping me, a stranger?

SUN-TAI My family very old, very honorable. No can see good man die. So I come. See you.

JEAN (*sobs*) Oh, bless you. Bless you.

SUN-TAI Oh, no, no, no, missy. Please don't cly. Everyting fix. Everyting all lite. Goodbye please.

MUSIC Cue #20 *bridge – then boat whistle*

BOB Well, Jean, we're on our way.

JEAN Yes, Bob, on our way home.

BOB It's a grand word, isn't it?

JEAN Oh, Bob dear; put your arm around me. I always want to remember my last glimpse of China like this. You beside me; your arm tight around me.

BOB China. I suppose I should hate the place after what happened to us there, and yet ... somehow I don't.

JEAN Of course, you don't. We'll always remember China. Not for those terrible weeks, but ... because of ... what we've been through ... it's brought us so very close together. As if we've been married for many years instead of just a few weeks.

BOB Yes, it's an eternity. We are close together.

JEAN Oh, yes, Bob. We're going to stay that way forever.

SFX **Cue # 21** *boat whistle*

BOB Oh, dear, I forgot to ask you. That gong. What did you do with it?

JEAN It's down below. In one of the trunks.

BOB You ... you mean to say you didn't throw it away?

JEAN Of course not. Why should I throw it away?

BOB Well, look at the bad luck it brought us. Don't tell me you've forgotten that already?

JEAN The gong didn't bring us any bad luck, Bob. It was a stroke of good luck our buying it.

BOB How do you figure that?

JEAN Well, if we hadn't gone to Sun-Tai for the gong, he'd never have known who we were. He'd never have come to me with his son's confession.

BOB Well, that’s one way to look at it. But believe me, I’ll never strike that gong three times again. You can bet on that.

MUSIC Cue #22 bridge

JEAN So there’s the story of the gong, folks. From that day to this, neither Bob nor I have struck it three times. Oh, we’re not superstitious.

BOB No, but we know when to leave well enough alone

JOHN By George, that was an interesting story.

EVELYN Oh, wasn’t it though. John, just think what might have happened if you’d hit it a third time.

JOHN Yes, eh. I’ll have to admit, Mrs. Wilton, I’m glad you stopped me before I struck this thing. It certainly was a close call. If I had my hand raised like this ...

SFX Cue #23 Gong

EVELYN John! You didn’t!

JOHN Well, I ... I didn’t mean to.

EVELYN Oh, heavens, that was the third time. What will happen now?

BOB Well, I ... I don’t know, but ...

SFX *Three raps on the door*

JEAN Bob. It happened. Just like that night in Shanghai.

EVELYN I’m going to faint.

BOB Come in.

SFX *door opens*

BOB Well. What is it?

JEAN Yes, for heavens sake, speak up. What is it? What happened? ... Jenkins?

JENKINS Beg pardon, madam, (*pause*) but dinner is served.

MUSIC Cue #24

MR FN (*over music*) This concludes our performance in the little theater off Times Square.

MUSIC Cue #25 final music

MR FN Are you saving your newspapers, magazines, paper bags and boxes? Paper is a vital war material and there is a serious shortage. Save your waste paper or give it to a local charity.

MR FN And now we move out of the theater and into the street. What do you say we stroll down Broadway?

ANNCR Good night, Mr. First Nighter.

MR FN Good night

SFX **Cue #26 street noises SFX: Footsteps (over street sounds)**

ANNCR The First Nighter Program is a copyrighted radio feature. This ... is Mutual.

First Nighter Program --- The Chinese Gong --- cast in order of appearance

1. Announcer
2. Mr. First Nighter
3. Usher (voice)
4. John Clark (guest)
5. Evelyn Clark (John’s wife)
6. Jean Wilton
7. Bob Wilton
8. Wong (servant boy – Chinese accent)
9. Count Renikov (Russian accent)
10. Woman in commercial
11. Sun-Tai (shopkeeper - Chinese accent)
12. Policeman (Chinese accent)
13. Lawyer
14. Young girl (Chinese accent)
15. Jenkins (the butler)