

Who, When, Wow! Mystery Edition

Curse of the Bambino

Carly. Guess who? Yep, it's me -- your curious, brave, super-cool, and extremely modest host of a secret podcast. Today's adventure will take us back to the olden days of America's favorite pastime... no, not pie-eating. That would be MY favorite pastime. I'm talking about baseball, and today, I'll investigate whether or not a legendary curse is legit. As far as mysteries go, this one is a grand slam. See what I did there? Did you see? Did you catch that? Nice right? I'm Carly Q, and this is Who, When, Wow, Mystery Edition!

(THEME SONG)

(Soundbite of office noises.)

Carly. When I walked into BUTHEAD HQ on Friday morning, I was worried because I was late. There had been a bit of a pie incident as I was leaving my apartment, if you know what I mean.

Carly in the background. Sorry I'm late! Sorry! So sorry!

Carly. But luckily, nobody noticed. In fact, everybody seemed distracted. There was a strange vibe in the air. I would have thought everyone would be talking about the company softball game that evening -- I was playing shortstop! - but nobody mentioned it.

Carly in the background. Everybody psyched for the big game or what?...

Carly. Normally, I would head right down to the basement to get to work, but people were just giving each other nervous looks. So I asked Amber what was going on.

Amber. What's going on? Well, don't you know what today is?

Carly. Friday?

Amber. Friday the?

Carly. Friday the, best day of the week?

Amber. (frustrated) No.

Carly. Friday the, day they serve apple fritters in the cafeteria?

Amber. No. Well, yes. But no.

Carly. Friday, the day of our big softball game?

Amber. Friday the 13th! It's Friday the 13th, Carly Q.

Carly. Ok. And.

Amber. It's the unluckiest day of the whole year! I told everyone we shouldn't have the big game today.

Carly. Hold on, now. I think you're worried about nothing.

Amber. Nothing? It's bad luck. AND to make things worse, Lewis broke the mirror in the breakroom!

Carly. Ok?

Amber. That's even MORE bad luck! Thank goodness he's not playing in the game today!

(Soundbite of shuffling papers)

Carly. Wait, Lewis is not playing? But he loves baseball! And he's our starting first baseman

Amber. It's just going to be a bad day. I just know it!

Carly. Ok, well. I'll be seeing you later, Amber. Have a nice, Whatever.

(Soundbite of basement door closing.)

Carly. Friday the 13th is just a day on the calendar. It doesn't. Uh. Ok I don't usually trip coming down the basement stairs. Friday the 13th is just a date on the calendar it doesn't.

(Soundbite of chair pulling out and sitting down.)

Carly. What's that noise? Must just be my imagination! I think Amber has me all nervous too!

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Oh, it's just you Nibbles! Good morning! You're not worried about Friday the 13th, are you?

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. I knew you wouldn't be. After all, if you saw a black cat, you'd have more to worry about than some old superstition.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Exactly. It's Apple Fritters Friday. We have a ball game later. Just gotta get to work and the fun will be here before you know it.

(Soundbite of computer typing.)

Carly. I got to work, thinking about sinking my teeth into one of those apple fritters. So good with ice cream on top. Nothing, especially a little superstition, was going to ruin this day. Cherry, a real cherry.

(Soundbite of thumb drive coming down the vacuum tube.)

Carly. Well, what do we have here? It was a time-sealed mystery, but I was really not in the mood to investigate. JUST KIDDING! Did you forget who I am? I couldn't WAIT to find out what it was all about.

Audio File. EVENT: 1920 (Beep) baseball player Babe Ruth (Beep) Yankees (Beep) 86 years (Beep) the Red Sox (Beep) slump (Beep) Curse.

Carly. Slump? Curse? What? So Babe Ruth caused some kind of bad luck for his old team?

H-dad. H-dad ready for action.

Carly. (muttering) Red Rocks? Red Sox? New York. Big Apples? No, Yankees. New York Yankees! Talk to me H-dad.

H-dad. Babe Ruth, traded from the Boston Red Sox to the New York Yankees in 1920. The Yankees were a mediocre baseball team, but after they got Babe Ruth, they became dominant, winning more than twice the number of championships of any other team!

Carly. I can totally see how that was not good news for the Red Sox.

H-dad. The Red Sox struggled to win a world championship for years – 86 years, in fact! This became known as the Curse of the Bambino.

Carly. Uh. What is a bambino?

(Soundbite of Lewis walking in.)

Lewis. It's a baby silly! Wah wah wah wah. You know, all that.

Carly. Aaaahh! Lewis!! Why are you always sneaking up on me like that?

Lewis. A better question is, why are you talking about Italian babies.

Carly. What?

Lewis. Bambino? What are you talking about, Carly Q?

Carly. Oh! "The Curse of the Bambino!"

Lewis. Ohhhh! That's the old Red Sox-Yankees rivalry! I know sports

Carly. Right! But what is this bambino thing about?

Lewis. Babe Ruth's nickname was the Bambino -- which means "baby" in Italian -- because he had a round, baby-like face.

Carly. Ah. I can relate to that! People say I have a baby face.

Lewis. Really? I don't see it

Carly. Just tell me what you know about the curse.

Lewis. I wouldn't normally believe in superstitions and curses but the Red Sox totally tanked after they sold the Bambino.

Carly. Oh come on. You don't believe in those old legends, Lewis!

Lewis. Well, did you hear?

Carly. You broke the mirror. Yeah, I heard. Awkward.

Lewis. The whole office is mad at me. Especially Amber. It was just an accident. I mean no one uses the mirror more than I do.

Carly. Well, you need to put that behind you, Lewis ol pal. We got apple fritters, a new mystery and baseball. We're going to have a great day!

Lewis. I suppose.

Carly. Which reminds me. Are you playing first base in the softball game or not?

Lewis. Oh, I'm not playing. I used to play baseball, but not in years.

Carly. But you used to love playing.

Lewis. I don't want to talk about it!

Carly. Pllleeeeeease tell me!

Lewis. No!

Carly. Well I am going back to 1923, during the Yankees first World Series, a few years AFTER the BAMBINO was traded. Maybe I can figure out if curses are real. Nibbles, Lewis, you coming with me?

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Lewis. Count me in, Carly. I'd love to be at that game!

Carly. Only if you tell me why you won't play in the softball game today!

Lewis. That's my secret, and it stays with me.

Carly. Ok. Well, we'll just wait until,

P.A. Voice. It is now lunchtime! Remember that it is Apple Fritter Friday, so please make sure to line up calmly. No pandemonium is permitted. No butting in line, and only one fritter per person!

Lewis. Apple fritters?

Carly. Babe Ruth.

Lewis. Yeah, but, apple fritters.

Carly. Mystery! Adventure! Baseball!

Lewis. Fine. (sigh) Let's play ball or whatever.

Carly. Yes! Come on, Nibs! Get in the backpack. Let's go meet the Bambi!

Lewis. Bambino.

Carly. Right! Whatever.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking, walking to elevator.)

Odie. Hello there, basement companion and Lewis. You're missing Apple Fritter Friday!

Carly. We have something to investigate, Odie!

Odie. Of course you do.

Carly. We're going to the 1923 World Series game to see if the Curse of the Bambino is real or not!

Odie. Baseball, eh? Are you both ready for the BUTTHED softball game after work?

Carly. I'm a shortstop!

Lewis. I'm, (clears throat) sitting this one out.

Odie. I'm the umpire. I enjoy power and monochromatic outfits. Plus I get to say things like "Strike three, you're OUT."

Carly. You seem like you'd be very good at that, Odie.

Odie. Yes. It's a gift. Now, New York, 1923. The Yankees played the Giants in that World Series.

Carly. I was thinking that we'd hang out and see what people say about the alleged curse. And hopefully we will talk to the Bambi - ino himself and see what he thinks.

Lewis. Yeah, he was just starting to become famous by this point.

Odie. Quick review of the time travel rules: no changing anything in the past, but you can, of course, ask all the questions you like. And your time is limited – you MUST be back before the end of the lunch break. And, keep in mind.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Odie. "Whether you think you CAN or you CAN'T -- you're right." That was Henry Ford. His words. I can't take credit.

Lewis. Henry Ford?! I love Han Solo!

Carly. Are you thinking of Harrison Ford?

Lewis. Oh yeah I was, who was Henry Ford again?

Carly. Henry FORD. The car guy? He invented the assembly line and,

Odie. Playyyyyy ball.

Carly. I hope we have peanuts and crackerrrrrr.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises and loud thud.)

Lewis. Old Yankee Stadium! Wow! They tore this down in 2008, but in 1923, it was brand new!

(Soundbite of crowd noises.)

Nibbles. Let me at those peanuts!

Carly. Easy Nibbles Here! Sir, I'll take a bag of hot peanuts.

Peanut Seller. 5 cents!

Carly. Oh! Cash! Right. Can I CashMo you?

Peanut Seller. Come again?

Lewis. Here's a nickel. Pay the man.

Peanut Seller. Thanks. Here's, Hey! What kind of nickel is this? Is this thing real?

Carly. Uhhh. Of course! It's 5 whole cents, right? I realized Lewis' nickel was from the future, and it looked different than 1920s money, so I passed some peanuts back to

Nibbles and quickly changed the subject! Wow It's so crowded here! I guess everyone's excited to see Babe Ruth!

Peanut Seller. Everyone except people from Boston! Hahaha! He hit a home run yesterday, that thing is still traveling!. I bet he'll smack another ball outta here today! (chuckles) Boston fans will wish they never gave him up to us!

Lewis. Sounds like they wished bad luck on themselves. Almost like a curse, eh?

Peanut Seller. I don't know about no curses, but they sure made a bad deal. It was a good deal for us, though! Peanuts! Get your peanuts! Babe Ruth's favorite snack!

Lewis. Is it really?

Peanut Seller. Who knows? (chuckles) It sure gets people to buy them, though!

(Soundbite of walking away, shouting "Peanuts!")

Carly. How are you doing back there, Nibbles?

Nibbles. Great! Never tasted anything so good in my life.

Carly. The peanut seller didn't seem to know anything about a curse. The game hadn't even started yet. We wanted to see how much we could find out. Suddenly, from the field, we heard,

(Soundbite of a bat cracking. People roaring and cheering.)

Carly. Did you hear that?

Lewis. Looks whos in the batter's box.

Carly, Lewis and Nibbles. Bambino.

(Soundbite of people cheering, clapping, bats hitting balls.)

Carly. We pushed through crowds watching him take batting practice. There he was - Babe Ruth. I'd always imagined he was something of a giant, but he wasn't really THAT big. The way he swung that bat though, he knew he was strong.

Crowd. Send it to Boston, Babe!

(Soundbite of loud laughter.)

Lewis. Is he laughing?

Nibbles. Why not?

Carly. He broke his bat. He's heading for the dugout to get a new one. Let's get close. Maybe we can ask Babe himself about the curse.

Lewis. But how? I don't think we're allowed to go down there.

Carly. Look! There's a jersey right there on top of the dugout. Looks like it is right about MY size.

Lewis. Carly you can't just do that. Remember what Odie said.

Carly. Grab me that hat too, ou scratchy.

Lewis. Uniforms were made of wool in the 1920s.

Carly. Yeah no kidding. Okay here I go.

Lewis. I don't think this is a good idea.

(Soundbite of Carly hopping down into the dugout and then beginning to knock stuff over.)

Carly. Yes, of course I am the bad boy. Watch me make a big bad mess because I am a bad boy. I will knock stuff over.

Lewis. NO!! Not BAD boy, BAT boy! BA-T! With a "T".

Carly. Oh! I always thought it was "bad". This makes more sense. Okay I'm just gonna clean all this up now because I am a bad boy.

Babe Ruth. What are you doin, kid?

Carly. Oh Gee Willikers. Mr. Babe. Ruth.Oh, Mr. Bambino,sir. Well I was just cleaning up these here bats see? Mr. Babe Ruth, nothing to see here but me cleaning up some bats and I don't know why I'm talking like this. Hahaha.

Lewis. Hey, Babe! What do you think of the curse on Boston?

Babe Ruth. What? Curse on Boston?

Carly. Yeah, they're in a slump now, since they sold you.

Lewis. Last year they finished in 8th place. They can't seem to catch a break since you left.

Babe Ruth. Well, I didn't leave. They traded me, instead of just paying me more. But they're good guys on that team. I loved my time there. But I'm a Yankee now!

Carly. So. Do you think there's a curse on the Red Sox?

Babe Ruth. Nah. No curse. Just managers making bad choices. Whenever someone makes a bad decision, they like to think it wasn't really their fault. (calls to crowd) But we're going to decide to win this championship, right New York? Excuse me while I hit a few more balls

(Soundbite of crowd cheering.)

Carly. We watched as he took a few more swings, hitting the ball so hard I was surprised it wasn't flattened! Suddenly, a policeman approached us... with the peanut seller.

Peanut Seller. Look there she is! She's the one dressed like a Bat Boy!

Lewis. Uh-oh

Carly. That doesn't sound good.

Peanut Seller. That's the one who was pushing the funny money! This nickel is stamped with 2004 unless she's from the future, she's using fake money! And I'm pretty sure she's got a rat in her backpack!

Police. Using fake money is a crime, young lady. And so is impersonating a bat boy.

Carly. Oh, uh. That was just a misunderstanding. I'll just take off this jersey.

Police. And I'm going to need to check your bag there. I'm told you may be carrying a stowaway rodent.

Nibbles. That's MISS Rodent to you!

Police. I'm sorry?

Carly. I said... I ...wouldn't *miss* seeing a rodent! Definitely no rats here! Only bats! Like this one. See?

Lewis. Isn't that the one that Babe Ruth just used?

Police. Really? Can I touch it?

Carly. Sure! It's all yours!

(Soundbite of Carly and Lewis running away through the crowd.)

Police. Wow! This is the actual bat that the Babe used to --Hey! Wait! Come back here!

Lewis. Run, Carly! To the elevator! Oh Gosh.

Nibbles. Oh I lost all my peanuts.

Lewis. Oh forget it Nibbles. Doesn't Carly give you pie all the time anyway?

(Soundbite of them running to elevator. Ding sound.)

Odie. Welcome back basement companion. How's the Babe?

Lewis. Uh awesome! We only saw him hit like 50 home runs.

Odie. And the curse?

Carly. He doesn't seem to think there's a curse. He just thinks people made bad decisions, and things would be different if they made better ones.

Odie. It's like I said.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

Odie. "Whether you think you CAN or you CAN'T -- you're right."

Carly. That definitely seemed like Babe's belief, for sure. According to HDAD, the Yankees won that World Series, and they've won 26 more since then -- And there was no curse ... it's just that Base Ruth was determined to win. And so he did, and so did the Yankees.

Lewis. Uhh time to get back to work. I guess I'll -- what is happening up there? Carly, come on, let's go see what's happening.

Carly. What sort of Friday the 13th frenzy is everybody in now? Hey Amber, What is going on?

Amber. Didn't I tell you it would be a bad day? The chef burned the apple fritters, so nobody had any! I just knew it. I really did.

Carly. Orrrr, maybe it's just a coincidence. The chef left them in the oven for too long? That's just a bad decision, not a curse.

Amber. Hmmm. That's a good point Carly Q. That's a very smart observation. Thank you.

Carly. Uhhh. You're welcome?

Carly. But lots of people were still feeling superstitious. When we got to the softball game that, we found out we were missing a player. Where's Arlo from the cafeteria?

Coworker. He's back at HQ cleaning up apple fritters.

Carly. We need another player

Coworker. I knew it.

Carly. I looked up in the bleachers and saw my answer.

Carly in the background. Lewis we need you.

Lewis. Nope. I don't play anymore!

Carly. Why not?

Lewis. It doesn't matter.

Carly. Lewis, You HAVE to tell me!

Lewis. Because (sigh) I played in sixth grade and I wasn't very good. But one time, I hit the ball and I ran to third base instead of first. Everyone laughed, even the umpire. I was too embarrassed to ever play again.

Carly. Oh Lewis, okay first of all, thank you for your vulnerability and sharing. And second of all, it sounds like you're telling yourself a story of bad luck. And I think we could change that story today. Come on, Let's play. And guess what? It worked. Lewis finally agreed to play softball! And in the bottom of the fourth inning, he went up to the plate, and.

(Soundbite of bat cracking.)

Carly. He hit a line drive that brought in the winning run! And yes (laughs) he ran to first base! And he was safe!

Carly in the background. Take that Friday the 13th. More like Friday the Fun Team.

(Soundbite of crowd cheering.)

Carly. Well. That's enough ball-playing for this little slugger. And remember you can always change the story. With that little slice of brilliance, I am out. But I'll be back next week with another time sealed mystery. I'm Carly Q! And remember, You never heard this!