

## Songbirds: 'Pipa's Ring' Part 1

A 'jeu de radio' by: **Dino Mahoney**

### Characters:

(Friends)

Pipa:

Gemma:

Wendy

Mimi

Pansy:

**Setting:** In the street.

### Synopsis:

Pipa finds a ring and shows it to Wendy - from there the story of Pipa's ring gets passed on from mouth to mouth and changes dramatically in a series of Chinese whispers.

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(SFX: Generic street sounds)

Pipa: Hey Wendy, look what I've just found!

Wendy: A ring! How lovely! Where did you find it?

Pipa: I was just getting off the mini bus and it caught my eye.

Wendy: Where was it?

Pipa: It was just lying there on the pavement in front of me?

Wendy: Lucky you.... I never find anything.

Pipa: I wasn't looking deliberately... I suddenly saw something shinning... maybe the sun was on it.... and I looked down and there it was... so I bent down and picked it up.

Wendy: It looks nice on you.

Pipa: Someone must have dropped it.

Wendy: Rubies and sapphires.

Pipa: If only! It's just a tin band and plastic stones. I don't think it's worth anything.

Wendy: Wouldn't it be great if those were real sapphires and rubies.

Pipa: Not sure... I'd have to give it in to the police.

Wendy: Yes but if no one claimed it after three months, you get to keep it.

Pipa: It fits me, see.

Wendy: Really well.

Pipa: One stones missing though.

Wendy: Where?

Pipa: See that little hole there?  
Wendy: Oh yes.... there should have been a stone there.  
Pipa: A blue one because they go red and blue in a pattern.  
Wendy: You could back to where you found it.  
Pipa: And look for a tiny blue stone?! I'd never find it!  
Wendy: You might.  
Pipa: Anyway, listen, I've got to be going... my Mum's making dinner and I don't want to be late.  
Wendy: Okay... see you Pipa.  
Pipa: Bye Wendy.

### Music

Wendy: Hey Gemma, guess what happened to Pipa?  
Gemma: No idea. What?  
Wendy: She found something in the street  
Gemma: What, money?  
Wendy: No a ring.  
Gemma: A ring. Lucky her! Where did she find it? Maybe we can go there and see if there's any more rings lying about.  
Wendy: It was near her local bus stop I think.  
Gemma: What kind of ring is it?  
Wendy: Rubies and sapphires.  
Gemma: What?! Pipa found a ruby and sapphire ring?! Wa! Fantastic! It must be worth a fortune!  
Wendy: Mind you, she's not sure if they're real stones.  
Gemma: They must be!  
Wendy: She was thinking of giving it to the police.  
Gemma: No! Why should she do that?! It's her luck to find it.  
Wendy: But someone else's bad luck.  
Gemma: Wendy listen to me... Pipa should not give that ring to a policeman... know why?... he'll keep it for himself, I know he will, he'll give it to his wife.... That's what they do, the police.... They keep expensive things that honest people find and hand in and then they give whatever it is...diamond earrings, a ruby and sapphire ring their wives.  
Wendy: Or their girlfriends.  
Gemma: Oh yes, you're right there Wendy... the poor policeman's wife won't see that ring..... it will be his mistress... his secret lady up in Schenzen... a ruby and sapphire ring would really impress one of those kind of girls.  
Wendy: It would.  
Gemma: Those mistresses up there are hungry for things like expensive rings.  
Wendy: I don't think she will give it to the police.  
Gemma: Good for her. What a stroke of luck.  
Wendy: I know.  
Gemma: I love jewelry.  
Wendy: So do I.

Gemma: I can't afford the real thing though... all my jewelry's imitation.  
Wendy: Mine too.  
Gemma: I've promised myself though, when I get engaged, if I ever do get engaged.  
Wendy: Of course you will.  
Gemma: When I get engaged I'm having a real diamond ring... a big one, not one of those tiny diamond chips they try to sell you.  
Wendy: The ones you can hardly see.  
Gemma: They look cheap. How big are the sapphires and rubies on Pipa's ring?  
Wendy: Well the sapphires are as big as strawberries.  
Gemma: Strawberries?! Really?! They must be worth an absolute fortune!  
Wendy: They probably are.  
Gemma: What about the sapphires?  
Wendy: About the size of blueberries I'd say.  
Gemma: So the sapphires are a bit smaller than the rubies.  
Wendy: A bit, yes.  
Gemma: Still, all in all it sounds like a very expensive ring. I wonder how much it'd be worth?  
Wendy: I told her to take it to a jeweler's and have it valued.  
Gemma: But she's got to be very careful if she does that. You know why don't you.  
Wendy: They might swap the stones.  
Gemma: Exactly, you go in with a ruby and sapphire ring and you come out with glass rubies and plastic sapphires.  
Wendy: You've got to be careful.  
Gemma: You have.  
Wendy: She's already lost one of the stones.  
Gemma: No! Really! They're all thieves those jewelers, the lot of them. That's why they've got so rich!  
Wendy: They take out all the real stones and replace them with glass stones.  
Gemma: Not even glass..... plastic!  
Wendy: It's scandalous! Anyway Gemma, I'd better say goodbye now I'm meeting my sister.  
Gemma: Okay then Wendy. I'll see you later.  
Wendy: Bye.

### Music

Gemma: (Conspiratorial tone) Hey Mimi... come over here.  
Mimi: What is it Gemma?  
Gemma: Can you keep a secret Mimi?  
Mimi: Of course I can! You know that... you don't have to ask.... when you told me Priscilla Wong stole a lipstick from a supermarket did I tell anyone?  
Gemma: (Dubious) No... but somebody did.  
Mimi: Well it wasn't me and you know it!

Gemma: Anyway, listen to this.  
Mimi: (Eager) Oooo what, do tell, do tell.  
Gemma: A secret right.  
Mimi: I swear on my life I will not tell anyone, ever, and if I do may all my finger nails fall out!  
Gemma: (Pause) Wow, that's a pretty strong promise.  
Mimi: I know and I mean it!  
Gemma: Okay then. It's about....  
Mimi: (Eager) Priscilla?  
Gemma: No, not Priscilla this time....it's about Pipa.  
Mimi: Pipa?! What's she done?  
Gemma: Nothing... it's what she's found.  
Mimi: Quick tell me, I can't bear the suspense!  
Gemma: You're never going to believe this.  
Mimi: Go on... go on!  
Gemma: A ruby...  
Mimi: A ruby?! She found a ruby?! That'll be worth a lot of money, a lot!  
Gemma: And sapphire...  
Mimi: She found a sapphire too! They're even more expensive than rubies. She'll make a lot of money if she sells them... or... better still... auctions them.  
Gemma: A ruby and sapphire ring!  
Mimi: (Almost speechless) A ruby and sapphire ring! Amazing! She should get it insured.  
Gemma: You're right. But there's a problem there.  
Mimi: She should insure it... what if she loses it? I mean the last person lost it so why shouldn't she? But if it were insured she'd get something... get a lot.  
Gemma: Yes but for insurance purposes you need to show a receipt or some other proof of purchase.  
Mimi: She could make one up!  
Gemma: That would be breaking the law Mimi... she could get into a lot of trouble.  
Mimi: True, I hadn't thought of that I suppose. How much is the ring worth?  
Gemma: I told her to take it to a jewelry shop and get it valued... but I warned her that they might replace the real stones with false ones.  
Mimi: What a shame.  
Gemma: I know, but it happens and there's not a lot you can do about it when it does.  
Mimi: I'd never take my jewelry to a jewelry shop to be values... if I had any that is.  
Gemma: Neither would I.... Anyway, look Mimi... I'd better get going, I've got a lot to do.  
Mimi: Me too.  
Gemma: I'll see you later then.  
Mimi: Bye.

Music

Mimi: Hey Pansy have I got news for you!  
Pansy: What is it Mimi? What news?  
Mimi: About Pipa.  
Pansy: Pipa? What about Pipa? Nothing wrong is there? I hope she's alright.  
Mimi: Well sort of.  
Pansy: She's not ill is she? I'd better call her and see how she is.  
Mimi: She's not ill... she's just... well, bitterly disappointed. I think she should go to the police but she won't... refuses... I don't know why.  
Pansy: What's been going on? Pipa's not in trouble is she?  
Mimi: Well it was like this... Pipa found a ring.  
Pansy: Did she? What kind of ring?  
Mimi: A gold ring covered, and I mean covered, in beautiful rubies and sapphires.  
Pansy: Real?!  
Mimi: Real, every last one of them.  
Pansy: And she found it?  
Mimi: Yes.  
Pansy: She must have been thrilled!  
Mimi: She was.  
Pansy: It must be worth a lot of money?  
Mimi: It is.. that is... it WAS.  
Pansy: Was? Oh no don't say she lost it?!  
Mimi: Yes, but not in the way you're thinking of... she didn't drop it in the street or anything.  
Pansy: So what happened to the ring?  
Mimi: She took it to a jewelry shop, that's what happened.  
Pansy: Why?  
Mimi: To have it valued.  
Pansy: And how much was it worth?  
Mimi: Well here's where the heartbreaking bit begins. You know how trusting Pipa is.  
Pansy: Yes, yes I do... she's the most trusting girl I think I know, apart from you Mimi.  
Mimi: And I can tell you Pansy... Pipa is even more trusting than me.  
Pansy: So go on, what happened?  
Mimi: It's terrible.  
Pansy: They stole it... the jeweler stole the ring.  
Mimi: Worse, he replaced the stones and gave it back to her.  
Pansy: What?!  
Mimi: Can you believe that?  
Pansy: That's terrible.  
Mimi: Imitation but so good it was impossible to tell the difference from the real thing.  
Pansy: She should report them to the police!

Mimi: How can she Pansy?... she found the ring, she can't prove it's hers... the police might even accuse her, wonderful trusting Pipa, of stealing it.

Pansy: So Pipa is left with a worthless ring.

Mimi: And a broken heart. If she'd sold that ring she could have paid for all three years of her university education.

Pansy: At least.

Mimi: At least. But now....

Pansy: Nothing. Poor Pipa, if only she hadn't been so trusting.

Mimi: I told her, but she wouldn't listen and now... it's too late. Look when you see Pipa, don't tell her I told you any of this will you.

Pansy: Of course not Mimi! I won't say a thing.

Mimi: She's putting a brave face on it all and I think we should support her.

Pansy: Definitely... I will... I will.

Mimi: Okay Pansy, nice chatting, but I've got things to do now, I'll see you later.

Pansy: Okay. Bye Mimi.

### Music

Pipa: Hi Pansy.

Pansy: (Heavily consoling tone) Hello Pipa. How are you my dear, dear friend.

Pipa: (Bright) Fine. Hey Pansy. Wanna see my new ring? Look. I found it in the street. Pretty isn't it. It's not real of course, but I kind of like it, don't you.

Pansy: (Heavily consoling tone) Oh Pipa, you are so, so brave... so very, very brave. I just want to say how much I admire you... I feel full of admiration for you I really do.

Pipa: (Puzzled) Really? Why Pansy?

Pansy: I shouldn't have said that, I'm sorry. I just wish I could be as brave as you Pipa, you're a lesson to us all. Look I'll leave you now... I know how difficult it must be to keep up all this brightness. Won't stay and tire you any more. Goodbye Pipa. I'm really, really sorry.

### Pause

Pipa: What's wrong with Pansy, she's acting really strangely. Oh look there's Wendy. Hi Wendy. How was dinner with your Mother?

Wendy: Delicious, but I ate too much as usual.

Pipa: Wendy.

Wendy: Yes.

Pipa: I met Pansy just now.

Wendy: Really? How is she?

Pipa: To tell you the truth I'm not sure... she was acting very strangely.

Wendy: Really?

Pipa: She was saying odd things and she had this sad expression on her face... I'm a bit worried about her.

Wendy: I know what you mean. Pansy has been acting a bit strangely recently... I think she's been under a lot of pressure at school. Her exam grades were much lower than she expected you know.

Pipa: Really?

Wendy: Yes, she told me.

Pipa: Well just now when I was talking to her she was acting very strangely:

Wendy: Did she look lost?

Pipa: Yes.

Wendy: And not making any sense?

Pipa: Yes.

Wendy: (SFX: Fade) I hate to say it Pipa, but those are typical signs of depression, she could be heading for some kind of nervous breakdown.

Pipa: D'you think so?

Music

**The End**