

Scene -full moon, mounds of dirt around the sycamore tree with a few empty whisky bottles and lanterns. The skunk trappers Joe and Cuss wearing skunk hats digging and arguing.

Cuss

I'm telling you Joe, stop calling me Stinks –no girl is ever goin to want to marry me if she hears my name is Stinks!!!

Joe

No girl needs to know your name once she gets whiff of you -heck for that matter most people turn the other way once they get of sniff of us. And carrying those news clippings that the fish was wrapped up in don't help us neither.

Cuss

Oh Joe, you know those clippings is why we is looking for that treasure –to send away for some mail order brides! Gals that haven't gotten a whiff of us yet.

Cuss takes out the news clippings from his pocket and hands them to Joe.

Here Joe read them to me again!

Joe

This one here says- Looking to come West and want a husband who still has teeth. I am a widow with twin girls, can cook, can skin small varmints and keep bugs away. Will bring a bathtub and good set of knives. See likeness and reply to Ada Jones at the Chicago Star, Chicago Illinois. *Joe shows Cuss the photo.* Here Stinks.

Cuss

I don't want to see that picture again, she looks like a skunk with the white streak in her hair. And don't call me Stinks!

Joe

Laughing You could be Mr. and Mrs. Stinks! And she ain't part skunk, that's what my gran calls a grey streak, not a skunk streak. Some gals have um.

Cuss

I don't believe you. You can have her. Read me the other one Joe.

Joe

Ok here is one from the Boston Globe. Mail order bride, short gal with fire in her hair, missing a thumb, can read and write a bit, keep a garden. Ain't spending money on photo. Send ticket West in care of newspaper. Hey Cuss this one would be good for you cause she can read and write.

Cuss

Cuss huffs and stops suddenly and whispers to Joe.

Joe, I hear something.....I hear breathing!!

Joe

Darn Stinks, your just drunk on that gypsy whiskey and hearing things again. I keep telling you it will be the death of you one day or maybe give you a grey streak like Ada Jones!!!

Cuss

Joe, Joe listen, I ain't that drunk and I hear them –someone is watching us!

Cuss looks hard into the crowd and points and screams.

Ghosts, I sees ghosts, them ghosts are here watching us! What do they want Joe, the treasure, my whiskey, our skunk hides?

Joe

Joe looks out and sees the crowd.

I don't know why they're here but my gran use to say ghosts get tired like the rest of us.

Joe takes a deep breath, takes another sip of whisky.

Here goes. Howdy ghosts. . .errr. . . I mean folks, my name is Joe Bend and this is my jittery friend Cuss Brown or Stinks if you want.

We are skunk trappers. You found us digging by this here Sycamore tree to find buried treasure.

Cuss jabs Joe and Joe turns to Cuss and whispers.

Don't fuss Stinks! These Ghosts don't care about this treasure, they want a story and they won't leave until they get it.

Listen up folks, a few years back Cuss and me were out here checking our skunk traps when we saw an army troop making camp under this here sycamore tree. The moon was about full so we kept our distance and listened hard. Well, if it wasn't General Fremont himself, traveling from Los Angeles with only about half a dozen of his men. They were sitting around the fire, jawing about this and that. The General sent two of the men to guard the wagon and took himself off to sleep in his tent.

Cuss

The rest of the men sat around the fire and fell asleep but not before we got an ear full. Seems like the General was taking a box of gold up to the Presidio in San Francisco. Those two guards stood sour faced over the wagon, grumbling away. We moved a little closer to the wagon so we could hear. The guards had come out west to find adventure and somehow signed up thinking adventure would come with the army. Well I tell you folks, those two boys couldn't been more than 16 and they wanted the wild west. So they were figuring on how to steal the gold,

bury it and come back later hi-tailing it to Mexico. They carried the box away and started to dig, we couldn't see them but heard the shovels working. Then, What happened next . . . Wasn't my fault!!! You better tell it that way Joe or,or. Oh, you know I never meant to, them clouds, they covered the moon and I couldn't see .