

“Swift Fox – The Conflicting Stories of Willie Boy”

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

Director’s note - Although race is mentioned in the descriptions, we do color blind casting. The Hi-Desert Cultural Center looks for quality and committed actors, not racially correct actors.

OLD WILLIE BOY – Indian. He is the narrator of the piece and tells his story. Actor age range 50-90. He does not interact with the other characters.

RANDOLPH MADISON – White. Anglo Virginian journalist, at the time of the incident 22 years old. He is the great grandson of President James Madison. Well educated. Good horseman and can handle a gun. But actor could be much older as he talks about the past but lives in the present...

YOUNG WILLIE BOY – Indian. 28 years old at the time of the incident, cowboy/horseman. He is in love with Carlota. He only lives in the past. At the time of the play, he is dead. Actor age range 20-35

BEN DECOUVERCOEUR – White. Probationary Deputy San Bernadino county, 33 years old at the time of the incident. As a child, his family was thrown off land in favor of the Indians. This occurrence has affected his attitude toward the Indians. The actor could be much older than 33, as he talks about the past, but lives in the present.

WALT DECOUVERCOEUR – White. Older half brother of Ben and posse member, 37 years old at the time of the incident Actor age range 35-60.

CLARA TRUE - White. Indian agent for 29 Palms Reservation, 42 years old at the time of the incident. She lives with another woman and has never been married. The actor could be much older as she talks about the past, but lives in the present.

MIKE BONIFACE – Indian. Carlota’s father and Chief of tribe, Elder. 67 years old at the time of the incident. He lives in the past at the time of the play: he is dead.

MARIA BONIFACE – Indian. 45 years old at the time of the incident. Mike's wife and Carlota’s mother. She lives in the past.

CARLOTA BONIFACE – Indian. Daughter to Mike and Maria. 16 years old at the time of the incident. She is in love and a romantic young girl. She lives in the past at the time of the play: she is dead.

SEGUNDO CHINO – Indian. Tracker and tribal policeman, 50 years old at the time of the incident. Actor age range 45-70. He knows the desert like “the back of his hand.”

JOHN HYDE – Indian. Tracker and tribal policeman. 25 years old at the time of the incident. Actor age range 20-45. He is Yaqui Indian from Mexico and speaks Spanish and English.

CHARLIE RECHE - Member of the posse, 45 years old at the time of the incident. Actor age range 35-60. He is shot by Willie Boy and almost dies

JOE TOUTAIN – White. Posse member and friend to Willie Boy, 34 years old at the time of the incident. Actor age range 35-60 . Willie Boy trusts Joe and they are good friends.

EDITOR (MR. CANFIELD) Editor of the Los Angeles Herald. Not involved in the incident, actor age range 45-70. He promotes the “Yellow Journalism.”

SIDES for auditions

SOLO SPEECHS

OLD WILLIE BOY

My name is Swift Fox or Willie Boy. You are going to hear a lot of things about me tonight, some true but most not. I was born in a teepee outside of Pahrump, Nevada, in the winter of 1881. They say I died on October 10th 1909 from a self-inflicted gunshot wound on Ruby Mountain, Landers California. By the way, there ain't no word for suicide in our language either. An Indian brave never kills himself, he lets someone else do that. Anyway, some Indians say I died in Las Vegas Nevada in a T.B. Sanatorium in 1933. This whole thing started because I fell in love with Carlota. I was young. I wasn't a rebel, I wasn't a renegade, I was just in love. If I could have only forgotten her, just gone away, none of this would have happened. But my heart wouldn't let me do that.

CLARA

(To audience).

I am Clara True. At the time of the “Willie Boy incident,” I was the Indian agent at Morongo Valley California. When I arrived on the Indian reservation in the spring of 1908, I was given no orders as to what to do. Some of the Indians spent their days in a drunken stupor. However, Swift Fox or Willie Boy was not among them. He was sober and hard working, a fine example of his race. I soon learned a new word "Blind Pigger". That is a man who unlawfully sells liquor on the reservation. I was obliged to stop the Blind Piggers, who had made threats against my person.

BEN

(To audience)

I am Ben DeCovercoeur. At the time of the "Willie Boy incident," I was a probationary Deputy for San Bernadino County living in Banning, California. I was the first white child born here. When I was 1 year old, my father- God rest his soul - was murdered by his cousin. My mother remarried. My stepfather, a good Christian man, was homesteading, trying to make a livin' when the government come along and said we was on Injun land and kick us off. I can't say I have a great regard for the Injuns after that or the government, but I am a Christian. Anyway, at 4:00 a.m. I got a telephone call. They told me what happened. Since it didn't happen on the reservation and I was a temporary Constable with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, it was my jurisdiction. Now Injuns ain't easy when it comes to the law, they got their own ideas about what's right and what's wrong. But I had my duty to forefil.

MADISON

I am Randolph Madison. At the time of the "Willie Boy incident, I was a 22 year old cub reporter for the Los Angeles Record. I am from Virginia and the great grandson of President James Madison. I first came to California at the invitation of my uncle who had a cattle ranch. I learn to rope, to ride and to handle a gun. But my passion was journalism.

CHARLIE RECHE

I'll be one of your men, Ben. Let me say something to you boys, before you decide. You're talking about an Indian in his own country. That's tricky work. And it ain't for no greenhorns. Any man that joins this here posse, better think about leaving a will, a widow and some orphans.

Everyone laughs.

You can laugh all you want but I ain't makin' no joke. Any man who thinks this is funny better think about what happened to the 7th cavalry at "The little Big Horn."

WILLIE BOY AND CARLOTA MEET

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

I have watched you grazing horses.

CARLOTA

You have?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

Yes, I have.

CARLOTA

Whatever for?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

I enjoy seeing beautiful things.

CARLOTA

And what beautiful things have you seen?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

You.

She blushes.

CARLOTA

Me?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

Yes, you and the horses.

CARLOTA

You think I look like a horse?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

No, no! I mean the way you treat them.

CARLOTA

And how do I treat them?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

Like your children, so sweet, so tender and so loving.

CARLOTA

They are just innocent creatures.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

You understand them, don't you?

CARLOTA

A little bit, I guess.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

More than a little, I think. I have never seen anyone like you.

She reacts shyly.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY (CONT'D)

I am Willie Boy.

CARLOTA

Yes, I know.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

You do!

CARLOTA

Yes.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

And you are Carlota.

CARLOTA

Yes.

Long pause.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

What is the matter?

CARLOTA

My father says I am not to talk to you.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
But why? What have I done?

CARLOTA
How is your wife?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
What?

CARLOTA
I'll bet she's lonely.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
I don't have a wife.

CARLOTA
That's not what I heard.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
I took her back to her people. We are no longer one.

Carlota looks at him distrustfully.

CARLOTA
I don't believe you! You are lying.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
I do not lie. That is not my way. I do not have a wife.

CARLOTA
Why should I believe you?

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
Because I am not lying.

Long pause.

CARLOTA
Alright, I believe you.

CARLOTA
I must.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY
When can I see you again?

CARLOTA
I watch the ponies every night before dark.
SCENE ENDS –

MIKE -MARIA - CARLOTA

THE MIKE RAMADA THE FOLLOWING MORNING

"WHERE WERE YOU MY DAUGHTER?"
Flashes on the screen.

Mike, his wife Maria and Carlota face each other.

MIKE
Where have you been daughter?

MARIA
Answer your father!

She stares at the ground not wanting to answer her father.

MIKE
Answer me, daughter! Is it that Willie Boy?

CARLOTA
Yes.

MIKE
Did he force you to stay out all night?

CARLOTA
No, I stayed because I wanted to...

MIKE
Do you hear this child? She wanted to!

CARLOTA
I like him.

MARIA

He is wrong for you, daughter.

CARLOTA

Why is he wrong for me?

MIKE

Why? I'll tell you why! He is too old! He has another woman! And if that weren't bad enough...HE IS YOUR COUSIN!!!

CARLOTA

He's not my cousin! He is Paiute from Nevada!

MARIA

No, you're right, he is not your cousin in the way the white people think of cousins.

MIKE

I don't care what the white people think. I am not white. But I am your father and you will do as I say! I do not wish to hear of this Willie Boy again!

SCENE ENDS –

SEGUNDO CHINO AND JOHN HYDE

SEGUNDO

Then, you'll want us, Indians. (TO AUDIENCE) I am Segundo Chino, Chemehuevi Indian, I know this country like the back of my hand. Willie runs in the old Indian style. I don't think the girl could keep up with him.

John Hyde, the other Indian steps up. He too has a Winchester.

HYDE

Well, I can keep up with him and I think I can find him and catch'm.

(to audience)

HYDE (CONT'D)

My name is John Hyde, or Running Rabbit. I am Yaqui not Chemehuevi like Segundo. I am from the Apacharia where the Apache live or the gringos call it Mexico. We are warriors. I will catch this Paiute.

To Ben.

SEGUNDO

He and me, we are Indian reservation Police...

This Willie Boy is givin' us good Indians, a bad name.

SEGUNDO

Ben, you'll never find him without a couple of Indian trackers.

HYDE

Beside, Miss True said we should go.

FLASH BACK -

**JOE AND BEN MEET EARLY SUNDAY MORNING
SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1909**

Flashes on the screen.

Joe is half asleep as he enters.

JOE

Damn, Ben, what's up? It ain't even sunlight and it's Sunday.

BEN

Sorry, to get you up this early.

JOE

You got a reason. Ain't you?

BEN

Yes, I most certainly do. You know that Indian Willie Boy?

JOE

Yes, sir. He's one of my top vaqueros. Why?

BEN

He just killed old Mike Boniface.

Joe is taken aback.

JOE

Damn! Willie Boy? Are you sure?

BEN

That's what they say!

JOE

Don't sound like him.

BEN

You knowed him pretty well. Tell me something about him.

JOE

Willie Boy, he was a good worker, never caused no trouble. Best man I ever had.

Joe is pensive for a moment

JOE (CONT'D)

You said he shot Mike Boniface?

BEN

That's what they say, he killed him dead!

JOE

Well, in a funny way, it kinda figures.

BEN

How so?

JOE

I knowed he was sweet on Mike's daughter. I heard that they'd runned away together. Their family were agin it. Old Mike brought her back home. They say she didn't like that too much.

BEN

Gilman says he's got a Winchester and about 20 rounds.

JOE

That ain't good news.

BEN

He goin' give us much trouble?

JOE

I seen him hit a jack rabbit at 30 yards and he was at full gallop. But killin' old Mike, don't sound like him.

BEN

Be that as it may, we got a job to do and I need your help, Joe.

JOE

Chasing down Willie Boy ain't much to my likin'.

BEN

If you don't wanna to come, I won't hold it agin ya.
Joe takes sometime to think about what he's going to do.

JOE

No, I'll come.

CARLOTA AND WILLIE BOY - FAREWELL

Willie Boy and Carlota enter. Willie Boy wears a heavy coat and Carlota a sweater.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

You are tired?

CARLOTA

No! I am Chemehuevi girl.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

We will stop.

CARLOTA

We go.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

No! You are hungry.

CARLOTA

I am not!

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

We have almost no more water and little food.

CARLOTA

I don't want water and I told you, I am not hungry.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

My Carlota is not a very good liar.

CARLOTA

I am not a liar!

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

They are after me not you. You are cold.

(He gives her his coat. She pushes it away.)

CARLOTA

I'm not cold.

Willie considers for a moment.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

Neither am I! Take the coat. Please.

She hesitates a moment and then takes the coat and puts it on.

I am not hungry or thirsty.

He hands her a canteen and the food.

CARLOTA

Thank you.

They embrace.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

I will go to 29 Palms and get supplies. You stay here.

CARLOTA

No, I am your woman, my place is with you.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

My place is with you too. I love you more than words can express.

CARLOTA

And I love you too.

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

But if you love me, you will let me go to 29 Palms. Then, I will return maybe with horses and we head north to Paiute country.

Carlota takes a few moments to consider this idea. Then is resolved.

CARLOTA

This is not to my liking but I will obey my man. Go!

YOUNG WILLIE BOY

I will return in two days. Hide in the rocks. If the posse catches you, tell them I forced you to come with me. Now you sleep and I will go. But remember, no fire.

They embrace and Willie Boy fades into the darkness.

FLASH BACK -

CARLOTA'S DEATH -INDIAN VERSION

HYDE, BEN and RECHE enter and approach the prostate body. They smile at John Hyde.

BEN (CONT'D)

Well, you're good shot, John, it looks like you killed him.

HYDE

He was just sittin' there on the rock I drew me a bead and

Charlie Reche turns over the body. He is shocked.

RECHE

Hold on...This ain't Willie Boy...

BEN

What you talkin' about?

RECHE

Look for yourself.

Ben crosses to the body and looks down. He is visibly shake.

BEN

You shot the girl,John!

John crosses to the body. The men stare at each other in shock.

HYDE

I didn't mean to.

BEN

It's too late for that.

HYDE

Look, she was wearing his coat. It was morning...misty. I thought it was Willie Boy.

There is a moment where the gravity of the mistake begins to sink in.

RECHE

You've put us in a Hell of a fix, John.

BEN

You can say that again. One hell of a fix!

HYDE

I told you, I didn't mean to do it.

BEN

(Ben is angry) It don't make no difference what you wanted to do, it's what you done did that counts.

RECHE

What you reckon we should do?

BEN

Damned if I know.

RECHE

Well, you're the deputy!

BEN

I am a temporary deputy. What's Willson going to say?

RECHE

Who's Willson?

BEN

Sheriff Willson! He is up for reelection. And now this! God Damn you, John Hyde.

HYDE

You said shoot to kill. I heard you.

BEN

I said shoot to kill Willie Boy! Not the girl!

HYDE .
I thought it was Willie Boy!

BEN
Well, it weren't!

HYDE
You said, "Shoot to Kill!"

BEN
No, I didn't!

HYDE
What's the difference?

BEN
What's the difference!!

Ben begins pacing the ground. He is seething.

BEN (CONT'D)
The difference is that you just killed the girl we are supposed to rescue. That's the difference. You stupid son of bitch. God Damn your eyes you... you Red savage!

HYDE
Don't call me no Red savage!

BEN
I'll call you any God Damn thing I want!

HYDE
Watch your tongue, Ben! Or, I'll cut it out!

BEN
You will! Will ya!

Ben attacks Hyde. The two men fight. Reche jumps in to break up the fight.

THE LAST INDIAN HUNT ENDS

Flashes on the screen.

Offices of the Los Angeles Record.

Madison finishes his story as the editor enters. He is reading Madison's copy. He likes what he's reading.

EDITOR

You got it! It's brilliant!

MADISON

(puzzled)

I beg your pardon?

EDITOR

This is the last great Indian battle. This story is going to sell like hot cakes!

Madison is not excited but rather despondent.

MADISON

So, we've won?

EDITOR

Yes, sir! We're part of it! You were part of it!

MADISON

(sarcastically)

We have destroyed the Indians, and I was part of it! Hooray for Me!

EDITOR

What's the matter with you, Madison? This is a great story.

MADISON

Is it?

EDITOR

It will sell thousands of copies. Everyone will know your name. You were a witness to the last great Indian battle.

MADISON

Me and General Custer, huh?

EDITOR

What more do you want? Civilization has triumphed.

MADISON

Civilization has triumphed?

EDITOR

What do you want to do?

MADISON

I think I would like to go back to the desert right now and put a bullet through my heart.

The editor is shocked at what he is hearing.

EDITOR

What did you say?

MADISON

I said, I'd just like to put a bullet through my heart and lay down beside Willie Boy.

EDITOR

Madison, are people from Virginia crazy? It's a great story. We won! You've written history.

MADISON

The history is written by the winners.

EDITOR

Yeah, that's the way it is.

MADISON

But the truth is remembered by the losers. The one thing a Yankee will never understand is the bitter taste of defeat. In the South we were defeated. I understand it and I have lived defeat, just like the red man. But the red man's defeat is more bitter than ours. He can't be reconstructed. He is not a citizen. He is an outcast in his own land but I respect the red man and I will never, never be proud of what we've done to him.

THE END