MINE, ALL MINE
or… From Ghost Town to Kaboom Town

By DENISE K. BUHR

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Appearance)

# of lines

ESPY ........................................Annie Sue’s silent assistant 1
ANNIE SUE ...............................owner of the general store 60
TRILLBY STERLING ......................owner of a nearby cow pasture 53
SELMA SIMPSON ........................fortune-telling Simpson sister 28
SADIE SIMPSON ......................chief brew master at the 26
Simpson Saloon

HUMBOLDT BILGEWATER

FOGGERTY ..........................government man 52

TOM DICKSON HARRIS

(STRANGER)..............man who is (and isn’t) who he appears to be 24

TIME

The late 1860s.

PLACE

The general store in Cross Town.

SET DESCRIPTION

Minimum furnishings in the general store include a counter, with a ledger book, pen and ink well, and a stool. UP CENTER there are shelves with boxes, bottles, tins, etc., while tools and large items hang from hooks or lean against the DOWN LEFT wall. Crates, barrels and other furnishings may be scattered about. A DOWNSTAGE entrance to the store is RIGHT. There is an UPSTAGE exit LEFT that leads to the storeroom.

See inside back cover for set design.
MINE, ALL MINE

1 AT RISE: ESPY stands behind the counter, writing in the ledger. ANNIE SUE ENTERS LEFT from the storeroom. She carries a box of goods and restocks the shelves as she speaks.

ANNIE SUE: Morning, Espy. Didn’t see you come in. (ESPY smiles and waves, then returns to ledger.) You be sure to order more sugar, hon. Patty Cake’s sweet tooth is only getting sweeter now that she’s got a bun in the oven! (ESPY crosses to shelves and points out the last gold pan.) No, no, no! I’ve told you a hundred times! We don’t need any more gold pans. I can’t sell that last one as it is. Cross Town hasn’t seen a prospector since the big rush of ’49. After all the miners left, there was talk of changing the town name from Cross Town to Dead End. Matter of fact, we ought to nail that last pan up on the wall as a relic of times gone by. (ESPY removes the nail can from the shelf and turns it over to show that it’s empty.) Well, then, add a bucket of nails to the order. But no gold pans! This is a general store, not an antiques boutique! (EXITS LEFT. ESPY returns to the counter and writes in her ledger. SELMA and TRILLBY ENTER RIGHT. TRILLBY carries a shovel handle and a bucket with a large rock in it and sets it on the floor by the counter.)

SELMA: Trillby, why do you continue with this foolishness? Hello, Espy. How’s the laryngitis? (ESPY shakes her head.)

TRILLBY: Hi, Espy. (To SELMA.) Because when Tom gets back from LaSalina with our hundred head of cattle, we’re going to need a way to water them. (ESPY moves UP CENTER and sweeps the floor.)

SELMA: But there’s no water where you’re digging. The divining rod says so. In fact, there’s something mighty peculiar about that spot. You saw what happened. My best divining rod split right in two.

TRILLBY: Selma Simpson, if I believed all that nonsense you spout…

SELMA: What’s in your hand?

TRILLBY: A broken shovel.

SELMA: No, this hand. (Grabs TRILLBY’S free hand and looks at her palm closely.) Oh, my. This is not good. Trillby, you must beware of a stranger about to enter your life. You have trouble coming.

SADIE’S VOICE: (From OFF RIGHT.) Sister! Sister!

TRILLBY: It sounds like you have trouble coming.

SADIE: (ENTERS RIGHT holding a tattered piece of cloth. Crosses CENTER between TRILLBY and SELMA.) Sister, just look! (Holds up cloth. ESPY moves behind group and looks over SADIE’S shoulder.)

ANNIE SUE: (ENTERS LEFT, crosses DOWN LEFT and nods to each as she greets them.) Hi, Trillby. Selma. Sadie. What’s all the noise about?
SADIE: My Sunday-go-to-meeting dress. Ruined!

SELMA: Sister, what on earth happened?

SADIE: I saw you had put the wash kettle on, so I put the clothes in.
And when I went to take them out... *(Holds up the cloth again and puts her hand through a hole.)*

SELMA: That wasn't wash water! That was a new batch of Hard Rock Rum.

ANNIE SUE: You mean that stuff you serve down at the saloon?

TRILLBY: If it does that to a piece of cloth, what's it doing to a person's insides?

SADIE: Sister, I do wish you'd let me take care of the brewing and stick to reading your tea leaves instead. Annie Sue, we're going to need some material for new dresses.

ANNIE SUE: We'll get it ordered. *(ESPY crosses behind the counter and writes in the ledger.)*

SADIE: Come on, sister. We'd better see how much we can save. *(Crosses RIGHT.)*

TRILLBY: There won't be anything but rags.

SELMA: She doesn't mean the clothes. She means the rum. *(Crosses to SADIE.)*

SADIE: This could have an interesting flavor. We could call it "Tatterdemalion."

SELMA: And sell it as a French import for twice the price. *(EXITS RIGHT with SADIE.)*

ANNIE SUE: *(Moves DOWN CENTER to TRILLBY.)* How's the digging?

TRILLBY: Not so good. I need a new shovel. *(Holds up broken handle.)*

ANNIE SUE: That's the... *(To ESPY.)* How many is that, Espy? *(ESPY holds up three fingers.)* That's the third one you've broken this month!

TRILLBY: It's all those blasted rocks! See this? *(Hands the shovel handle to ESPY. Takes a rock out of the bucket and hands it to ANNIE SUE.)* Too bad there's no gold in them. Well, I better get back to work. Do you have another shovel?

ANNIE SUE: *(Sets the rock on a shelf, picks up a new shovel and hands it to TRILLBY.)* This is the last one in stock. Espy, add a shovel to the order. *(Looks at TRILLBY as ESPY writes.)* Better make it two shovels. *(ESPY crosses out the previous mark and rewrites.)*

TRILLBY: No, that won't be necessary. *(ESPY gives up and rips the page out of the ledger.)* I won't need another one. I'm gonna strike pay dirt today. I can feel it in my bones. Thank you, Annie Sue, Espy. *(EXITS RIGHT.)*
ANNIE SUE: Now she’s beginning to sound like Selma. And she better hope she hits water instead. (To ESPY) Add that shovel to her bill. I’ll throw this out with the rest of the kindling. (Takes shovel handle from ESPY and EXITS LEFT. ESPY begins to write in ledger, drops her pen and kneels behind counter to look for it.)

FOGGERTY: (ENTERS RIGHT and looks around store but doesn’t see ESPY still kneeling behind the counter. Crosses DOWN CENTER and speaks to nobody in particular.) So this is Cross Town. (Aside.) Looks more like a ghost town than a gold town. (ESPY stands up, unnoticed. Continues aside.) But my brother says there’s a bonanza here just waiting for someone to claim it. It’s regrettable that cowboy caught him with an ace up his sleeve. His arm will mend, though, and his bad luck is my good fortune. (ANNIE SUE ENTERS LEFT, looks at ESPY and points to FOGGERTY, questioningly. ESPY shrugs. ANNIE SUE slowly moves DOWN LEFT as FOGGERTY speaks to HIMSELF, still unaware of ESPY and ANNIE SUE.)

Now what did those directions say? (Takes a paper out of his pocket and reads.) “Fifty paces south from the general store.” This must be the place. “Turn west at the large pine. Ahead three hundred yards to the creek. Follow the north fork downstream, then the east branch one half mile. Turn north five hundred feet.”

ANNIE SUE: And you’ll be in the middle of Trillby Sterling’s cow pasture.

FOGGERTY: (Jumps and turns to ANNIE SUE.) I beg your pardon?

ANNIE SUE: If you follow those directions, you’ll end up in the middle of Trillby’s cow pasture. Right, Espy?

FOGGERTY: (Looks at ESPY, surprised.) Oh, how do you do? (ESPY smiles and curtsies.) I didn’t notice you there. (Aside.) Was the quiet girl there the whole time? I hope she didn’t hear too much.

ANNIE SUE: Of course, you could just take the path down by the Simpson Saloon and get there a lot quicker. And you wouldn’t have to wade the water or bushwhack through the tules. That is, if you really want to go to a cow pasture.

FOGGERTY: Is there anything special about this cow pasture?

ANNIE SUE: No. Except there ain’t no cows in it yet. And it ain’t fit for growing anything except cow weed. And rocks like this. (Takes the rock from the shelf.) Trillby must have forgotten it. Why do you want to know?

FOGGERTY: (Takes the rock.) Rocks like this? (Aside.) That little cheat. He didn’t want me to find that mine. (To ANNIE SUE.) Oh, my name is Humboldt Bilgewater Foggerty. I’m with the government. I’m here to check out the land in this area.

ANNIE SUE: Is there something wrong?
FOGGERTY: I’m sure I’ll find something. If there’s something wrong that is. (Aside.) And there will be! (To ANNIE SUE.) Perhaps I should see the person who owns this pasture.

ANNIE SUE: That would be Trillby Sterling. She should be there now. Just follow the path.

FOGGERTY: Shall I take this rock back to her?

ANNIE SUE: Oh, I don’t suppose she’d want it. There’s plenty more where that came from.

FOGGERTY: Oh, really? I’ll just take it anyway. Good afternoon. (EXITS RIGHT. ANNIE SUE straightens some items on the shelf. ESPY writes in her ledger. TOM ENTERS RIGHT and dusts himself off.)

ANNIE SUE: Tom! What are you doing back already?

TOM: My name’s not Tom. (Pulls his hat down and turns away from ANNIE SUE.)

ANNIE SUE: Sure it is. Tom Dickson Harris. That’s you.

TOM: My name’s not Harris. It’s Stranger. (ESPY comes out from behind the counter to look at TOM. He continues to turn away from both women.)

ANNIE SUE: You’re not a stranger. Everybody knows who you are.


ANNIE SUE: Are you sure?

TOM: I ought to know.

ANNIE SUE: You sure look like Tom. You say your name is Stranger?

TOM: Yep. (ESPY shrugs and returns behind the counter.)

ANNIE SUE: You’re the second stranger that’s been here today. Only the other one wasn’t a Stranger, he was a Foggerty. But he was a stranger, if you know what I mean.

TOM: (Aside.) It worries me that I do. (To ANNIE SUE.) Where did this other stranger, this Foggerty, go?

ANNIE SUE: He went to Trillby’s cow pasture.

TOM: Aha!

ANNIE SUE: (Suspicious.) Of course, you being a stranger, you wouldn’t know where that is, would you?

TOM: Uh, no. Where is that?

ANNIE SUE: Down the path by the Simpson Saloon.

TOM: Did he say why he was going to Trillby’s cow pasture?

ANNIE SUE: To talk to Trillby.

TOM: About what?

ANNIE SUE: He didn’t say. You’re kind of nosey just like that other feller. What’s going on?
TOM: That’s what I’d like to know.

ANNIE SUE: Here comes Trillby now. You can ask her what that other man wanted.

TOM: (Hasty.) I have to check on something first. (Crosses to RIGHT EXIT. TRILLBY ENTERS RIGHT. TOM turns his back to her as she passes and then dashes OUT RIGHT.)

TRILLBY: (Marches DOWN CENTER, perturbed.) Annie Sue, do you know anything about a problem with my property?

ANNIE SUE: Never heard of such a thing.

TRILLBY: That’s what Mr. Foggerty was saying.

ANNIE SUE: Really? You already spoke with him? (Aside.) I knew that shortcut would be quicker, but that was quite fast! (To TRILLBY.) Where is Mr. Foggerty anyway?

TRILLBY: In my cow pasture. He said he had to run some tests. I can’t go back to my pasture until he says.

SADIE and SELMA ENTER RIGHT and cross DOWN CENTER between TRILLBY and ANNIE SUE. SADIE carries a basket with a rock in it.

SADIE: Trillby, why is Tom sneaking around behind the buildings like he doesn’t want anyone to see him?

TRILLBY: Tom’s here?

ANNIE SUE: No, that ain’t Tom.

SADIE: It sure looks like Tom.

ANNIE SUE: Well, it ain’t. I talked to him. His name is Stranger.

SELMA: The stranger I warned you about, Trillby.

TRILLBY: The only stranger I know about is Mr. Foggerty.

SELMA: A second stranger? (Grabs TRILLBY’S hand.) He isn’t in your palm.

TRILLBY: No, he’s in my cow pasture.

SADIE: Who is Mr. Foggerty?

TRILLBY: He’s with the government. He says my land is no good.

SELMA: I told you that. I saw it in the stars.

TRILLBY: He saw it in the ground. He’s taking samples of rocks and soil and cow weed to run some tests.

SELMA: The rock! Sister, tell her about the rock.

SADIE: Sister and I were stirring up a batch of soap today, and we discovered a very curious thing in the bottom of the soap kettle.

ANNIE SUE: I’m afraid to ask.

SELMA: We found one of your rocks. (Tips the basket forward. EVERYONE leans in to look.)

TRILLBY: My rocks?
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES
ONSTAGE: Stool, counter, ledger book, pen, ink well, gold pan, empty can, broom, shovel, brown bottle filled with liquid*.

BROUGHT ON:
Box of miscellaneous goods (ANNIE SUE)
Broken shovel handle, bucket with a large rock inside, deed (TRILLBY)
Tattered piece of cloth, basket with a large rock inside, empty jar, full jar (SADIE)
Paper with directions to the pasture, green bottle filled with liquid*, gold coin (FOGGERTY)
Tarot cards, pail (SELMA)
Clear bottle filled with liquid* (TOM)

* The three bottles in this play should look similar in size and shape, but differ in color, though the colors themselves don’t actually matter. Alternatively, they can all be similar in color but differ in shape, as long as the audience (and Tom!) can see the differences.

COSTUMES
ANNIE SUE wears a long, light-colored dress or skirt and blouse, and an apron.
ESPY wears a long, dark skirt, white blouse and an apron.
TRILLBY wears a calf-length denim skirt, work blouse, boots, straw hat or bandanna.
SELMA wears a long, bright dress or skirt with pockets, bright blouse, several flamboyant scarves, several bracelets, rings, earrings and necklaces.
SADIE wears a long, bright dress or skirt and blouse, and an apron.
FOGGERTY wears a dark suit and vest with a pocket watch, white shirt, tie, spats and black hat. He carries a cane.
TOM wears dusty jeans, dusty flannel or plaid shirt, cowboy hat, boots.

LIGHTING AND SOUND
No special lighting effects. The pounding noise from the storeroom can easily be made by pounding on a piece of wood with a hammer. The horse running can be a pre-recorded sound effect or made simply with wood blocks.
Mine, All Mine - Set Design

Stage Left

Tools

Stage Right

Shelves

Exit to Store Room

Upstage

Exit to Street

Downstage

Audience

Forestage

Counter

Exit to Store Room

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