

The Play in 10 scenes

1

Stanley Yelnats is a boy who has bad luck due to a curse;

STANLEY *I'm always in the wrong place at the wrong time. It's because of my no good dirty rotten pig stealin' great-great grandfather.*

Stanley is sent to Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention camp, for a crime he did not commit.

STANLEY *They're just a couple of old sneakers - they fell from the sky.*

2

Stanley and the other boys at the camp are forced to dig large holes in the dirt every day. **Stanley** eventually realizes that they are digging these holes because the Warden is searching for something.

MR. SIR *...Dig as deep and as wide as your shovel. If you dig up anything interesting, you should report it to me when I come by with the water truck.*

STANLEY *What am I supposed to be looking for?*

MR. SIR *You're not looking for anything. Digging builds character. Take a bad boy and make him dig a hole every day in the hot sun, it will turn him into a good boy. But if you happen to find something, you let me know. If the Warden likes what you found, you'll get the rest of the day off.*

3

When he was a boy, Stanley's great-great-grandfather, Elya Yelnats, received a pig from Madame Zeroni, a gypsy, in exchange for a promise. Elya's promise was that after the pig grew strong he would carry Madame Zeroni, who only had one leg, up a mountain and sing her a song that she had taught him. After becoming disillusioned with the girl he thought he loved, however, Elya hops a boat to America, forgetting his promise to Madame Zeroni.

*"IF ONLY, IF ONLY," THE WOODPECKER SIGHS
"THE BARK ON THE TREE WAS A LITTLE BIT SOFTER"
WHILE THE WOLF WAITS, BELOW, HUNGRY AND LONELY
HE CRIES TO THE MOO-OO-OON, "IF ONLY, IF ONLY."*

4

One hundred and ten years before Stanley arrives at Camp Green Lake, the schoolteacher, Katherine Barlow, falls in love with Sam, the black onion seller. Trout Walker, the richest man in town has always wanted to marry Katherine. When he finds out that she is in love with Sam he gathers the townspeople to burn the schoolhouse and attack Sam. Katherine and Sam attempt to escape but their boat is destroyed while only half way across the lake and Sam is killed.

SAM *We'll go to my secret onion field. We'll be fine. The onions grow all year round, and the water runs uphill. And we got enough of your spiced peaches to last us a week or two.*

These are the facts. Trout Walker's boat, with the sheriff and other leading citizens on board, smashed into Sam's boat. Sam was shot and killed. Miss Katherine was rescued, against her will. Since that day, one hundred and five years ago, not a drop of water has fallen on Green Lake. You be the judge: whom did God punish?

5

Katherine is driven mad by her grief and becomes an outlaw known as Kissin' Kate Barlow. Her name refers to the fact that she kisses the men she kills, leaving a lipstick imprint of her lips on their faces. In her twenty years of robbing people in the west, she happens to rob Stanley's great-grandfather. She buries Stanley's great-grandfather's money somewhere, Kate dies before anyone can find out where the money is hidden.

KATE BARLOW *Go ahead and kill me, Trout. But I sure hope you like to dig. You, your children, and their children can dig for the next hundred years and you'll still never find it.*

6

Stanley has a hard time digging holes due to the incredible heat and the hard, dry land.

STANLEY *Oh, man. I can barely hold the shovel. My blisters have blisters. And every time I dig out a shovel full of dirt, half of it rolls back into the hole. Say, uh, Magnet? Where are we supposed to go to the bathroom?*

MAGNET *Pick a hole, any hole. But make sure nothin's livin' in it first. You don't want to be disturbing a family of yellow spotted lizards.*

At one point Stanley digs up half of a lipstick tube that has the initials KB on it and he speculates that perhaps Kate Barlow used to live in the area.

7

Stanley becomes friends with a boy named Zero, whom he teaches to read in exchange for help digging his hole. Although Stanley and Zero, also known as Hector Zeroni, do not know it, Hector is the great- great-great-grandson of Madame Zeroni.

STANLEY *I'm teaching him to read and write. It's a trade. The hole gets dug so what does it matter? Isn't it more important for him to learn to read? Doesn't that build character more than digging holes?*

ZERO *I'm not stupid. I know everybody thinks I am. I just don't like answering their questions.*

8

Zero eventually runs away from camp and Stanley, in an effort to save him, follows after a few days. The two help each other to reach the top of a big mountain, which turns out to be Sam's old onion field. Because Zero is very weak, Stanley carries him up this mountain. They survive on onions for more than a week and then return to camp, planning to search for Kate Barlow's treasure in the hole where Stanley found the lipstick tube.

STANLEY *Do you believe in destiny? When the shoes dropped on me, I thought it was just my no good dirty rotten pig stealin' great-great grandfather. But now sitting up here on God's Thumb, I don't know. You want to dig one more hole?*

9

Stanley and Zero find a suitcase that has the name Stanley Yelnats on it. Although the Warden attempts to take the suitcase from them, Stanley's lawyer, Ms. Morengo, arrives to say that Stanley has been proven innocent and Stanley and Hector are able to leave the camp with the suitcase. It turns out that the suitcase contains many valuable items and is in fact the same suitcase that Kate Barlow took from Stanley's great-grandfather, also named Stanley Yelnats, so many years ago.

ZERO *It's got his name on it!*

MS. MORENGO *What?*

ZERO *See. Stan-ley Yel-nats. It's the same front-wards and backwards.*

10

At the end it seems that the Yelnats family curse is lifted. Hector is reunited with his mother, from whom he was separated many years ago and Stanley's father finally succeeds in inventing something: a cure for foot odour.

CLYDE LIVINGSTON *Hi, I'm Clyde Livingston, but everyone around here calls me Sweet Feet. However my feet weren't always sweet. They used to smell so bad that nobody would sit near me in the dugout. Then a teammate told me about Sploosh. (He pulls out a can.) I just spray a little on each foot every morning, and now I really do have sweet feet. Plus, I like the tingle."*

VOICEOVER *Sploosh. A treat for your feet. Plus, you'll like the tingle.*