

Introduction: Charlie the Horse

COWBOY LINGO

Charlie: Well, howdy there, everybody! Welcome to the frontier town of Giddyup Junction. It's just a little speck on the map, to be truthful with ya. Some folks say it's a rest stop on the way to nowhere, but those of us who call it home find it quite cozy.

Oh, now where are my manners? I plumb forgot to introduce myself. My name's Charlie. I'm the deputy 'round these parts. I admit, it's not a terribly exciting job. We don't get too many ruffians in a little town like this. But I do what I can to help keep the peace 'round here.

Today I'm here to help y'all get used to life out here on the range. I'm 'specially here to teach you folks some of the strange words we use out here in cowboy country. It's like learnin' a whole 'nother language sometimes. Let me show ya what I mean. *(A sign appears with the word "dogie" on it.)* Now here's a word you've probably heard before, but we use it a bit differently. The word is "dogie" [*DOH-gie*]. Do you know what that means? You probably think it's a little dog, like what you might have for a pet. But out here on the range, "dogie" is what we call a motherless calf. That's why cowboys like to shout, "Get along, little dogie!"

Here's one more. *(A sign appears with the word "higgledy-piggledy" on it.)* Whoo-wee, that's a strange lookin' word. It says "higgledy-piggledy." Does anybody know what that means? Nope, it's not a word for a little pig. It means that somethin' is strange or confusin'. Like if I were to say, "These cowboy words sure are higgledy-piggledy." *(Laughs.)*

Don't worry there, folks. You'll get used to the cowboy lingo before you know it. Luckily, you don't need to know any special words to understand God's Good News. It's a message for everybody, and that's what we're gonna be talkin' about here in Giddyup Junction. I hope to see ya again next time. Y'all take care now, ya hear.

Introduction

NEW KID IN TOWN

The Kid enters, talking to himself and looking around.

The Kid: Well, well, here we are. Good ole Giddyup Junction. It's been a while since I was last here. Place hasn't changed all that much. *(Points.)* Well, look over there. It's the old hotel. Me and the gang robbed that place a few years back. *(Chuckling to himself.)* They sent out a posse to find us and everything. *(Points in another direction.)* And over there! That's Thompson's Barber Shop. I robbed that place too. Got locked up for two months for that one. It was supposed to be three months, but the gang busted me out. Yup, this town sure is full of memories. *(Hesitates, thinking.)* Uh . . . but that was the old me. I don't do that sort of thing anymore. My life's been changed, thanks to God's Good News! I'm gonna start fresh in this town! No more of that outlaw stuff for me!

Now then, I'm feelin' kinda thirsty. *(Looking around.)* Hmm. I wonder where I could find a nice cold sarsaparilla [*sas-puh-RILL-uh*] in this town.

Missy enters, moving as if she's going to walk right past The Kid.

The Kid: Uh, excuse me there, missy.

Missy: How do you know my name?

The Kid: What? I don't know yer name.

Missy: But you called me Missy. That's my name. Missy Suzanne Abernathy. I'm the editor and chief reporter of the local paper, the *Giddyup Gazette*.

The Kid: Uh, well, I didn't know that was yer name. See, it was just an expression. All I was really trying to do was ask . . . Well, see, I'm quite parched, and I was wonderin' where I could get a nice cold sarsaparilla in this town.

Missy: Sarsaparilla? Oh sure. *(Points.)* Just down there at Gertie's Place.

The Kid: Oh yeah, Gertie's Place. *(Under his breath.)* Think I robbed them once too.

Missy: What was that?

The Kid: Oh, nuthin'. Much obliged there, Missy.

The Kid exits as Missy watches him leave.

Missy: Well, well! Either my eyes are playing tricks on me, or that is none other than the notorious outlaw, The—

Otis rushes in, carrying a shovel.

Otis: Hey there, Missy! Guess what I got!

Missy: Hmm, I don't know, Otis. Could it be a new shovel?

Otis: *(Laughing and holding up a shovel.)* No! It's a new shovel!

Missy: That's what I said.

Otis: Oh, I guess you did. This new shovel is just what I need to finally get some gold out of my mine.

Missy: Otis, you've been working in that mine for years now. I don't know if there's really any gold in there. *(Missy keeps looking in the direction that The Kid exited.)*

Otis: There's just gotta be gold in that mine, and I'm gonna find it! Say, why do you keep lookin' over there?

Missy: Did you see that stranger who walked by a minute ago?

Otis: *(Looking around.)* Stranger? What stranger? You mean that kid walkin' into Gertie's Place? What about him?

Missy: I think that's none other than that notorious outlaw The Kid.

Otis: What, him? But he's just a kid.

Missy: Well, that's why they call him "The Kid"!

Otis: But if he is who you say he is, then he's robbed banks, trains, stagecoaches, and everything else this side of the Rio Grande. Oh no! My mine! It's in danger! He's prob'ly fixin' to steal all my gold! I gotta do something! This is terrible.

Sheriff Sam and Charlie enter.

Sam: What's going on over here?

Charlie: I'd say Otis's got himself worked up over somethin' again.

Sam: Missy, you didn't tell him again that there isn't really any gold in his mine, did ya? You know how that upsets him.

Missy: I did tell him that. But that's not what got him so upset.

Charlie: What's the problem then?

Missy: Well, I'm pretty sure I just saw The Kid, right here in Giddyup Junction.

Sam: The Kid? You can't be serious.

Missy: Go see for yourself! He went to Gertie's Place to get a sarsaparilla!

Sam: If she's right, then we're in for some trouble. That kid is no good! I've locked him up seven-teen times.

Charlie: Actually, it was eighteen times.

Sam: Whatever it was, it was a lot of times. He's probably come back here to plan some big job of some sort . . . like robbin' a bank or maybe cattle rustlin'.

Otis: Or stealin' all the gold out of my mine!

Sam: This is not good, not good at all!

Charlie: But you never know. Maybe The Kid has changed.

Missy: Changed?

Sam: How do ya figure that?

Missy: Well, God's Good News can change anyone's life . . . even someone like The Kid.

Charlie: Do you suppose he might've changed?

Missy: I don't know. But I've got to get to my office to print this new scoop! "The Kid Returns to Town"! What a headline! Gotta go!

Missy exits, running.

Otis: And I gotta go keep an eye on my mine. No way I'm gonna let an outlaw get his hands on my gold!

Otis exits.

Sam: Well, Charlie, if The Kid really is back in town, we've got our work cut out for us. It's up to you and me to protect this town. We need to keep our eyes open and make sure The Kid isn't up to no good.

Sam starts to walk out.

Charlie: I don't know. I still say The Kid may have changed.

Charlie exits.