

DEAF SMITH: The Great Texian Scout

By

Stephan C. Baldwin

Produced by ...

Howard County Junior College District:

SouthWest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf

Howard College, Big Spring, Texas

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

ERASTUS (DEAF) SMITH...daring guide, scout and spy for the Texian Army

HENDRICK ARNOLD*...a free Negro and member of Smith's spy company

PRESIDENT/GENERAL SAM HOUSTON...commander-in-chief of the Texian Army

GUADALUPE (LUPE) SMITH...his wife; woman of Castillian birth and culture

GENERAL COS...Mexican officer who offered \$1,000 for Smith's head

TWO MEXICAN SOLDIERS

TWO TEXAS ARMY SOLDIERS

TWO FEMALE MEXICAN FOLK DANCERS

MRS. DICKESON

NOTES: Two female dancers needed only for second scene; their male dance partners will later change into Mexican and Texas Army soldiers.

Lupe interchanges with Guadalupe Smith (G. SMITH)

One of the female dancers can change to MRS. DICKERSON

*If no qualified black actor could be found, any substitute would be fine.

SCB

DEAF SMITH: The Great Texian Scout

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY:

Scene 1

Place: Texas Republic House of Congress
Time: December 18, 1837

Scene 2

Place: Plaza of LaVillita of Bexar (Old San Antonio)
Time: October, 1835

Scene 3:

Houston's Headquarters

Scene 4:

Vince's bayou road

Scene 5:

Texian Army Campfire

Scene 6:

Mexican Army Campfire

Scene 7:

Battle of San Jacinto

Scene 8:

Houston's Headquarters (Capture of Cos) and (Dream encounter with 'Lupe)

Scene 9:

Back to Texas Republic House of Congress (End of ARNOLD'S speech)

SCENE 1

Gradual light on PRESIDENT SAM HOUSTON who is standing in front of a low wooden podium on down right and he is now pounding the gavel to get attention while looking directly at the audience.

HOUSTON

Order! Order! As President of the Texas Republic, I expect silence among you senators and representatives. You cannot adjourn this legislative meeting without first hearing about our deceased friend, Erastus "Deaf" Smith. Even though Deaf Smith died 19 days ago, I am still in mourning! Why? From the first shot of our glorious Revolution to the victorious Battle of San Jacinto, Deaf Smith was always my stay in the darkest hour! Therefore, my friends, I ask you to pay attention to a fellow scout and spy of the Texian Army. (Stepping aside) Mister Hendrick Arnold.

(Enters ARNOLD)

(Houston exits)

ARNOLD

(Takes off Texas hat in respect)

I thank thee Mr. President Houston. Good evening busy gentlemen. It is truly a great honor to appear before you. But I was far more honored to have served alongside old scout Deaf Smith. Since he is now resting in peace in a grave unmarked and hardly ever thought about his long overdue army pension promised by you, I stand here on his behalf as well as his starving family. All I ask is this liberty to share with you a dilemma of a man who first sought revenge then changed his mind. Not because he was an angry deaf man, not because he was a true Texian, but because he was human. For those of you who are not quite familiar with his incredible exploits, let me begin with the Seige of Old San Antonio where Mrs. Smith danced in the plaza. Yes, it all began with music, so to speak...

(Immediate cross-fade to Scene 2)

SCENE 2

Three dotted soft white eight-foot flats or masonites are placed on stage. Stage right has the large painting of the San Jacinto flag. Center stage has the Texas state seal. The old Mexican flag is seen on the set on stage left.

Full-lights on as two pairs of dancers come dancing to the end of one Mexican folk music (La Posta) then the dancers line up for the second dance called "La Bambia". (Note: any appropriate folk music could do.)

Interrupting the near end of the second folk dance is the sudden ENTRANCE of GENERAL COS in his full military attire and a Mexican SOLDIER who is carrying a rifle and a rolled paper tucked under his belt; both enter from stage left.

SOLDIER
(shouting)

Alto! (No response) Stop in the name of Mexico and General Santa Anna! Alto! (Still no response and he gets approval from General Cos to use his rifle).

(Cocks rifle and shoots directly in air)

(Music and dancers stop abruptly.)

When I say stop in the name of the Republic of Mexico and General Santa Anna, I need only say...alto...once. (Pause) May I introduce your military governor...General Cos.

COS

My humble apologies for interrupting your last dance on this beautiful but hopeless plaza. General Santa Anna has instructed me to take your town and declare martial law. My presence is a consequence of your rebellious behaviour. Either you need a thrashing or you need be banished from Texas forever! And before we disperse this unlawful assembly, I must know the whereabouts of...El Sordo! Yes, the deaf one..(instructs the soldier to nail "wanted" poster on stage left flat.

(Poster says:)

WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE!

El Sordo

\$1,000 reward

COS

After this war began, I started to hear a great deal about El Sordo. Mexicans and Anglos praise his scouting ability. He shall not stand in my way - no matter how good he is.

(Then COS throws a leather bag of Spanish Reals on ground in front of the startled crowd)

There is the bag filled with the reward, \$1,000, for telling me where I can capture El Sordo, the Deaf One, or known by some as Erastus "Deaf" Smith.

(Pause)

Still no takers? (Walks up to 1ST MALE DANCER) What about you?

1ST MALE DANCER

I've never heard of him, General Cos. El Sordo does not strike a bell with me.

COS

(Throws dancer's hat off)

Won't tell me? (Turns to 2ND MALE DANCER) What about you?

2ND MALE DANCER

In Texas, there are many men who are called Smith. I cannot recall anyone whose name is Erastus. What a strange name.

(COS pushes him down)

COS
(Walking up to ARNOLD)

Are you just another who wishes to deny his friendship with El Sordo?

ARNOLD
(Walks up to poster)

I will not deny being his friend, but I find it hard to believe he's worth all this money.

COS

His knowledge of the lands of Texas is worth much more. He can be a valuable guide for the Texas Army. Since we are at war with you rebels, I'll do anything to take away this best scout!

G. SMITH
(Stepping out of crowd)

But Sir, Deaf Smith has not joined the Texian Army. He is proud of his new Mexican citizenship.

ARNOLD

He's made it clear he would take no sides.

1ST FEMALE DANCER

He's always minded his own affairs.

2ND FEMALE DANCER

So there is no reason in the world for you to hate him or punish him.

COS

I hated him the first time I heard his name! My spies tell me that the whole Texas Army is after him for scouting services! Your leaders like Austin, Travis, Fannin, Bowie and Sam Houston all want Deaf Smith on their side! My spies tell no lies! Deaf

Smith is being groomed as the...eyes of the Texian Army! So I must do away with him before he changes his mind.

G. SMITH
(Walking up to GENERAL COS)

My husband will not tolerate your imaginary animosity.

(PAUSE)

COS
(Delighted)

Mrs. Smith?

G. SMITH

I'm proud to be the wife of a man who loves peace. Rastus shall find it rather flattering when he learns of his value on both sides.

COS
(Motions for SOLDIER to hand money bag to Mrs. Smith)

Tell me where your husband is and the reward is yours. You'll live comfortably for the rest of your life.

G. SMITH
(Tosses bag back to SOLDIER)

Your money cannot buy me. Money will not buy my loyalty. I shall never betray my husband.

COS

Such blind loyalty! You are a fool, so are you all! Deaf Smith is my enemy and he shall be mine alone!

ARNOLD

You are creating a crime before it starts. You're a good-for-nothing coward!

(SOLDIER hits ARNOLD with rifle butt)

COS

Any further insults? You are all a hopeless lot. I'm wasting my time and I shall begin with a complete confiscation of the property of Deaf Smith...El Sordo!

(COS and SOLDIER exit SL)

(Everyone gathers around Arnold who is given water and a head bandage.)

DEAF SMITH
(Enters)

(He is wearing: Weather-beaten sombrero, dingy buckskin, ragged pants and old brogans. He is carrying his Kentucky rifle, powder horn and Bowie knife in seath. He carries a bunch of dead rabbits. Sees poster with dancers.)

\$1,000 for my head! 'Lupe!...(Kisses and hugs her then...)

(Looking at ARNOLD)

What happened to you?

ARNOLD

I challenged General Cos and his intentions.

2ND FEMALE DANCER

They struck him with a rifle for standing by your innocence.

D. SMITH

(He and his wife hug and she is crying)

Why are you crying?

G. SMITH

You will have to leave LaVillita (San Antonio) again!

D. SMITH

Because of that ridiculous poster? Must be a mistake. I've done nothing wrong!

2ND MALE DANCER

General Cos is serious. You must run for your life!

1ST FEMALE DANCER

General Cos wants you dead. Leave now!

D. SMITH

I'm innocent! Why does he want my head?

(Lupe takes him aside while rest of group moves to the opposite side.)

G. SMITH

Yes, you are innocent, but General Cos is serious. (Points to poster) He says the Texian Army will enlist you. He got his information from his spies.

D. SMITH

His spies are wrong! I just told General Austin and General Houston not to count on me. I can't believe this is happening to me!

G. SMITH

What will you do now?

D. SMITH

I'll go to General Cos and tell him the truth.

ARNOLD
(Interrupting)

He will slit your throat on sight!

D. SMITH

(Heads toward SL until he sees something in the distance...looking ahead of audience.)

(1ST MALE DANCER exits SR suddenly)

(Everyone gathers around DEAF SMITH)

(D. SMITH puts his arm around LUPE)

(On-lookers ad lib what they see in "distance.")

Lupe, they are burning our house and farm.

2ND MALE DANCER

They scatter your horses...

1ST FEMALE DANCER

and cattle...

2ND FEMALE DANCER

and take your arms.

1ST MALE DANCER
(Enters, breathing heavy)

General Cos is coming back!

(LUPE moves to hug D. SMITH)

(Dancers exit stage right. ARNOLD, G. SMITH, D. SMITH stay behind)

D. SMITH

I shall slit his throat first!

(Takes down the poster and throws it on the ground.)

G. SMITH

You are adding kindling onto a fire. It is not good. Leave revenge to God.

D. SMITH

If he can turn my land into waste, I can take his life. If General Cos wants war with me, I will punish him. It's him against me alone.

G. SMITH

Please, 'Rastus, run and hide until this war is over.

D. SMITH

No. I will not hide from anyone. My dignity is at stake.

ARNOLD

You cannot fight a one-man war.

G. SMITH

Please flee!

(PAUSE)

D. SMITH

I'm going back to see General Houston.

ARNOLD

If you're joining the Texian Army, I'm going with you!

D. SMITH

If they'll take me...

ARNOLD

They'll celebrate having the best scout in Texas!

D. SMITH

No celebration for me until I kill General Cos.

(Arnold is on a quick look-out while 'LUPE and 'RASTUS have one final moment together)

G. SMITH
(Taking him aside)

Remember, everywhere you go I go with you in spirit. Take with you what I said. Revenge does not belong to you. (They embrace.)

(Offstage gunshots, only ARNOLD and G. SMITH duck. Then both men flee SR and G. SMITH waves goodbye.)

BLACKOUT

(Lone light on ARNOLD as he is in Scene One)

ARNOLD

...it was the beginning of a war within a war. Two men seeking revenge without even knowing each other. Mrs. Smith kept trying to get her husband to desist, but to no avail. However, the bigger war with Mexico kept both men busy for awhile. News of Deaf Smith joining the Texian Army brought great rejoicing at General Houston's camp...

BLACKOUT

SCENE 3

Two soldiers and General Houston stand in front of the middle set which is the state seal. They're standing around a campfire. A bridge is seen protruding from stage right.

Everyone greets each other.

HOUSTON

I am sorry to hear that the Mexican Army destroyed your property. General Santa Anna shall pay for this.

D. SMITH

You take care of him and I'll take care of General Cos.

ARNOLD

My companion thinks of nothing but Cos!

HOUSTON

Well...Mr. Smith, I have good news for you. The Provisional Government of Texas has authorized me to appoint you head of my spy company. It was not easy to convince them of your ability. If not for the support of Austin and Travis, I might have failed. Speaking of Colonel Travis, I have some bad news. (takes out a letter from inside his coat.)

D. SMITH

Is it about the Alamo?

HOUSTON

Yes. (Begins to read letter...)
(Sentimental background sound begins, suggestion, timed version of GREEN LEAVES OF SUMMER.)

"To the People of Texas and all Americans in the World: I am besieged by a thousand or more soldiers under Santa Anna. The enemy has demanded a surrender. I call on you in the name of liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the

American character to come to our aid. If this call is neglected, I am determined to die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country."

"Victory or death..." William Barret Travis, commander of the Alamo Garrison.

(PAUSE)

D. SMITH

Have you sent reinforcements, Sir?

HOUSTON

No. The Alamo has fallen.

ARNOLD

Any survivors? Our families are there too. We have friends in part of the country.

HOUSTON

I need you to go back to Bexar and find out. Godspeed my friends.

(SMITH and ARNOLD exit via bridge)

SCENE 4

Mrs. Dickerson enters from stage left. Dim lights. DEAF SMITH and ARNOLD trek along the road until they meet MRS. DICKERSON who carries a staff. She is exhausted and soiled with dirt and blood. They recognize each other but the greeting is subtle and low-keyed. After a brief hug...

D. SMITH

Is it you, Mrs. Dickerson? General Houston sends us to check on the Alamo.

DICKERSON

No need. They are all dead.

D. SMITH
(Stunned)

I, I, can't believe it. What about my wife and family?

DICKERSON

She has fled safely along with Mr. Arnold's family. Only mothers and children were spared (sobs quietly.) Everyone was killed...everyone was...(fainting a bit).

ARNOLD

Come with us Mrs. Dickerson, we'll take you to General Houston's camp.

D. SMITH

Yes, go with Mr. Arnold. I'll catch up with you shortly.

(ARNOLD and DICKERSON exit stage right)

If all 200 at the garrison are dead, then my revenge is 200 fold!

(Gradual light appears on an isolated 'Lupe who talks to her husband in a dream. DEAF SMITH folds his arms and bows his head amidst the fog in his lonely spot.)

G. SMITH

You are adding kindling onto fire. That is not good. You were taught that revenge belongs only to God. Nothing is gained in life when someone tries to get even. Deep inside you know you'll never be at peace with yourself, even after you perform your evil deed. Please channel your anger and hatred into the nobler things in life. Please, I speak from the heart because I love you. I never stop caring for you.

BLACKOUT

(Lone light on ARNOLD as he narrates)

...Deaf Smith was extremely goal-oriented, that is, to achieve his revenge. Nothing seemed to deter that old soldier of course, he had time for others. When the morale of the Texians was real low, there was Deaf Smith, bringing up everyone's spirits with his unusual encouragement and positive outlook. He told everyone not to give up hope, to keep on trying and trying...

SCENE 5

Two Texas Army soldiers are sitting around the campfire; they welcome DEAF SMITH and ARNOLD who join them.

ARNOLD

Will this war ever end?

SOLDIER NO. 1

I wonder if the enemy is asking the same question.

SOLDIER NO. 2

They are too busy celebrating their victories.

SOLDIER NO. 1

But the time will come when the tide shifts in our favor.

D. SMITH

Let's not give up hope. The war is not over. We must keep trying, never giving up, and improving with time and experience, then the war turns in our favor. A few battles lost does not include the war itself. We are on home territory. There is much at stake for us. I know we can win.

ARNOLD

I believe that too. One decisive victory will give us back our freedom, our land, and our happiness. Beyond that victory is the preservation of those hard fought liberties.

SOLDIER NO. 1

That's why I feel this win in my heart. The desire is to fight for everyone's rights, not just the rights of one person. We are fighting for all of us.

SOLDIER NO. 2

Once we achieve independence, the killing stops.

(GENERAL SAM HOUSTON enters the scene)

(The soldiers stand but HOUSTON makes them sit in original places.)

HOUSTON

Santa Anna and his troops are hiding near Richmond. His generals are flanking him on all sides. We need to know their destination. I want Smith and Arnold to go into their camp.

SOLDIER NO. 2

How can a deaf man learn anything in the lion's den?

HOUSTON

He has never failed me. What he gets done is more important to me.

D. SMITH

Getting into the camp of the enemy is my specialty.
(Getting up.) Mr. Arnold and I will return with the information.

SOLDIER NO. 1

Are you really deaf, Mr. Smith?

D. SMITH

Sometimes I hear, sometimes I don't. I can talk but people think I'm from Russia.

ARNOLD

And he knows Spanish quite well.

D. SMITH

In the midst of gunfire, the sound of whizzing bullets never bothers me, and I can concentrate better on the battle. I always feel the barking dog's bite first.

ARNOLD
(Gets up)

But I get to hear the whizzing bullets and the barking dog.

(D. SMITH and ARNOLD exit stage right quickly to...)

SCENE 6

Two Mexican soldiers are standing by their campfire. ARNOLD puts clothes on SMITH from stage right then hides behind set. In comes DEAF SMITH, wearing a pancho and sombrero and holding a flask. He is acting like a drunkard. First they push him away, then he offers them a swig of his flask.

D. SMITH

My toast to the winning army! (Drinks.) (Toasts again.)
Death to General Houston and his dirty Texians!

(Each soldier takes a quick swig and toasts)

SOLDIER NO. 2

Gracias, Amigo. Where are you from?

D. SMITH

Bexar, LaVillita. I was born in Russia.

SOLDIER NO. 1

Let me see your papers.

(DEAF SMITH hands him his citizenship papers.)

(After reading) You're cleared. Where are you heading?

D. SMITH

First to Bexar then to Mexico City to fetch my wife and children.

SOLDIER NO. 1

Does she have a great shape?

D. SMITH
(Nods)

You two coming to Mexico too?

SOLDIER NO. 2

Wish we could. General Santa Anna wants us near the bayou soon.

D. SMITH

Oh, you mean Vince's bayou.

SOLDIER NO. 2

Si.

D. SMITH

Watch out for those sneaky Texians!

SOLDIER NO. 2

One more victory is all we need and we'll catch up with you in Mexico City.

D. SMITH

(Toasts) Viva La Mexico! (Passes flask around) You don't look like a soldier.

SOLDIER NO. 1

(Showing his saddle bag around his shoulder) At twilight I leave with this..our final military plans.

D. SMITH

Well, here's a toast to a very brave courier! (Passes drink around again.) Tell me, amigos, do you fight for hate?

(Both shake head in the negative)

No? Then why do you fight?

SOLDIER NO. 2

I was drafted. At least I'm allowed to travel. Nothing personal against Texians or Americans. It's a duty that must be done.

SOLDIER NO. 1

I'm in it for adventure. The thrill of being a courier is better than being a sloppy soldier. (Takes a quick swig.)

SOLDIER NO. 2

Sloppy? Soldiers are sloppy? Huh? (Pushes SOLDIER NO. 1)

D. SMITH
(Acting as peace-maker)

Easy, Amigo! Peace!

SOLDIER NO. 1
(Using SMITH as a shield)

I didn't mean you!

SOLDIER NO. 2

We have more courage than sissy couriers! (Tries to take a swing)

D. SMITH
(Hands his flask to SOLDIER NO. 2)

Here! Keep it all! It'll cool you down! (To SOLDIER NO. 1) You had better come with me! Come, quickly! (SMITH picks up the dispatch quickly.)

(D. SMITH and SOLDIER NO. 1 flee SR)

(ARNOLD enters and knocks out SOLDIER NO. 1, puts rope around and exits with him and SMITH)

SOLDIER NO. 2
(Shakes fist and drinks)

Keep him away from me! Couriers are cowards! (Drinks whisky) Hey, who was that Russian man, anyway?

BLACKOUT

(Cross-fade to Scene 6...the bridge on SL)

(Lone light on ARNOLD as in Scene 1)

That's right! He managed to bring back the most important news of the war. The dispatch gave us the break we so desperately needed. Every war had its great breaks, and Deaf Smith gave us ours, and more.

SCENE 7

ARNOLD leads the courier by a rope. Following the courier is D. SMITH, sans pancho and sombrero. As they come off the protruding bridge, D. SMITH gets ARNOLD'S attention before the latter moves SR where two Texians are waiting.

D. SMITH

Wait. Vince's Bridge is the only way in or out, right?

ARNOLD

If we battle here, yes. Come. We must hurry!

(All three men stage cross to SR where soldiers are standing and they call Houston out)

D. SMITH

(Hands dispatch to HOUSTON)

Here's the dispatch we found. Take care of this courier.

(HOUSTON motions to SOLDIERS NO. 1 to take COURIER)

(SOLDIER NO. 1 and COURIER exit SR)

HOUSTON

(To SOLDIER NO. 2) Search this (hands saddlebag.) What information do you have, Mr. Smith?

D. SMITH

General Santa Anna and General Cos are near us now. They are separated from the main army. It's our chance to end this war.

SOLDIER NO. 2
(Showing map he took out)

Look at this map! Santa Anna's plans. Like walking right into our camp.

(All gather around to view map.)

HOUSTON

No question about it. It's our chance to confront them.

D. SMITH

What about Vince's Bridge? Don't you think we need to destroy it.

ARNOLD

Yes, I agree! What do you think, General Houston?

SOLDIER NO. 2

What will that do for us? How do we get out?

D. SMITH

No one gets out. No reinforcements for Santa Anna and no escape for anyone. That goes for General Cos, too!

HOUSTON

A fight to the death? (Smith nods) Very well, so let it be destroyed! Do it now...(instructs SOLDIER to hand them axes)... Go my friends, go! (SMITH and ARNOLD head toward bridge) Alert the army, prepare to fight. (SOLDIER exits SR) At long last we fight. This is the battle!

(Offstage sound of taps and rolling of drums)

(Quick switch to bridge where SMITH and ARNOLD are chopping down the bridge in haste)

(They throw away the remaining parts in the bayou)

(Note: Dismantling of bridge should be shown dramatically)

(Background flute music of "Will You Come to the Bower?") (Song sheet in back of script) (Music to be played twice)

D. SMITH

The battle is beginning! (Pointing to the destroyed bridge)
The bridge is gone!

ARNOLD

No one can escape! It is a fight to the death!

D. SMITH

The time has come! General Cos is mine! I shall find him!

(Red lights dim. Drum get louder. Flag carrier rushes by. SOLDIER NO. 2 fires rifle, cannon sounds and flashes everywhere. Mexicans and Texians are fighting and fencing in silhouette. More battle sounds and flashes and smoke and shouting then...)

(Sudden spot light on....)

D. SMITH
(Swinging saber)

The bridge is destroyed! Fight for your lives!...(lights out)

(Quick light on...)

ARNOLD

(Waving the battle flag)

Remember the Alamo! (Light out...)

(Sudden light on...)

HOUSTON

(Firing pistol)

Fight for Texas! Our Texas! (Light out)

(Battle sounds begin to abate. There is an eerie silence then we see shadows of wounded and weary soldiers, all gathering near center stage)

(As the lights go on from left to right, we see the following: D. SMITH, ARNOLD, TEXIAN SOLDIER NO. 1, MEXICAN SOLDIER NO. 1, COS, MEXICAN SOLDIER NO. 2, TEXIAN SOLDIER NO. 2, and HOUSTON)

(Everyone is battle weary and marked. HOUSTON is bandaged around one leg and SMITH has his stomach bandaged)

SCENE 8

HOUSTON

(To the MEXICAN Soldiers) Santa Anna has surrendered nobly. Y
may take your men and go back to your country in peace. May we
be good neighbors.

COS

(Stepping forth)

Yes, we leave in peace. May it last as long as it can.

HOUSTON

Gracias, General Cos.

(SMITH and ARNOLD look at each other.)

HOUSTON

Mr. Smith, is something wrong?

D. SMITH

I caught him but did not know who he was! He is not dressed like a general.

COS

Are you...El Sordo!

Everyone spreads out a bit as SMITH moves next to COS)

D. SMITH

What took you so long to find me?

COS

And what took you so long to find me! Your desire to destroy me is well-known.

D. SMITH

I had a job to do for Texas first. But you were never off my mind!

COS

The war is over. We are no longer enemies. What do you plan to do now?

D. SMITH

(Looking at HOUSTON) With your permission, General Houston, I wish to cut his throat! (Taking out his Bowie knife)

HOUSTON

The battle is over. No more killing!

D. SMITH

My private battle is not! (Grabs COS)

ARNOLD

(Knocks COS aside, interrupting SMITH)

Killing him won't do any good. Put the knife away. Think of what your wife said. Think about her. Think about life.

(All freeze at this point as SMITH looks toward stage right where his wife, 'LUPE appears)

G. SMITH

'Rastus! What good will revenge do? Be at peace with yourself. Hate and anger are not necessary. Spare Cos and you spare yourself. Come home in peace. (Exits SR)

HOUSTON

Mr. Smith, what is wrong? Are you all right?

D. SMITH

(Putting knife in sheath)

The war is over. I no longer feel the urge to kill you, General Cos. You may live. Now go!

(All four soldiers, plus COS, exit SL)

ARNOLD

(To SMITH)

You are wiser my friend.

HOUSTON

Yes. By the way, Mr. Smith, would you like to form a Ranger group and protect the border of freed Texas? In return, you get free food, arms and horses. Will you do it?

D. SMITH

As long as Texas needs me, I'm willing to be of service...just make sure I get my army pension (smiles and shakes with HOUSTON who smiles).

(HOUSTON exits SL)

ARNOLD

(Pointing to the stomach bandage) You are still bleeding?

D. SMITH

It is nothing. But I no longer feel this pain of revenge. It was never good for my soul.

(Stage lights begin to dim and SMITH fades in the background)

ARNOLD

Better start taking good care of yourself. When you return from border patrolling, let's sit by the fire and talk about our old fighting days. (Moves to DR slowly and into the spot)

SCENE 9

ARNOLD looks directly at audience as he finishes his speech before the Texas Republic Congressional meeting.

ARNOLD

That was a year ago and he never returned to share our war memories by the fire. The stomach wound killed him. Mrs. Smith and I went to Richmond but could not find his grave...an unmarked grave is an unforgivable disgrace. (Pause) My good brothers, Deaf Smith sought revenge and changed his mind. What does that tell you? Is he not worth the pension promised? Thank you.

(Puts hat on and steps out of spot as HOUSTON enters...)

HOUSTON

(Pounding the gavel)

All in favor of giving the family of Deaf Smith land, pension, and honor immediately, please raise your right hand! The motion carries. Our meeting now adjourns.

(Shakes hands with ARNOLD)

BLACKOUT

END OF THE PLAY