

**“Thirsty for the Word...or Lost in the Desert of Sin”**  
**By Helen Jameson**

- Genre:** Comedy
- Biblical Ref.:** Isaiah 30:21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”  
Psalm 63:1 Oh, God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you. My soul thirsts for you; my body longs for you in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
- Topics:** Sin, Forgiveness, Seeking, Refreshment, the Word
- Characters:** Stanley, a Foreign Legion officer  
Oliver, a Foreign Legion soldier  
The Wanderer, a weary, bedraggled stranger driven by thirst for the Word of God who stumbles upon an oasis outpost in the Desert of Sin.
- Set:** 1 camel cut-out, freestanding  
1 Palm Tree  
2 Small benches and a small table in between  
Rocks around the tree base
- Props:** Binoculars  
Handkerchief  
Canteen  
Mailbag with a Bible inside (carried by Oliver)  
Large fly swatter  
Water pail for the camel  
Tea Pot and 2 cups/saucers  
Deck of cards  
Clipboard  
Bandage
- Costumes:** **Stanley:** Foreign Legion hat, khaki shorts and shirt, epaulets on shoulders, black belt, knee high white socks, black shoes or laced boots  
**Oliver:** Foreign Legion hat, khaki shorts and shirt, black strapping crisscrossing the chest, knee high white socks, black shoes or laced boots. His right hand is bandaged. Every time he salutes, his hand hurts.  
**The Wanderer:** Ragged shorts and shirt, dusty and dirty, barefoot
- Sound:** Music/“Phaedra Pharonica”
- Setting:** An oasis outpost in the Desert of Sin. The camel and palm tree are in the foreground. A small table with two stools are DSC. A tea pot and 2 cups/saucers are on the table. A large flyswatter is hung on the palm tree.
- Lights:** Houselights dim as (SOUND) music plays. (LIGHT) a spot shines on the stage scene. As the music plays, the two Foreign Legion Soldiers march through the aisles to the stage. Stanley leads. He carries the binoculars and a clipboard. Oliver follows. He carries a Bible, a deck of playing cards, and a water pail. They execute sharp turns as they march.
- Stanley:** *(Counting.)* March...march...one...two...three...four...one...two...three ....four....  
*(SOUND: Music fades.)* Company halt. *(Oliver screeches to a halt behind him bumping Stanley. Stanley glares at him.)*
- Oliver:** Sorry, sir.

**Stanley:** Attention, Private Oliver....and maintain your distance, please.

**Oliver:** *(Saluting and almost dropping the bucket.)* Ouch! Yes, sir.

**Stanley:** We shall now check the supply list. *(Looking over the clipboard/clearing his throat.)* Canteen?

**Oliver:** *(Holds up the canteen.)* Check, sir!

**Stanley:** Binoculars?

**Oliver:** Check!

**Stanley:** *(Gruffly.)* And where are they?

**Oliver:** Around your neck, Sir!

**Stanley:** *(Flustered.)* Ahh hum....Very good! Playing cards for the never ending game of Gin Rummy?

**Oliver:** Right-O, Sir! I've got the cards.

**Stanley:** Complete deck?

**Oliver:** All cards accounted for , Sir!

**Stanley:** Very good, old chap..... *(Looking at the clipboard again.)* Hmmm....one last item....the *(spelling it)* B-I-B-L-E.

**Oliver:** *(Patting the mailbag.)* One B-I-B-L-E. *(Proudly.)* Ready to read, sir! *(Saluting.)* Ouch.

**Stanley:** Jolly good! Keep it close to you. We shall read a chapter or two... after tea, of course. This blasted Desert of Sin is so ....so....so....

**Oliver:** Demoralizing, sir?

**Stanley:** Exactly, Private Oliver. Now proceed with your usual duties....keep on schedule! It's almost teatime.... check for creepy-crawlies *(They both shiver.)* ...tarantula, asp, and the occasional desert fly. Please use the flyswatter and not your hand.

**Oliver:** *(Saluting.)* Ouch! Yes, sir! *(He retrieves the flyswatter as Stanley continues to speak. He pops here and there as if killing bugs.)*

**Stanley:** Meanwhile I shall survey the sand dunes with my trusty binoculars....keeping a keen eye out for trouble. *(He surveys the terrain, and then wipes his brow with a handkerchief.)* Blast this infernal heat. It seems eternal.

**Oliver:** *(Continuing to swat.)* It is the Desert of Sin, sir. No breeze for the weary...no shade for the desperate. Our little oasis is the only cool spot for miles. Certainly attracts the bugs and snakes.

**Stanley:** *(Shivering/looking through the binoculars once more.)* Hmmmm....nothing happening in the sand dunes.

**Oliver:** *(Hanging up the flyswatter.)* The campsite is secure.....I walloped all the creepy-crawlies.

**Stanley:** Very good. Did you check the camel?

**Oliver:** No, sir. I'll hop to it. *(Stanley sits and sips his tea cup as Oliver literally hops to the camel.)* Sir?

**Stanley:** I must say, Private Oliver, the tea is most excellent. A good brew.

**Oliver:** Thank you, sir....but the camel....

**Stanley:** What about the camel, old chap?

**Oliver:** The camel is....is frozen.

**Stanley:** Frozen? In the desert? Impossible. Man, get your facts straight.

**Oliver:** Sir, he is as stiff as a board.

**Stanley:** Good grief! *(Sits his tea cup down/Crosses to examine the camel.)* You're quite right. *(Taking off his hat and bowing his head.)* The Desert of Sin has claimed another victim.

**Oliver:** *(Taking off his hat.)* Oh, no....Walter was such a good camel. Except he did spit ever once in a while. *(Sniffing loudly.)* My heart fairly skips a beat thinking the poor beast is gone. *(Wailing.)*

**Stanley:** Control yourself, Private Oliver. Walter is not dead. A good nosebag of water should revive him. *(He returns to his teacup.)*

**Oliver:** Yes, sir! *(Getting a bucket and holding it up to the camel's face.)* There you go....old Walter.....drink it dry.

**Stanley:** *(Returning to his seat and tea.)* Hurry up there! Your tea is getting cold.

**Oliver:** Yes, sir! Right-O! *(Putting the bucket down/sitting on a stool. They toast with the tea and slurp loudly. Meanwhile the Wanderer enters and collapses at the edge of the stage moaning.)*

**Wanderer:** WWWWWWW

**Oliver:** Did you hear something, sir?

**Stanley:** No, old chap... just you slurping. *(Shuffling the cards.)* How about that game of Gin Rummy?

**Wanderer:** WWWWWWWWWW..

**Oliver:** Sir...I most definitely heard something. It sounded like a.....

**Wanderer:** WWWWWWWWWWWW

**Oliver:** It sounded just like that.

**Wanderer:** *(Beating the floor to get their attention.)* WWWWWWW!!!!

**Stanley:** *(Jumping up.)* Good heavens! It's a lost soul! *(They both run to him and help him sit on a stool.)* Poor fellow! He must have been adrift in the Desert of Sin for days.

**Oliver:** *(Holding his nose.)* More like years, sir. Stinky, he is.

**Wanderer:** WWW...WWWWWW...WWWWWW!!!

**Stanley:** *(Holding his nose also.)* He is rather ripe, but he appears to be saying something. *(To the Wanderer)* WWWWW?????

**Wanderer:** WWW...WWWWWW

**Stanley:** WWWWWW? What could it be?

**Oliver:** *(Thinking.)* WWWWW? Water, sir? Do you think he wants a wee drop of water?

**Stanley:** Right-O, Private. That's using your bean. Hand him the canteen.

*(Oliver hands the canteen to the Wanderer who moans and throws it away.)*

**Oliver:** That's not very nice! Where's your manners? I don't think he wants water, sir.

**Stanley:** Possibly a spot of tea? *(Loudly in the Wanderer's ear.)* WOULD YOU LIKE A SPOT OF TEA?

**Wanderer:** *(Shaking his head strongly.)* WWWWWWWWWWWW!!!!

**Oliver:** He don't want no tea for sure. He is a puzzle...that's what he is.

**Stanley:** Yes...a puzzle, Private. A wanderer wandering wantonly through the wasteland wanting a "WWWWWW."

*(The Wanderer and Oliver look at each other.)*

**Oliver/ Wanderer:** *(Together.)* WWWWWWWW?

**Stanley:** By Jove, I think I've got it! Wwww...Walter! After trudging across the desert sand, the old boy needs a ride. I believe he wants our camel.

**Wanderer:** *(Strongly shaking his head/pointing to the Bible.)* WWWWWWWWWW! WWWWWWWW!

**Oliver:** Not Walter, Sir! I've grown attached to the dromedary.

**Stanley:** And so have I. *(To the Wanderer.)* Sir, you can not have our camel!

**Wanderer:** *(Rolling his eyes in disgust/looking right and left.)* WWWWWWW!  
WWWWWWWWWW! WWWWWWWWW! *(Holding up one finger to indicate a word.)*

**Oliver:** What's he doing?

*(The following dialogue is rapid fire as Oliver and Stanley name a series of objects as if playing charades.)*

**Stanley:** I believe he wants to play charades. *(Oliver and Stanley look at each other.)*

**Together:** Jolly good....we love games!

*(The Wanderer pulls on his own ear.)*

**Stanley:** Sounds like? Wwwwwww.

**Oliver:** Wwww? That's no clue. We knew that already.

*(The Wanderer holds one finger against his arm to indicate one syllable.)*

**Oliver:** It's got one syllable.

**Stanley:** And it starts with "WWWW"

**Oliver:** Watermelon? I like watermelon...Very refreshing! Wish I had a slice right now.

*(The Wanderer shakes his head no.)*

**Stanley:** He says it's not watermelon...besides, watermelon has four syllables.

**Oliver:** Sorry, sir! *(Salutes.)* Ouch.

*(The Wanderer puts his hands together as if praying and then unfolds them flat—the sign for book. He does this several times.)*

**Stanley:** What's he doing?

**Oliver:** A butterfly? There ain't no butterflies in the desert. The sun's made him daffy.

*(The Wanderer moans loudly and bangs his head on the table.)*

**Stanley:** Don't despair, old man.....give us another clue.

*(The Wanderer holds up one finger.)*

**Oliver:** One?

*(The Wanderer pinches his thumb and forefinger together to indicate a short word.)*

**Stanley:** Short word?

*(Wanderer taps his nose and points to Stanley to indicate he has guessed correctly.)*

**Stanley:** *(Excitedly.)* One short word.

*(The Wanderer wipes his forehead to show they are getting hot. He pinches his thumb and forefinger together again.)*

**Oliver:** He wants us to make it smaller.

**Stanley:** One short word....make it smaller.  
*(The Wanderer pinches his thumb and forefinger again.)*  
Short Word?  
*(The Wanderer pinches his thumb and forefinger again.)*  
*(Stumped.)* Word?

**Oliver:** Word? What's that mean?

**Stanley:** WWww.....word.

*(The Wanderer makes the sign for book again.)*

**Stanley:** Book....Word? Book...word. By Jove, I think I've got it. We have only one book around this oasis. Hand me that Bible, Private Oliver. *(Oliver takes it out of his mailbag.)* Is this what you want, old man?

*(The Wanderer grabs the Bible and pages through it until he finds a verse. He sighs/smiles and hands it to Stanley.)*

**Oliver:** Read it, Sir! Let's solve this mystery.

**Stanley:** "Oh, God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you. My soul thirsts for you; my body longs for you in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

*(The Wanderer applauds wildly, grabs a tea cup, and slurps down a cup of tea.)*

**Oliver:** That's something, sir. You figured it out. The old boy just needed the Word of God.

**Stanley:** As we all do when we travel in the Desert of Sin. Come along, Private. Grab an arm. *(They each hold up the Wanderer. They both make faces as they smell the Wanderer.)* Let's take him down to the oasis and give him a good dip. Some healing fresh water is needed .

*(They exit as SOUND: Music plays.)*

**THE END**