

BAYVIEW SCHOOL, PORT HOPE SIMPSON

presents

JIM'S TRAP BERTH

CAST:

Magistrate - Kirk McNeill  
Skipper Jack - Dino Penney  
Uncle Ted Simpson - Darnell Sampson  
Jim Massey - Albert Russell  
Aunt Sally Simpson - Colleen Russell  
Liz Massey - Veronica Lawless

INTRODUCTION:

A trap berth is stolen and a magistrate is called in to solve the case.

SCENE I

(Setting - Uncle Ted's stagehead.)

UNCLE TED: Well, Jack, how's the fish today?

SKIPPER JACK: Not too plentiful, only a half a barrel.

UNCLE TED: Well, that's not too good.

SKIPPER JACK: No boy. Me trap was all gone afloat.

UNCLE TED: I was out and had a dinner haul and there wasn't too much tide on mine then.

SKIPPER JACK: What? You wasn't out to haul this evening?

UNCLE TED: No. When I was out dinner time, it didn't seem like much fish on the go, so I stayed in and mend a bit of twine.

(Enter Jim talking to Uncle Ted.)

JIM (ANGRY): Do you know who took my berth out back Fish Rock?

SKIPPER JACK: No, I taught you had you trap out there.

JIM: No. There was an iceberg comin' up along. So, I goes and takes it all up. While I was waitin' for the iceberg to pass up along, I came in to get something to eat.

SKIPPER JACK: What? You never left nothing there to hold your berth?

JIM: Well, no. I only came in to get something to eat while I was waiting for the iceberg to pass up along, but when I got out again, the iceberg was gone and so was my berth.

SKIPPER JACK: Boy, that's a bad loss.

JIM: Yes, sir. That was the best berth I had. I'd like to get my hands on the feller who took my berth!

UNCLE TED: Well, it's the best berth I got now and there's not much you can do about it!

JIM (SURPRISED): What? You took my berth?

UNCLE TED: Yes! I was going out along with me trap and seein' that your trap was up, I put mine there.

SKIPPER JACK (TO UNCLE TED): Boy, I taught you was a better man than that, to go and take poor Jim's best trap berth.

UNCLE TED: Well, he didn't have his berth marked and I been wanting that berth for some time now.

JIM: Sure - yee fellows got all the best berths around here now.

UNCLE TED: Yeah - but we're supposed to have all the best berths 'cause we've lived here all our lives!

JIM: Sure - Just because we're "Newfies" is no reason to treat us like dirt!

UNCLE TED: Yeah - Newfies come down here - should only expect to get second-hand berths!

JIM: First hand or second hand - I'm having my berth back when the Magistrate comes!

## SCENE II

(Setting - In the courtroom which is located in the back of the General Store.)

MAGISTRATE: Court comes to an order to try the case of Jim Massey versus Uncle Ted Simpson. Seein' the price of fish is what it is, we'll call this a poor man's case and no court charges will be laid. Uncle Ted Simpson, you're charged with stealing the trap berth of Jim Massey. What do you plea? Guilty or not guilty?

UNCLE TED (JUMPS UP): Sir...

MAGISTRATE: Order! You must address me as "Your Honor" and you must take the witness stand before you speak.

UNCLE TED: Well, Your Honor, I didn't steal Jim's berth. I just got my trap where his used to be.

JIM: Your Honor, if his trap is where mine used to be, then he must have stole my berth!

MAGISTRATE: Order in the court! Uncle Ted, I would like to hear your side of the story first.

UNCLE TED: Yes, sir - I mean - Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but  
The whole truth?

UNCLE TED: I do, your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: You may begin, Uncle Ted.

UNCLE TED: Your Honor, it was about a month ago and I was going out around  
Fish Rock with my trap aboard. I seen that Jim had his trap  
took up and nothing there to hold his berth, so, I put mine  
there.

JIM (JUMPS UP): That's not true!

MAGISTRATE: Order! You must wait 'till Uncle Ted is finished. You will  
get your turn.

JIM (SITTING DOWN): O.K., Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: Uncle Ted, you may continue.

UNCLE TED: Well, Your Honor, it's one of the best berths around here and  
I think it should have been mine in the first place, 'cause  
I've lived here all my life.

MAGISTRATE: Is that the whole story?

UNCLE TED: Yes, Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: Uncle Ted, you may step down now. (Uncle Ted moves off the  
stand and takes his seat.) We now call Jim Massey to the stand.  
(He takes the stand.) Do you swear to tell the truth, the  
whole truth and nothing but the truth?

JIM: I do.

MAGISTRATE: Jim Massey, you may begin to tell your side of the story now.

JIM: Your Honor, it happened like this. It was one morning when I went  
out to haul me trap, and I seen an iceberg comin' up along. So, I  
goes and takes it all up. While I was waitin' for the iceberg to  
pass up along, I went in to get a bite to eat. When I came out, Uncle  
Ted had his trap there and, Your Honor, if that's not stealin', I  
don't know what is! (Sitting down.)

MAGISTRATE: Is that all you have to say?

JIM: Yes, Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: You may step down. Does anyone else want to add anything?

AUNT SALLY: Yes, Your Honor. I would like to say a few words.

MAGISTRATE: O.K., Sally, you may begin.

AUNT SALLY: Your Honor, if Ted can't keep that berth, we're not going to have enough fish to feed our eight children through the winter.  
(Sitting down.)

LIZ: Your Honor, I would like to say something to that.

MAGISTRATE: O.K., Liz, you may speak.

LIZ: If Jim can't get that berth back, we're going to have to do without alot of things this winter. And we also got five children to feed.

MAGISTRATE: Is that all yea women got to say?

AUNT SALLY AND LIZ: Yes, Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: Well, that's going to be tough. Maybe if the two of you owned the berth...

UNCLE TED: I don't get what you mean.

MAGISTRATE: Well, Uncle Ted, it's like the old saying goes.."You can kill two birds with the one stone".

JIM: Your Honor, how could you kill two birds with the one stone?

MAGISTRATE: Oh - um - uh - well - never mind that. What I mean is you should share the berth.

JIM: Well, Your Honor, how can you share a berth? You can't put two traps in the one berth.

MAGISTRATE: No, I mean you would have the berth for half the summer and Uncle Ted will have it for the rest of the summer.

JIM: Well, I suppose that'll be alright.

MAGISTRATE: Uncle Ted, is you satisfied with this decision?

UNCLE TED: Your Honor, I think that's fair but who gets the berth for the first half of the summer?

MAGISTRATE: Let's flip a coin.

AUNT SALLY: Your Honor, is that like gambling?

MAGISTRATE: No, ma'am. It's just a way of making an honest decision.

AUNT SALLY: Well, Your Honor, I guess that'll be alright.

MAGISTRATE (TAKING A COIN OUT OF HIS POCKET): Which side do you want, Uncle Ted?

UNCLE TED: What side? I want the side with the Queen's head on it.

MAGISTRATE: O.K., Jim, you gets the other side. Will you toss the coin Skipper Jack?

SKIPPER JACK: Yes, Your Honor.

(Magistrate passes the coin to Skipper Jack and he tosses it into the air and lets it fall to the ground.)

SKIPPER JACK: Your Honor, the side with the Queen's head on it is sticking up.

MAGISTRATE: O.K., Uncle Ted, you gets the berth for the first half of next summer.

UNCLE TED: That would be fine, Your Honor.

MAGISTRATE: Is anyone here unsatisfied with this decision? (No one speaks.) Well, this case is now solved and so court work is now over. Good luck with the fish next summer boys.

(They get up to leave and Uncle Ted and Jim shake hands.)

### SCENE III

(Setting - Uncle Ted's house. Uncle Ted is sitting on a chair by the table, smoking his pipe and drinking homebrew. Enter Jim.)

UNCLE TED: Speak of the devil...when did you sheft down?

JIM: Not too long ago. We came down on the mail boat.

UNCLE TED: Have a good winter?

JIM: Pretty good, but it was too long with nothing to do. How was yours?

UNCLE TED: Well, boy, I didn't have too bad a winter. Alot of snow but that is expected when you live down here on the Labrador.

JIM: Yes, sir, I suppose you had it awful cold, too.

UNCLE TED: Yes, boy, it was. But I had lots of this around (tapping the homebrew can) to keep me warm.

(Enter Skipper Jack)

SKIPPER JACK: Jim, when did you come down?

JIM: Not too long ago. I came on over here to have a chat with Uncle Ted.

UNCLE TED: Well, boys, never mind that. Let's have a drink of homebrew.

JIM: That stuff is only good when you got nothing else to drink. (He takes out a bottle of whiskey from his coat.) Let's have a real celebration.

UNCLE TED: Well, look at that. Sal...bring us in three glasses!

(Enter Sally..)

UNCLE TED: Where's the glasses?

AUNT SALLY: What do you want them for?

UNCLE TED: Jim brought a bottle of whiskey down from Newfoundland.

AUNT SALLY: Well, go and get 'em yourself.

UNCLE TED (GETTING UP): That's women fer yea.

AUNT SALLY: Jim, where's Liz to?

JIM: She and kids is unpacking.

AUNT SALLY: Oh, I see. Tell her to come over the once.

JIM: Yeas, I'll let her know.

(Enter Ted with three glasses. He puts them on the table. Jim gets up and pours the whiskey into the glasses and hands them to the men.)

SKIPPER JACK: Well, boys, let's drink to the start of another summer.

UNCLE TED AND JIM: Yes, we'll drink to that.

(They raise their glasses and then drink. Enter Liz.)

LIZ: Well, this is where you're to. Do you know we got work to do? I want you home right now.

JIM: See yea 'round, boys. (Walks out.)

SKIPPER JACK AND UNCLE TED: See yea, Jim.

SKIPPER JACK: Ted, you really goin' to let Jim have that berth for the last part of the summer?

UNCLE TED: Yes, boy, ain't that what the Magistrate said? Besides, I never get any fish there late in the summer, and Jim is too darn stupid to know it!

SKIPPER JACK: I knew you wouldn't give up as easy as that.

(Skipper Jack pours another glass of Jim's whiskey for the both of them.)

UNCLE TED: Yes, boy, we can't let them fellers from Newfoundland come down here and take over because we'd end up like them fellers up in St. John's - flat on our backside and starvin' to death!

SKIPPER JACK: That's right!

(Both raise their glasses and drink it down.)

THE END