

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT  
THIS PLAY IS FULLY PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT**

All plays, books, music and other materials published by Heartland Plays, Inc. are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries which the United States has reciprocal relations including, but not limited to all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, The Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention. All rights to the plays and materials on our website are strictly reserved including, and without limitation, professional and amateur performance rights; motion pictures; public reading; radio and television broadcasting; audio and video recording and reproduction of any type known or yet to be invented; information storage and retrieval systems of any type known or yet to be invented; and the rights of translation into any and all languages. No individual or organization whether amateur or stock may perform this or any play published by Heartland Plays, Inc. without first obtaining advance permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. and paying the appropriate fees including Royalties and Single-Use Copyright fees. Heartland Plays, Inc. collects royalties on behalf of the Playwrights whose plays it publishes. Unauthorized copying, transcribing or reproduction of this or any play or excerpt, or storage or transmittal in any form and by any means whether known or yet to be invented, is strictly forbidden except as provided by Agreement with Heartland Plays, Inc. Any unauthorized use is a violation of copyright laws and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER**

1. DO take advantage of the free online perusal of our plays to help you make the best choice for your particular needs or production.
2. DO enjoy the convenience of our online purchase application for performance rights and single-use copyright.
3. DO understand that this play and all plays and materials on our website are controlled by Heartland Plays, Inc. and fully protected by copyright.
4. DO NOT attempt in any way to copy, transcribe or reproduce this play by any means or perform this play or use any play or material from our website without first receiving permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. Any attempt to use this or any other work without first obtaining permission is a violation of copyright and punishable by law.
5. DO NOT rob this Author or any of the Authors we represent of their right to be paid for the use of their property. It is a crime and it is wrong!

**Product Code Y560-A**

**The Absolutely True  
Story of Tom Sawyer  
As Told by Becky Thatcher**  
**by**  
**Everett Robert**

**Based on "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" by Mark Twain**

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
REPRODUCTION WITHOUT SPECIFIC WRITTEN PERMISSION PROHIBITED**

**Performance Rights Available Exclusively through  
Heartland Plays, Inc. at [heartlandplays.com](http://heartlandplays.com)  
[playsnow@heartlandplays.com](mailto:playsnow@heartlandplays.com)  
customer service: 406-431-7680**

**Copyright © 2010 by Everett Robert**

**The Absolutely True Story of Tom Sawyer**  
**As Told by Becky Thatcher**  
by Everett Robert

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

<u>Mark Twain:</u>	<i>Narrator, spinner of stories and tall tales, a completely unreliable source of information.</i>
<u>Mrs. Clemens:</u>	<i>Mark Twain's wife, the real narrator.</i>
<u>Tom Sawyer:</u>	<i>12 going on 24 who thinks he is smarter than everybody else. His plans always backfire.</i>
<u>Huck Finn:</u>	<i>Tom's older friend. Not as smart, but also, not as dumb.</i>
<u>Becky Thatcher:</u>	<i>One smart girl, maybe too smart for her own good.</i>
<u>Amy Lawrence:</u>	<i>Becky's best friend, looking for revenge on Tom.</i>
<u>Mary Sawyer:</u>	<i>Tom's cousin and the third of the three girl gang.</i>
<u>Syd Sawyer:</u>	<i>Tom's little sister. Always tattling, and always tagging along.</i>
<u>Aunt Polly:</u>	<i>Tom and Syd's Aunt.</i>
<u>Bob:</u>	<i>The stage manager.</i>

**SCENE**

*In front of Aunt Polly's house, St. Petersburg, MO*

**TIME**

*1830s*

ACT I

Scene 1

*The curtain opens to reveal the set: a long white picket fence with a gate in the middle, a charming two-story house behind it on the SL side. On a windowsill sits two pies covered by a terry cloth. A clothes line stretches across the stage, and an outhouse with a hole in the roof, also SL. There is a sign on the outhouse that reads "Out of Order" in blocky, childlike letters. In front of the fence are lined up several buckets, a couple of paint brushes, and an old tree stump, SR. TOM and AMY are already on the stage, shrouded in shadow. Tom leans in and kisses Amy on the cheek, then runs off SL into the house. Amy follows, stands outside the porch, waits a beat, then throws her hands up in disgust and storms off SL. A stagehand, BOB, enters SR with a chair, which he places SR. As Bob is exiting, MARK TWAIN enters SL. This is how we all imagine Twain; the white suit, the shock of white hair, the unlit cigar in his fingers. He acknowledges Bob with a nod of the head and then stops CS. Twain speaks with a very, almost exaggerated, Southern accent. The backstage is dimly lit, while Twain is spotlighted.*

MARK TWAIN

(Looking over to the house, clucking his tongue a little)

Oh that Tom

(Turns his attention to the audience)

Good [morning, afternoon, evening] ladies and gentleman, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Mark Twain and it is my pleasure to be here [name of theater and/or town]. As you can see, the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated.

(Laughs at his own joke)

I was born in 1835 in the riverside town of Florida, Missouri. Yes, that is correct the same state the produced Rush Limbaugh also produced me.

MRS. CLEMENS

(OS)

So the whole state has a reputation of producing liars, braggers, and blowhards.

*MRS. CLEMENS enters SL as she talks and stands staring at Twain for a beat. As she enters, she is spotlighted as well. Twain is in shock and is stumbling to find the words to say.*

(CONTINUED)

MARK TWAIN

(Stage whisper to Mrs. Clemens)

What are you doing here?

(To the audience)

Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for the interruption. This,

(A beat and a look at Mrs. Clemens)

YOUNG lady obviously has issues with me, we'll take care of it momentarily. Robert, could you please escort my,

(Another beat)

fan out of the building?

*Bob enters SR almost exasperated with having to do this. He takes Mrs. Clemens's arm and begins to escort her off the stage, but before he can even take two steps forward, she has slapped his hand away. Hands on her hips, she glares at Twain.*

MRS. CLEMENS

Don't you dare try to escort me off the stage, Bob. And you, this is how you treat your WIFE?

(Beat if the audience reacts)

Yes ladies and gentlemen I am his wife and let me tell you something, this man is a fraud! Yes, that's right, a fraud. His name isn't even Mark Twain, it's Samuel Clemens.

*Twain is outraged and is motioning furiously with his arms and cigar for Bob to get her off the stage. This isn't going at all like he expected.*

MARK TWAIN

I say, I say, I say, this is an outrage. I will not stand up here and be called a liar, a fraud, and made to look like a fool.

MRS. CLEMENS

You do a fine job of that without out my help. Besides, you know it's all true. Now what story were you about to tell these fine people?

MARK TWAIN

I was going to tell them stories of young love, of adventure, of pirates and Indians. Tales set on the banks of the mighty Mississippi. In short, my most famous story, that of Tom Sawyer.

MRS. CLEMENS

(Over Twain)

You mean your biggest lies.

(CONTINUED)

*There is a moment where these two just stop and stare at each other. Twain then turns his head a little in a huff.*

MARK TWAIN

Every word I wrote is 100 percent, honest to God truth.

MRS. CLEMENS

Oh poppycock!

MARK TWAIN

Okay, fine, I MIGHT have exaggerated a FEW things.

MRS. CLEMENS

Like all of it?

*(Turning to the audience)*

I've been hearing him tell this same story for years and I've finally decided that it's time to set the record straight. Most of what you know about Tom Sawyer, like MARK over there, is a lie. Take for example the most famous story, the story of how Tom tricked all those kids to white wash the fence.

*Twain is suddenly a little worried that his secret might actually be exposed.*

MARK TWAIN

Now wait a minute, darling, that story really did happen.

*Mrs. Clemens shoots Mark a look, you know the look, the look that says "sit down and shut up".*

MRS. CLEMENS

Bob, could you kindly bring me a chair to sit in? Thank you.

*As Mrs. Clemens continues to talk, Bob brings out another chair and places it opposite Mark's.*

MRS. CLEMENS

Now then, all the kids in town did in fact help paint Aunt Polly's fence, but it wasn't because TOM got them to.

## Scene 2

*The spotlights go out as Mrs. Clemens sits down.*

*The stage lights fade up as AUNT POLLY sticks her head out the second story window. Aunt Polly is an older woman, her hair gray and in a bun and she wears almost a permanent scowl. Her dress is a simple frontier style dress. Nothing*

(CONTINUED)

*flashy or special here but it is well made and is clean, which is very important to Aunt Polly.*

AUNT POLLY

Tom! Yoo-hoo Tom, where are you? Tom! Oh bother, where has that boy gotten off to now?

*Aunt Polly continues to look around from her second story perch as TOM and HUCK try to sneak in right under Aunt Polly's nose. Both boys are dressed in dirty denim overalls, Huck's is missing one strap. Both have on big straw hats and carrying fishing poles. Huck has a corn cob pipe between his teeth. Huck sees Aunt Polly looking for them and reaches out to tap Tom on the shoulder, but all he manages to do is knock Tom off balance. Tom falls forward right into the buckets, which cause a great clatter, which in turn causes Aunt Polly to look right at the boys.*

AUNT POLLY

You two, stop what you're doing and wait right there. I'll be down in two shakes of a lamb's tail.

*Aunt Polly disappears and Tom and Huck sit down, backs against the fence.*

TOM SAWYER

What did you do that for Huck?

HUCK FINN

Well, I was just trying to get yer attention Tom.

TOM SAWYER

Well, what did you need?

HUCK FINN

Well, I was going to tell you that Aunt Polly was looking for you.

*Tom rolls his eyes dramatically.*

TOM SAWYER

Listen Huck, when Aunt Polly gets here, you let me do all the talking, okay?

HUCK FINN

Why's that Tom?

TOM SAWYER

Because she LOVES me Huck and I can talk her out of anything.

HUCK FINN  
Okay Tom.

*Aunt Polly enters from SL and looks down at the two boys.*

AUNT POLLY  
Now just what were you boys up to?

TOM SAWYER  
Oh nothing Aunt Polly, you know...

*As Tom struggles to come up with an excuse, Aunt Polly just keeps going. She doesn't have time for any excuses.*

AUNT POLLY  
I know exactly what you were doing, you were going to go and play hooky weren't you? Don't lie to me, I can always tell when you're lying.

*Aunt Polly keeps going, she's on a roll and there is no stopping her.*

AUNT POLLY  
(Continued)  
You know we have the Sunday School picnic here in just two days and that I need my fence white washed. So the two of you can just sit right down and start painting.

*Aunt Polly, seeing Huck getting ready to interrupt, anticipates his question.*

AUNT POLLY  
(Continued)  
Yes, you too Huckleberry Finn. Two hands get the work done, four hands get it done faster.

*Aunt Polly then exits SL as Tom and Huck each pick up a pail and brush. They begin to paint, both very poorly. Huck continues to paint the same spot over and over and over again. Tom is painting hurriedly and sloppily. Pretty soon he gets distracted and starts sword fighting an imaginary opponent with his paint brush. Huck looks up.*

HUCK FINN  
I don't like this Tom, I thought we was going to have fun today.

*Tom pauses mid parry; looks at Huck, sighs and plops down next to him.*

TOM SAWYER  
I know.

*They both sigh, then look over as BECKY, MARY, and SYD enter. All three are pretty, young girls. Syd looks suspiciously like Tom, as she should, she is his little sister.*

TOM SAWYER  
Hey, I got an idea. What if we got some other kids to do this for us?

HUCK FINN  
How are you going to do that Tom?

TOM SAWYER  
We'll start painting and tell them how much fun it is. Then they'll want to paint too.

HUCK FINN  
I don't know Tom. I don't think that will work.

TOM SAWYER  
Sure it will, trust me and start painting. Hey, Hey, Becky, Mary, Syd come here.

*Tom motions the girls over while Huck watches.*

BECKY THATCHER  
What do you want Tom?

SYD SAWYER  
Yeah Tom, what do you want?

TOM SAWYER  
Say would you two like to have some REAL fun?

BECKY THATCHER  
(Suspicious)  
What kind of fun?

MARY SAWYER  
Yeah, what kind of fun?

TOM SAWYER  
(In full-on salesman mode)  
What would you say if I told you, you could paint this here fence? Why me and Hucky here are having a great time. Aren't we Huck?

HUCK FINN  
No, I hate white washing!

*The girls laugh. Tom smacks Huck in the back of the head and pulls him to the side.*

TOM SAWYER

(Stage whisper)

Huck, you're supposed to tell them what a great time you're having.

HUCK FINN

(To Tom)

Oh! Okay Tom.

(Turning to the girls)

Oh I shure love white washing. It's so much fun to sit in the hot sun and sweat all day while working yourself to death.

BECKY THATCHER

(Sarcastically)

Yeah that sounds like it's a WHOLE lot of fun.

SYD SAWYER

How is that fun?

MARY SAWYER

(To Syd)

It's not fun Syd. I hate painting, my mom made me do that last week.

HUCK FINN

Oh no! I'm sorry Mary, that must have been hor'ble. I'm shure glad your mom didn't make me do it.

TOM SAWYER

HUCK!

HUCK FINN

(Remembering he's supposed to be helping)

OH, I mean, I wish she DID make me do it. I love painting. You got any thing for me to paint?

*Everyone, including Tom, stop and just look at Huck, who is trying eagerly to find something to paint. He paints the fence. He paints the ground. He paints himself. Huck moves into the audience and begins painting them. Here he improvises lines to say.*

TOM SAWYER

HUCK! We're painting the FENCE.

HUCK FINN

Oh yeah, I fer'got. Okay Tom.

*AMY LAWRENCE enters as Huck walks back on stage. She is glaring at Tom, hands on her hips. The other girls notice her and move over.*

AMY LAWRENCE

Oh, that Tom Sawyer.

SYD SAWYER

Why do you say that Amy?

BECKY THATCHER

Yeah, what did he do to you?

AMY LAWRENCE

He tricked me into giving him a kiss.

MARY SAWYER

Tricked you? How?

AMY LAWRENCE

He said he'd give me a silver dollar.

SYD SAWYER

Then what happened?

AMY LAWRENCE

I kissed him, and then...

BECKY THATCHER

Yeah?

AMY LAWRENCE

And then...

SYD SAWYER

Yeah?

AMY LAWRENCE

And then...

MARY SAWYER

Yeah?

AMY LAWRENCE

He ran away.

*Amy almost starts to cry in embarrassment, but the other girls quickly comfort her.*

(CONTINUED)

SYD SAWYER

Oh that brother of mine! We SHOULD get him.

MARY SAWYER

But wouldn't that make us as bad as him?

*The other girls look at Mary, as if she's crazy*

MARY SAWYER

What? All I'm saying is that if we get him back we're just as bad as he is.

BECKY THATCHER

No we're not; we'll be teaching him a lesson.

MARY SAWYER

A lesson?

BECKY THATCHER

Yeah. If we don't teach him a lesson then he'll just continue to do it.

*A beat while Mary considers this.*

MARY SAWYER

Okay. If you say so.

BECKY THATCHER

Hey Syd, you're Tom's sister, what does he love to do more than anything else?

SYD SAWYER

Well, I know he likes to fish.

(Beat)

Oh! And money! He loves those silver dollars and will do ANYTHING to get his hands on one.

BECKY THATCHER

And Mary, what does he hate more than anything else?

MARY SAWYER

WORK!

*Amy laughs and nods at the assessment while Becky grins.*

BECKY THATCHER

Well, what if we did this?

*She huddles together with the other girls and they begin to quietly plot and plan. While the girls have been talking, Tom and Huck have moved out into the audience and have begun trying to recruit them. But Huck keeps spoiling everything for Tom. Finally the girl's break their huddle.*

AMY LAWRENCE

(Very sweetly)

Oh TOM!

*Tom looks over and sees the three girls looking at him. Suddenly his chest is puffed up and he has his hands on his hips, strutting past Becky and Amy, pausing as he gets to Syd and Mary, looking at them then turning back to walk past Amy and Becky again, flexing his muscles and showing off.*

TOM SAWYER

(His voice deeper, trying to sound more manly. But then his voice breaks)

Why hello Amy, what can I do for you?

*Meanwhile Huck is just staring at the other girls, lost in his own imagination.*

BECKY THATCHER

Well, I heard that old Mother Hopkins was willing to pay a silver dollar for every dead cat you could find. And I know you know where all the cats are at.

TOM SAWYER

(Excited)

A WHOLE silver dollar, just fer a dead cat? What the frog's feet for?

AMY LAWRENCE

I don't know Tom. But I heard say that she's a witch.

TOM SAWYER

(Suddenly he's very knowledgeable)

Yeah, I heard that too.

HUCK FINN

(Not to be left out)

Me too. That's what my pa always said, Ole Ma Hopkins is a witch.

*The other girls, who have been tittering and giggling suddenly grow solemn, though it takes every fiber of their being to do so, and nod in agreement, mutters of "Me too, me too" and "Yeah, I heard that too"*

(CONTINUED)

TOM SAWYER

Well that makes sense. I suppose a witch WOULD want a dead cat. And I know where all the cats are at. Well me an' Hucky do.

(Suddenly he has a thought)

Say, why isn't anyone else finding dead cats and taking them to her?

BECKY THATCHER

(Who suddenly has to think fast)

Well, it's because, they all are afraid of her.

TOM SAWYER

Yeah I can see that. But I'm not afraid, no sirree. Let's go Huck!

HUCK FINN

(Who has started to day dream again)

What? I don't know Tom, I don' think this will work.

*Becky gives Huck a strange look as Tom steps in between her and Huck, blocking Huck from her line of sight.*

TOM SAWYER

You just leave it to me Becky.

*He grabs Huck's arm and they start to run off, but then he remembers something.*

TOM SAWYER

Oh Doggone it. FROG'S FEET!

*This is Tom's way of cursing and it makes him feel very grown up and important.*

BECKY THATCHER

What is it Tom?

TOM SAWYER

Well, it's just that Aunt Polly tole me I had to paint this here fence today.

BECKY THATCHER

What if we painted it for you?

TOM SAWYER

Oh that'd be SWELL! You'd that for me?

BECKY THATCHER

Well sure, I mean ole Mother Hopkins has got to have her dead cats or she'll curse the whole town. So this is much more important.

TOM SAWYER

And Syd, you won't tattle on me?

SYD SAWYER

I swear, Tom, that I will not, not tattle on you.

*Tom looks confused by this for a minute, trying to figure out what Syd just said. Then he shrugs and nods.*

TOM SAWYER

And Mary, you won't tell either?

MARY SAWYER

Tom, you know I never tell on you.

TOM SAWYER

All right then!

*And with that he and Huck run off SL to find themselves a dead cat. Becky looks at her friends.*

BECKY THATCHER

Girls, I know how we can get ourselves some of Aunt Polly's State Fair Blue Ribbon Apple Pie. And with all of us here, it won't take long to do it either.

AMY LAWRENCE

How do we do that Becky?

BECKY THATCHER

Syd, I think it's time to tattle on ole Tom Sawyer.

SYD SAWYER

*(Almost sing-song like)*

Oh Aunt POL-LY, Tom ran off without finishing the fence.

*Aunt Polly sticks her head out of the second story window of the house again and looks down at the four girls*

AUNT POLLY

Oh that boy. When I find him, I'll tan him good, he knows that has to be done for the Sunday School picnic.

*Becky steps forward, with a smile and an idea.*

BECKY THATCHER

Say Aunt Polly, what if we painted the fence for you instead?

AUNT POLLY

Why Becky, that's awfully generous, but that really is Tom's job and he should do it.

BECKY THATCHER

Well, we don't mind Aunt Polly. Do we girls?

*The other girls watch in disbelief.*

BECKY THATCHER

(Continued)

Of course painting a fence sure does work up an appetite.

*The girls realize what Becky is talking about and begin to nod in agreement.*

AUNT POLLY

Well aren't you girls just the sweetest. You know I have some apple pies I just baked. If you girls do a good job, I'll give you two of those pies.

BECKY THATCHER

That sounds like a plan Aunt Polly, we just need to get changed.

AUNT POLLY

Come on in and get yourself some painting cloths.  
(The girls run in the house)

What nice young ladies.

*Aunt Polly sticks her head back into the house as Tom and Huck enter from the back of the house and make their way through the audience looking for a dead cat and generally making themselves a nuisance in the audience. Pretty soon they end up back at CS.*

TOM SAWYER

Huck, I thought you said you knew where a dead cat was?

HUCK FINN

Well, I saw one back there last week, but he must have got up and walked away.

TOM SAWYER

Hmm, is there any place we HAVEN'T looked?

HUCK FINN

Well what if we looked under ole Muff Potter's house? [Or insert the name of local celebrity or important person in town.] You know he aint cleaned under there in a coon's age, I bet there's tons of dead cats there.

TOM SAWYER

Yeah. That's a good idea!

*The two boys run off stage. As they leave, the four girls come out wearing coveralls. They quickly start painting.*

MARY SAWYER

Good idea Becky, I can almost taste that apple pie.

SYD SAWYER

Yeah, ole Tom is going to be so mad when he finds out. Next to silver dollars, there aint nothing Tom loves more than Aunt Polly's pie.

AMY LAWRENCE

Well I'm not going share any of my pie with that two-bit scoundrel.

BECKY THATCHER

Me either! We do the work, we eat the pie. What about you Mary?

MARY SAWYER

Well, he is my cousin. But you know what they say?

SYD SAWYER

What's that Mary?

MARY SAWYER

Pie is thicker then blood

*Suddenly there is a commotion off-stage. Tom and Huck are arguing. The girls pause and look off-stage.*

HUCK FINN

I don't think that's a dead cat Tom.

TOM SAWYER

Of course it's dead, it's just laying there, what else would it be?

HUCK FINN

I don't know?

TOM SAWYER

Just go pick it up by its tail and you'll see it's dead.

HUCK FINN

But Tom, I don't think it's dead.

TOM SAWYER

FINE! I'll prove to you it's dead.

*We hear a cat's squall followed by a crash and then another crash. Tom enters SL and his face is covered by one mad pussy cat. Tom has his hands around the cat trying to force it off, but that cat isn't going anywhere. All the painting has stopped and everyone is watching Tom fight the cat clear across the stage.*

HUCK FINN

Tom, I tole you that cat weren't dead!

TOM SAWYER

Doggone it Huck, just help me get it off my face!  
Owwwww!

*Tom and Huck struggle to free the cat as they exit SR. Just after they exit there is another cat's meow and another crash. Tom and Huck then enter SR, sans cat, and brushing themselves off. That's when they notice all the girls, who have resumed painting.*

TOM SAWYER

(Suspicious)  
Say, what's going on here?

BECKY THATCHER

Did that cat get to yer eyes?  
(Sarcastically)  
We're painting.

TOM SAWYER

But didn't I ask you earlier to help me paint?

AMY LAWRENCE

Yeah, but you didn't offer us any of Aunt Polly's pie.

TOM SAWYER

What?

MARY SAWYER

Aunt Polly gave Becky two pies to paint the fence and she offered to SHARE it with us if we helped paint.

TOM SAWYER

I want some pie.

HUCK FINN

Me too Tom.

TOM SAWYER

Hey Becky! Hey, can we help paint too?

BECKY THATCHER

I don't know Tom, it's awfully hard work.

TOM SAWYER

I can work hard, Hucky too.

HUCK FINN

I can?

TOM SAWYER

Sure you can.

SYD SAWYER

Tom, you don't know how to work.

AMY LAWRENCE

Let alone how to work *hard*.

*The girls all laugh at this. When Tom sees this is getting him nowhere, he begins to plead to Mary.*

TOM SAWYER

Mary, please, we can work hard and we want some pie.

MARY SAWYER

It's up to Becky.

BECKY THATCHER

All right Tom, you and Huck just go grab a brush and get started.

*Becky points clear down SR, off stage.*

BECKY THATCHER

Down there looks like a good spot.

*Tom and Huck don't ask any questions, they run to get brushes and pails and then exit SR.*

TOM SAWYER

(As they exit)

If I paint one side of the fence and you do the other we'll be done twice as fast.

HUCK FINN

Say, that's a good idea Tom!

*The boys exit and everyone resumes painting, until OS we hear Tom.*

TOM SAWYER

(Off Stage)

Huck, you just painted my face! Doggone it, I'll get you for that!

*Huck runs back on stage, in front of the fence, but Tom is close on his feet, but Tom is behind the fence. His face is painted white. Huck trips and falls CS. Tom, seeing an opportunity lunges forward, but he has forgotten there is a fence there and now his head and arms are stuck in the gate in the fence. Becky sees an opportunity. She turns to her friends*

BECKY THATCHER

Ten Hut

*As if on cue, the girls hold their paint brushes to their sides*

BECKY THATCHER

Present arms

*The girls hold up their arms, paint brushes extending high.*

BECKY THATCHER

Forward PAINT!

*And with that the girls begin to paint Tom's face. Becky then turns to the audience.*

BECKY THATCHER

For just one penny, you too can paint Tom Sawyer's face! That's right get the chance to paint Tom Sawyer's face, for just one penny!

*Becky motions for people to come up on stage. As they do, Becky collects their money and hands them a paintbrush. Huck lines up as well to paint Tom's face. Just as the line is forming again for a second go around, Aunt Polly's face appears in the second story window.*

AUNT POLLY

What's going on here?

*The crowd quickly breaks up with shouts of "it's Aunt Polly!", "Everybody run", etc.*

SYD SAWYER

Aunt Polly, Aunt Polly, Tom got his head stuck in the fence, see.

(CONTINUED)

AUNT POLLY  
THOMAS JEFFERSON SAWYER, YOU GET OUT OF THAT FENCE  
RIGHT NOW!

*Huck walks right up to Tom and looks down at him.*

HUCK FINN  
Gee Tom, that sure looks like it hurts.

*Close.*

Scene 3

*At close, the spotlight comes up on Twain, who is trying to correct the damage done.*

MARK TWAIN  
Now y'all know my book contained other stories of Tom's adventures. Like the Time he attended his own funeral. I will never forget that day...

MRS. CLEMENS  
(Interrupting him)  
Well I should hope not, it was a day none of us ever forgot.

MARK TWAIN  
(Seemingly ignoring her)  
Why the church was packed with grieving mourners, Aunt Polly was crying,

MRS. CLEMENS  
(To herself)  
Oh hogwash!

MARK TWAIN  
(Continuing to ignore Mrs. Clemens)  
Meanwhile Tom and Huck were simply playing pirates.

*Mrs. Clemens has had enough.*

MRS. CLEMENS  
Oh bully, Sam Clemens, that's not what happened and you know it.

*The spotlight goes out on them and the curtain opens on Aunt Polly and Syd as they are shaking out a nice, clean table cloth and preparing to hang it on the clothes line. They exit as soon as they are done. As they exit back into the house, Tom and Huck enter SR. Tom is angry, kicking at a rock or a can, or maybe whatever he's kicking at is in his own imagination. Huck is following behind him, as usual.*

(CONTINUED)

TOM SAWYER

Doggone that Becky Thatcher.

HUCK FINN

Why's that Tom?

TOM SAWYER

Because, Huck, she promised us that ole Mother Hopkins would buy a dead cat for one silver dollar, but she wasn't buying dead cats, remember.

HUCK FINN

Oh yeah, I fergot.

TOM SAWYER

How could you forget? It just happened yesterday.

HUCK FINN

I dunno, I jus' did.

*Both boys sit down by the stump, lost in their own thoughts.*

TOM SAWYER

Doggone that Becky Thatcher!

MARK TWAIN

Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a doggone minute!

*As Mark Twain interrupts, the action on the stage freezes, the stage lights go dim and the spotlights come up on him and Mrs. Clemens.*

MRS. CLEMENS

What is it dear?

MARK TWAIN

(Indignant)

This isn't what happened.

MRS. CLEMENS

(Very sweetly)

It isn't?

MARK TWAIN

No, it isn't! Why I remember writing

(Beat while he tries to remember what he wrote)

BOB!

*Bob enters and hands a copy of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer to Mark Twain, who begins to flip through the book.*

MARK TWAIN

I remember writing on page...

MRS. CLEMENS

(Interrupting him)

Dear, I'm sure this ISN'T how YOU wrote it, but you're not telling the story tonight, I am.

*Twain snaps the book shut.*

MARK TWAIN

Well these people did not pay to come see MRS Samuel Clemens talk. They came to see MARK TWAIN talk, and I'm going to start telling it MY way.

MRS. CLEMENS

Well, why don't we let them decide?

MARK TWAIN

Let who decide?

(Beat)

THEM? What do they know?

MRS. CLEMENS

Well, like you said, they paid good money tonight and they should be allowed to decide.

MARK TWAIN

(Dismissing her)

Fine, fine, whatever.

MRS. CLEMENS

Now then, what do you folks say? What do YOU want to hear, HIS story, or mine.

*Hopefully the audience will want to hear Mrs. Clemens's version, with her encouragement. Mark Twain should be doing his best to IGNORE the audience. After all he doesn't think too highly of them at this moment.*

MRS. CLEMENS

(Almost smugly)

I TOLD you they wanted to hear my version

MARK TWAIN

(Sulking)

Fine, fine, whatever you say dear.

*The spotlights go out and the stage lights come back up, and as it does so does the action. Tom has come across a brilliant idea. You can almost see the light bulb go on over his head.*

TOM SAWYER

I got it Huck!

HUCK FINN

Got what Tom?

(He begins to look at and examine Tom's hands)

I don't see nothing.

TOM SAWYER

(Pulling his hands away from Huck)

How to get Becky.

*Becky, Syd, Mary, and Amy enter, watch the two boys for a second and then quickly hide.*

HUCK FINN

For what?

(Tom gives him a look that says 'not this again')

OH yeah. Well, how are going to get her?

TOM SAWYER

(Very proudly)

We'll KIDNAP her!

HUCK FINN

(Confused)

Kidnap her?

TOM SAWYER

(Very animated, and excited about this plan)

Yeah, what we'll do is this. I'll dress up like a pirate, then you distract her and while she's distracted I'll jump out and kidnap her. We'll take her to the woods and hold her there until she pays us a dollar

(A beat)

EACH!

HUCK FINN

I don't know Tom, I don't think this will work

TOM SAWYER

Of course it will work trust me.

*The girls are huddled together in their hiding spot, conferring. Becky looks over to Tom and then back to the girls and they quickly exit SL.*

TOM SAWYER

Look here she comes now.

*Becky, Mary, and Amy re-enter with Syd tagging SL as Tom enters the house to get ready for his kidnap attempt. The girls finish their scheming and approach a confused Huck Finn, who just watches them.*

HUCK FINN

Oh...um...Becky, hold up...um Tom want...

BECKY THATCHER

Oh, we are so sorry for your loss Huckleberry.

HUCK FINN

Huh?

(Looking around)

What did I lose?

AMY LAWRENCE

It's just dreadful, Huck, DREADFUL. To die so young.

HUCK FINN

Died? Who died?

SYD SAWYER

He wasn't much of a brother, but I sure do miss him.

(Pretending to cry)

Oh Tom! Tom, I miss you!

*Mary quickly wraps an arm around Syd and comforts her nodding solemnly.*

MARY SAWYER

It's just so sad and at his age.

HUCK FINN

Wait just a minute, are you saying that Tom...

(Piecing it together)

That Tom is?

BECKY THATCHER

Oh, brave Huckleberry Finn. You must still be in shock over his untimely demise.

HUCK FINN

Tom...demised...untimely?

AMY LAWRENCE

Yes Huck. Didn't you know? Tom died last night.

(CONTINUED)

HUCK FINN

(Finally realizing what the girls are saying)

TOM'S DEAD! How'd he die?

AMY LAWRENCE

Oh, it's just, it's just too horrible to tell.

BECKY THATCHER

But he doesn't know Amy, we have to tell him.

AMY LAWRENCE

You tell him Becky, I can't, it's just  
(Amy is now sobbing along with Syd)

HUCK FINN

What happened? I was jus' talking to him...

BECKY THATCHER

Paint poisoning! Tom died of paint poisoning after we white washed his face.

HUCK FINN

Oh no! I thought that looked like it hurt! Oh poor Tom, white washed to death!

AMY LAWRENCE

Whited out, so to speak.

SYD SAWYER

Washed away, to the great beyond.

MARY SAWYER

Painted to oblivion.

HUCK FINN

But, how can that be? Why I was jus' talking to him.

SYD SAWYER

You SAW ol' Tom?

MARY SAWYER

Landsake he's come back from the grave!

AMY LAWRENCE

He must have unfinished business!

BECKY THATCHER

And now his ghost walks the earth

(CONTINUED)

*Tom exits the house, brandishing a wooden sword, one eye is covered with an eye patch, and is wearing a bandanna that looks like one of Aunt Polly's old dresses. In his mind he looks ferocious, but in reality, he looks ridiculous.*

TOM SAWYER

Ahoy, ye scurvy mates! Fifteen men on a dead man's chest yo, ho, ho and a bottle of Long John Silvers.

*Tom then decides that it would look better if the eye patch was on the other eye and quickly switches it.*

TOM SAWYER

I am the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main! Avast!

HUCK FINN

Run Becky, Tom's unfinished business is you! He wants revenge.

AMY LAWRENCE

You see him, Huck? Is he here now?

HUCK FINN

He's right there. And he's dressed like a pirate.

BECKY THATCHER

Oh it's worse then I feared, he's not just a ghost...

MARY SAWYER

Oh you don't mean that he's a...

AMY LAWRENCE

A pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

The worst kind!

TOM SAWYER

What the frog's feet are you talking about?

HUCK FINN

Oh nothing, Tom. Jus' that you's dead and is a ghost.

AMY LAWRENCE

A pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

The worst kind.

TOM SAWYER  
What?

HUCK FINN  
You died last night Tom. Paint poisoning.

TOM SAWYER  
Paint poisoning! Why that's hogwash!

HUCK FINN  
No Tom, it was white wash. And when the kids painted your face, you swallowed some and now you's...you's...dead!

BECKY THATCHER  
Why, we must have a funeral. Syd, Mary, get all the kids together.

*Syd and Mary exit into the audience and bring up people to view the funeral.*

MARK TWAIN  
You know I don't remember any of this happening, least not like this!

MRS. CLEMENS  
Oh hush, the funeral is about to begin.

TOM SAWYER  
I can't believe it! I'm not dead! I feel fine.

HUCK FINN  
(Quite matter-of-factly)  
I know Tom, but you've got to cross over.

*Syd and the other children enter and gather around Becky, who is standing on the tree stump.*

BECKY THATCHER  
(Very serious)  
Friends, Romans...

HUCK FINN  
(Stage Whisper to Mary, talking over Becky)  
What's a Roman? Is that a ghost, since they are always a'roaming and a'moaning?

*Syd elbows Huck and Mary holds a finger up to her lips to silence him. Huck stands, shuffling his weight from side to side nervously.*

BECKY THATCHER

*(Continuing with her speech)*

We come here today to bury this...well he wasn't quite a man so, this boy, Tom Sawyer. We know that there has never been a boy like Tom Sawyer, and we hope there never will be again. Some will say that Tom was the worst boy to ever come out of St. Petersburg. That he smelled the worst, that he was the dumbest and the clumsiest. That he was a real cretin and ignoramus. We know that isn't true. Lest we don't think so, though off the top of my head I can't think of anyone else who could meet that description. But surely somewhere, sometime in this town's history there had to be some boy that knew less about well, everything, than Tom Sawyer. And if that's the case then that boy would surely be the dumbest, most ignorant boy in, well, the world.

*Becky pauses and all the girls' eyes go to Huck Finn, who is sobbing and blowing his nose loudly. He stops for a minute to inspect his handkerchief, then shoves it in his back pocket.*

BECKY THATCHER

*(To Huck)*

Bring the ghost...

AMY LAWRENCE

The pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

The worst kind!

BECKY THATCHER

...the pirate ghost over here and lay him with his head against this stump.

TOM SAWYER

I ain't doing no such thing. I'm alive, Huck. I'm telling you I'm alive.

*Tom runs upstage and into the sheet hanging from the clothes line.*

AMY LAWRENCE

Quick Huck! You need to catch him and tie him up.

*Huck runs after Tom and pulls the clothesline down and proceeds to wrap it around Tom, turning Tom into the stereotypical "ghost in a sheet". Tom flaps his arms trying to get free.*

(CONTINUED)

SYD SAWYER

Yeah, you need to catch him.

MARY SAWYER

If you don't catch him and bring him over here, he'll haunt you Huck, for the rest of your life.

BECKY THATCHER

It's the only way we can bring Tom back.

HUCK FINN

What do I do? My best friend is a GHOST!

AMY LAWRENCE

A pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

The worst kind!

*Tom has managed to wiggle himself free of Huck. Huck, not knowing what to do, flat out tackles Tom.*

HUCK FINN

I'm sorry Tom!

BECKY THATCHER

(Trying not to laugh)

Hey Huck, I know how you could bring Tom back!

HUCK FINN

How?

AMY LAWRENCE

(Getting in on the fun)

Well just think. Jesus brought people back to life all the time!

HUCK FINN

He did?

MARY SAWYER

All the time.

BECKY THATCHER

Yeah, I bet if you hit him with a Bible, that'll bring him back

*All the kids start to agree with the girls.*

AMY LAWRENCE

Syd, go get your Bible. And hurry. Tom's not getting any younger, and he's beginning to stink.

SYD SAWYER

Oh, he always smells like that! It's cause he always trying to pick up dead cats. Course, they aren't always dead. Why do you smell like that, Tom? Are you really dead?

AMY LAWRENCE

Just run, Syd. Run!

*Syd runs off through the gate as Huck gets his own idea in his head. He starts to bang poor Tom's head into the ground.*

MARY SAWYER

Talk to him, Huck. Tell that ghost to go away!

AMY LAWRENCE

That pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

(Offstage)

THE WORST KIND!

BECKY THATCHER:

Better yet, shout at him, Huck! You got to shout for the ghost get out of Tom's body.

HUCK FINN

(Shouting)

Get out of my friend! Get on out of there, you ghost pirate! Go find yourself another body!

AMY LAWRENCE

That's right Huck! Let ol' Tom have it!

MARY SAWYER

Don't hold back now, Huck!

HUCK FINN

You hear that, ghost!

AMY LAWRENCE

A pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

(Entering with bible)

The worst kind!

HUCK FINN

You're haunting days are over! You go on now and leave Tom be!

(CONTINUED)

AMY LAWRENCE

Yeah! Leave him be!

MARY SAWYER

Leave him be to the seven seas!

BECKY THATCHER

And be a pirate no more to see!

*Syd quickly runs back on stage with a BIG Bible and hands it to Amy, who hands it to Mary, who hands it to Becky, who hands it to Huck.*

BECKY THATCHER

Use this Huck!

*Huck takes the Bible and begins hitting Tom in the rear with it*

HUCK FINN

Git on out of here you pirate ghost! I want my friend back! Give me back Tom! Give me back Tom!

*He keeps hitting Tom over and over again as all the kids encourage him. Aunt Polly then sticks her head out the second story window.*

AMY LAWRENCE

Give him back his Tom!

SYD SAWYER

And give me back my brother! Oh Tom! Oh Tom! Can you hear me, brother? Can you hear me?

MARY SAWYER

I think it's working. Hit him harder!

BECKY THATCHER

Yes! By all means, Huckleberry Finn. Beat that ghost!

AMY LAWRENCE

That pirate ghost!

SYD SAWYER

The worst kind!

AUNT POLLY

What's going on here?

EVERYONE

It's Aunt Polly!

*And with that everyone runs, the girls indicate to the audience members to return to their seats. There is mass chaos as Huck is hitting Tom with the Bible. Tom, somehow, manages to stand up, but is woozy from the beating he has endured during Huck's attempted exorcism. He tries to run but is too dizzy too and ends up falling straight into the outhouse, head first.*

SYD SAWYER

Aunt Polly, Tom got into...

AUNT POLLY

Thomas Jefferson Sawyer!

*Huck walks over to Tom and looks down.*

HUCK FINN

You okay Tom? Being a ghost sure looks like it hurts.

*Close.*

Scene 4

*The spotlight comes up on Mark Twain. He is alone on the stage and pacing back and forth, thinking. He isn't looking at the audience, or Mrs. Clemens, who is just watching him.*

MARK TWAIN

(To himself)

There has to be some story of Tom's she can't screw up. There just has to be. Bob!

*Bob comes out with the copy of Tom Sawyer that Twain flips through looking for a story. Suddenly Twain brightens up, and straightens up, hands the book to Bob, who exits, and then turns to the audience and addresses them.*

MARK TWAIN

Ladies and gentleman, there is one story that, while not as well-known as the other two stories, is 100 percent true. I guarantee it.

MRS. CLEMENS

(Snorting)

And what story is that dear, Tom and Huck at the graveyard because I can tell you that...

MARK TWAIN

(Quickly interrupting her)

Hush woman. No, not that story. I was thinking of the story of how Tom won a Bible.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. CLEMENS

Won a Bible? I don't remember Tom WINNING a Bible.

MARK TWAIN

(To Mrs. Clemens)

Well of COURSE he WON a Bible! Why else do you think they gave it to him?

(To the audience)

You see, ladies and gentlemen, in those day a child could win their very own Bible simply by memorizing Bible verses.

*Mrs. Clemens looks confused throughout all of this, as if something doesn't make sense. Finally she interrupts her husband.*

MRS. CLEMENS

I DO remember how Tom got that Bible, and it wasn't by memorizing Bible verses. What an absurd notion, getting a Bible because you memorized the Bible, honestly.

*The curtain opens on Aunt Polly, who has her head out of the second story window looking for Tom.*

AUNT POLLY

Tom! Tom! Where are you?

*There is a clatter off-stage and Aunt Polly perks up a little, but clucks her tongue when Bob and his stage hands come out carrying a pulpit and several benches. He shrugs apologetically at Aunt Polly who gives him a look. The stage crew exits SR as Aunt Polly shakes her head and continues to look for Tom.*

AUNT POLLY

Tom, oh TOM! Oh bother where has that boy gone off to now? He better not be trying to skip out on Sunday School. Mary, Sydney?

*Mary and Sydney enter SL in Sunday dresses and look up at Aunt Polly, who looks down at them.*

AUNT POLLY

Have either of you seen Tom?

SYD SAWYER

No Aunt Polly not since...

*Syd quickly stops*

AUNT POLLY  
Since the what?

MARY SAWYER  
(Quickly Covering)  
We haven't seen him, Aunt Polly.

AUNT POLLY  
That boy. TOM!

*May and Syd exit and Aunt Polly continues to look for Tom, who enters SR with Huck. Tom is dressed in his Sunday best; a pair of knickers, a starched white shirt with a too tight collar, which he continually pulls at. Huck is dressed in his Sunday best, a pair of overalls with both straps. Aunt Polly spies them from her perch on the second floor.*

AUNT POLLY  
Yoo-Hoo, you there Tom, what are you up to?

TOM SAWYER  
Nutt'n Aunt Polly, just went to fetch Hucky for Sunday School.

AUNT POLLY  
I knew you were up...wait, what?

TOM SAWYER  
I went to fetch Hucky for Sunday school.

*Aunt Polly looks at him in disbelief, this isn't the Tom Sawyer she knows, but she finally accepts his statement and pops her head back inside the house. Tom waits until she is gone then turns to Huck with a grin.*

TOM SAWYER  
All right now that she's not here, let me tell you what I got planned.

HUCK FINN  
Planned? I thought we was going to the picnic Tom. I've been hankering for some of Aunt Polly's apple pie. And some fried chick'n and mashed taters and...

*Huck would go on like this if Tom hadn't interrupted him.*

TOM SAWYER

We'll still go to the picnic Huck, just like I promised. But first we need to get that Becky Thatcher back.

HUCK FINN

Back for what?

TOM SAWYER

(Not wanting to admit Becky tricked him)  
Back for...well, just because.

HUCK FINN

Because why Tom?

TOM SAWYER

Just because Huck, just because. Now did you bring the glue like I asked you too?

HUCK FINN

(Pulling out a small glue jar from the recesses of his overalls)  
I did Tom, swapped it off Mr. Walters's [or insert the name of a local teacher or principal here] desk, just like you told me too. But I don't see what you need it for.

*While Huck has been talking, Tom has walked over to the podium and grabbed the big bible that has been set up there.*

TOM SAWYER

We're going to smear the glue on the pages of this Bible. When Becky gets up to read from it, her fingers will get stuck to the pages and the only way to get them free is to rip the pages off. Then Becky will be blamed for ruining the Bible.

*Tom seems genuinely pleased with this overly complicated idea, chest swelling with pride. As he does, Twain roars and storms CS.*

MARK TWAIN

Now wait just one cotton picking minute.

MRS. CLEMENS

Yes dear, what is it?

MARK TWAIN

You're getting the stories confused.

MRS. CLEMENS  
How so?

MARK TWAIN  
In my book, Becky accidentally vandalizes their teacher's anatomy book and Tom takes the blame. It didn't happen at Sunday School or involve a picnic or anything like that.

MRS. CLEMENS  
Yes dear, that is how you wrote it,

MARK TWAIN  
(Interrupting her)  
Well then, tell the story right by thunder!

MRS. CLEMENS  
If you'd let me finish, I was about to say that's how you wrote it, but that doesn't mean that's how it happened.

MARK TWAIN  
How do you know what happened? You weren't there.

MRS. CLEMENS  
Dear, I have my ways. Now, getting back to the story

*The action on the stage unfreezes as Twain mutters to himself going back to his side of the stage about Mrs. Clemens taking away Tom's chivalry and the power of myth. Tom is swelling with pride at this overly complicated plan of his.*

HUCK FINN  
I don't know Tom.

TOM SAWYER  
Trust me Hucky, this will work for sure. Now help me out.

*Tom and Huck sit on the ground open up the Bible and liberally smear the glue with brushes all over the pages. Huck looks down at the paper dubiously.*

HUCK FINN  
Are you sure this is going to work Tom?

TOM SAWYER  
(Confidently)  
Of course it'll work.

HUCK FINN

But, won't she see the glue?

*Tom pauses, another question he hasn't considered. Then he shakes his head and grins.*

TOM SAWYER

Nah, don't you worry about that, she's a GIRL they're not smart like we are.

*Huck shrugs this off and then motions for Tom to hurry that others are coming. Tom carefully puts the Bible back up on the podium. The two of them find a seat clear in the back as the girls enter through the house, recruiting audience members to join them. Tom and Huck can't stop giggling and fidgeting, they are excited about this. Aunt Polly enters SL and looks at the assembled children.*

AUNT POLLY

Good morning children.

EVERYONE

(In unison)

Good morning Aunt Polly.

AUNT POLLY

Before we get to the fun and games...

HUCK FINN

And the food!

AUNT POLLY

Yes, and the food, we need to see who has memorized their Bible verses.

*A few hands shoot up right away, not surprisingly they belong to the girls. The boys are muttering and murmuring to themselves. Aunt Polly sighs at this and points to Becky.*

AUNT POLLY

Becky, would you be a dear and come up here and recite your memory verse to us?

BECKY THATCHER

Yes Aunt Polly.

*Becky walks up to the podium clears her throat and then looks down at the glue smeared Bible.*

BECKY THATCHER  
Aunt Polly?

AUNT POLLY  
Yes Becky, what is it?

BECKY THATCHER  
Can you come here?

*Aunt Polly is confused; Becky is one she can always rely on. She walks over and Becky points to the Bible. Aunt Polly then searches the gathered children for the culprit or culprits. She knows immediately who is to blame. She locks eyes on Tom and Huck and is about to call them out when she gets an idea and a sly smile forms across her face.*

AUNT POLLY  
Actually Becky, we hear from you all the time, why don't you join Amy and Sydney and let's hear from someone else.

*Becky grins and nods, she has an idea what Aunt Polly is doing here. Aunt Polly searches the faces of the children, drawing this out.*

AUNT POLLY  
Now then, let's see, whom shall I choose?

*There are some girls shouting "Me, me" or "Over here" all waving their arms trying to catch her attention.*

AUNT POLLY  
How about, you Tom Sawyer and you too Huckleberry Finn.

*There is a panicked look in Tom and Huck's eyes. Huck leans over to Tom.*

HUCK FINN  
(Stage whisper)  
What do we do? I don't know no Bible verses.

TOM SAWYER  
(Stage whisper, but confident)  
Just make something up, that's what I always do.

AUNT POLLY  
Any time boys, anytime. Come on up, quit dilly dawdling.

*Tom and Huck slowly get up from the bench and slowly make their way up to the podium. Aunt Polly indicates one of them should recite but they can't make up their minds who should start.*

TOM SAWYER  
You go first.

HUCK FINN  
No, you go first.

TOM SAWYER  
Just get up there.

*And with that, Tom gives Huck a playful shove forward and he takes one step back.*

AUNT POLLY  
Excellent Huckleberry, let's hear you recite a Bible verse.

HUCK FINN  
(Panicking)  
Umm, umm, umm, Jesus, umm, cried?

*Aunt Polly, who shares Tom's over confidence, has been certain that Huck wouldn't know anything, so she is taken back a little by this, actual, Bible verse.*

AUNT POLLY  
(In amazement)  
Why, Huckleberry, you're correct.

*Tom gives Huck a big wink and he joins Tom by the podium.*

TOM SAWYER  
(Leaning over in a stage whisper)  
See, I told you that would work.

AUNT POLLY  
Now your turn Thomas.

TOM SAWYER  
What?

AUNT POLLY  
It's your turn.

TOM SAWYER  
Oh, yeah.

*He nervously steps up to the podium and clears his throat.*

TOM SAWYER

Um, in the beginning, Jesus loved us so much that he, he gave us, um Robin Hood to fight the Sheriff of Nottingham and he gave the rich to the poor.

*Tom starts off nervously, but picks up speed and is in full gear by the end, proud of his "Bible" verse. The rest of the kids just sit dumbfounded, as is Aunt Polly.*

AUNT POLLY

Tom, that is wrong in so many different ways. Did you even read the assigned reading?

TOM SAWYER

(Suddenly caught in his lie)  
umm, yeah?

AUNT POLLY

So you wouldn't mind if I gave you a little quiz?

TOM SAWYER

A quiz?

AUNT POLLY

Yes, a quiz.

*Tom is very nervous now and is looking all around for help, from someone, anyone and finds none coming his way.*

AUNT POLLY

Name two of Jesus's disciples?

TOM SAWYER

Two?

AUNT POLLY

Yes Tom, just two.

TOM SAWYER

Of Jesus's DISCIPLES?

AUNT POLLY

(Getting exasperated by Tom's attempts to get out of this)  
YES Tom, two of Jesus's disciples.

TOM SAWYER

(Searching his memory for any answer)

Ummm...

(Suddenly he remembers two names that go together)

DAVID AND GOLIATH!

*All the kids start laughing and Tom tries to cover his mistake*

TOM SAWYER

(Very quickly)

Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Jonah and the WHALE! SODOM AND GOMORRAH!

*Tom is fully panicking now and picks up the Bible and holds it close to his face. The girls sneak up to the front and shove the Bible into his face. Tom begins to run around trying to pry the Bible off his face.*

TOM SAWYER

Huck, Huck, help me, it's stuck to my face!

AMY LAWRENCE

Tom, Tom are you okay?

SYD SAWYER

Tom! Speak to me, brother. Speak to me!

BECKY THATCHER

Yes, Tom. Speak to us the word of God!

TOM SAWYER

(Muffled and weakly)

Oh horse feathers and frog's feet!

MARY SAWYER

I don't remember that being in the Bible.

BECKY THATCHER

It's because it's not from the regular Bible.

SYD SAWYER

What Bible is it from?

BECKY THATCHER

Tom's Bible of course!

SYD SAWYER

Wow! The Gospel According to Tom!

(CONTINUED)

MARY SAWYER  
Amen, Cousin.

AMY LAWRENCE  
And Glory Hallelujah!

BECKY THATCHER  
Glory, Glory, Hallelujah! Follow my lead girls.

TOM SAWYER  
Ow, ow, ow!

HUCK FINN  
I think it's stuck Tom. Let me try again!

TOM SAWYER  
No! It hurts! It hurts!

*Tom stumbles away and Huck chases Tom around the stage to try and help. BECKY produces a pitch pipe and in an instant has the girls humming "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Tom is like a chicken with its head cut off. He can't see, is confused and doesn't know where he is going. After running this way and that, into the audience and back on stage, Tom finally runs straight into the out of order outhouse, head first. He is half in and half out.*

AUNT POLLY  
(Angrily)  
Thomas Jefferson Sawyer!

*The kids have all stopped laughing, and are just staring at the prone back half of Tom Sawyer.*

AMY LAWRENCE  
Tom!

*She rushes over to help him.*

SYD SAWYER  
He didn't just fall into the...

MARY SAWYER  
He did just fall into the...

SYD SAWYER  
I can't believe...

MARY SAWYER  
...that he actually fell where he fell.

SYD SAWYER

A one-in-a-million shot!

AMY LAWRENCE

You got to hand it to that boy. That kind of aim takes talent.

BECKY THATCHER

I just wish he had aimed somewhere else.

SYD SAWYER

What's that smell?

ALL

EWWWWW!

MRS. CLEMENS

So you see, Tom didn't EARN that Bible by memorizing verses, they gave it to him because after that, no one else...

(Pause)

wanted it. But enough of this, let's just move on, before Tom embarrasses himself any further.

HUCK FINN

(Examining Tom's body sticking out of the outhouse)

Gee Tom. That sure looks like it hurts.

*Close.*

Scene 5

*Mark Twain is all in a huff as the curtain closes.*

MRS. CLEMENS

Is something wrong Sam?

MARK TWAIN

Yes, something is wrong, you're ruining my whole night here.

MRS. CLEMENS

(Fake sincerity)

Oh, am I? I didn't mean to.

MARK TWAIN

There has to be some story you can't ruin. Bob! Bob!  
BOB!

BOB

Yes Mr. Twain?

(CONTINUED)

MARK TWAIN

I need to see my book again

BOB

Here you go sir

*Bob has come prepared, book already in hand and gives it to Mark Twain and exits. As he exits, Twain begins flipping through the book looking for any story.*

MARK TWAIN

(Talking to himself)

Let's see, showing off in front of Alfred? No, not that one. Hmm, the trip to Jackson's Island? No. How about the time that Tom went to Africa or when he solved a murder? No, not those either. Hmm, what about, yes here it is, when Tom found treasure in McDougal's Cave!

*Twain snaps the book closed and Mrs. Clemens looks up at him at this.*

MRS. CLEMENS

Are you SURE that's the story you want to tell?

MARK TWAIN

Of COURSE it's the story I want to tell, it's the best story in the whole book.

MRS. CLEMENS

Well, I only ask because...

MARK TWAIN

(Interrupting her)

Oh you'll probably have to tell the way you remember it, but you can't deny Tom found treasure in that cave.

MRS. CLEMENS

Well, yes, I suppose he did find a treasure there.

*The curtain starts to open as Twain begins to talk.*

MARK TWAIN

You see there was an old cave nearby that all the children knew about. They knew most of the passageways, and twists and turns and...

MRS. CLEMENS

(Interrupting him)

They knew better then to play there.

(Beat)

Well, MOST of them knew better then to play there.

(CONTINUED)

*The girls come to life, laughing, teasing, playing, etc. Notably absent is Tom and Huck.*

SYD SAWYER

Hey I know, why don't we play some hide and seek?

*Syd begins to count, while the girls hide on the stage. Tom and Huck enter from the house. Tom is drying his head with a towel.*

TOM SAWYER

I HATE having to take a bath and it warn't even bath night.

HUCK FINN

Yeah, but you sure needed it Tom.

*Tom gives Huck a look and then notices Syd.*

TOM SAWYER

Hey, what's going on?

SYD SAWYER

We're playing hide and seek, come on.

TOM SAWYER

(Suddenly trying to show off)

I'm the best hide and seek player ever, I don't play with amateurs.

*The girls say their lines from their hiding places, sticking only their heads out (Ala Laugh-In or Hee-Haw).*

BECKY THATCHER

Amateurs? I bet we can hide better than you!

HUCK FINN

No way, if Tom says he's the best, then he's the best.

SYD SAWYER

Oh yeah? Tom says lots of things, most of them real whoppers! Why should we believe him now?

HUCK FINN

Yeah, Tom? Why should we believe you now?

TOM SAWYER

Cause I can prove it this time!

AMY LAWRENCE

You can? Why how, Tom?

(CONTINUED)

BECKY THATCHER

Oh he can't prove anything. Except that there's nothing but air where his brain ought to be!

TOM SAWYER

I can too prove I'm the best!

HUCK FINN

Yeah!

MARY SAWYER

Oh yeah?

*They wait but there is no third response finally  
Tom elbows Huck.*

TOM SAWYER

Yeah!

AMY LAWRENCE

Yeah?

HUCK FINN

Yeah!

BECKY THATCHER

Yeah?

TOM SAWYER

Yeah!

MARY SAWYER

Yeah?

HUCK FINN

Yeah!

SYD SAWYER

Yeah?

TOM SAWYER

Yeah!

BECKY THATCHER

Enough!

*(Breaks cover and approaches Tom)*

How 'bout you put your money where your mouth is?

TOM SAWYER

How much?

BECKY THATCHER

How about a silver dollar?

TOM SAWYER

Okay, one silver dollar.

*Tom nods, spits in his hand and extends it to Becky, who looks at it for a minute, then spits in her own and shakes it. The girls run off.*

HUCK FINN

Tom, you ARE the best hide and seeker right?

TOM SAWYER

Yeah! I mean, shoot yes! Don't you believe me?

HUCK FINN

I don't know Tom, everything else that's happened...

TOM SAWYER

(Interrupting him)

No, this time will work for sure, trust me.

HUCK FINN

Okay Tom.

TOM SAWYER

See, what we'll do is go down to old McDonald's cave.

MARK TWAIN

It was old McDOUGAL'S cave, not old McDonald's.

MRS. CLEMENS

Old McDougal's, old McDonald's. Ee-eye, Ee-eye, Oh.

TOM SAWYER

See, what we'll do is go down to old

(He pauses and looks over to Mark Twain then over to Mrs. Clemens then back to Twain)

*McDougal's* cave and hide there.

(Sticks his tongue out at Mrs. Clemens)

No one ever goes there.

HUCK FINN

You're sure Tom? You know where this cave goes?

TOM SAWYER

Sure, it runs right under this here yard.

*Tom starts to run off but Huck stands there watching. Tom re-enters grabs Huck's arm and drags him off. Soon one of the girls comes*

*creeping in and hides and another kid runs on, find her and chases her off. Repeat this for a while, with kids hiding on the stage and in the audience but being found and chased off. As it does the curtain closes. Bob puts out a sign on the SL side in the same, almost childlike scrawling on the outhouse, that says "Danger! Do not enter!". The stage lights have gone down and changed color, almost blue as Tom and Huck enter through the audience. There is one single, regular spotlight shining down near SR. We are now in McDougal's Cave.*

HUCK FINN

Tom, are you sure this is safe?

TOM SAWYER

Of course I'm sure this is safe. Would I bring you here if it wasn't?

*Huck doesn't answer Tom, just pauses and watches him for a moment, then shrugs and decides to go on ahead.*

HUCK FINN

Say, Tom, do you know where we're at?

TOM SAWYER

Of course I know where we are at? We're  
(Pausing and searching for an answer)  
We're in a cave.

HUCK FINN

Then how do we get out?

TOM SAWYER

Umm, follow me, I know the way.

*They reach the sign and Tom looks at it for a moment.*

TOM SAWYER

(Reading it to himself)  
Danger! Do not enter!

HUCK FINN

What's it say Tom?

TOM SAWYER

Nothing, just that there is...buried treasure here.

HUCK FINN

Buried treasure? Well let's go then.

*The two pass the sign and Huck begins looking around excitedly.*

HUCK FINN

Where's the treasure at Tom?

*Tom is looking around and points absentmindedly toward the single white light.*

TOM SAWYER

Um, try over there.

*Huck hurries over and gets on all fours and begins looking around. Huck is easily distracted though, and soon has started looking straight up into the light, in a daze.*

HUCK FINN

Say Tom, where's this hole go to?

TOM SAWYER

(Not paying attention)

What hole?

HUCK FINN

(Pointing straight up)

This hole, where this light is coming from?

TOM SAWYER

What are you talking about Hucky?

*Tom gets up from his treasure hunting and walks over and looks straight up. The two of them stare upwards trying to figure it out in silence.*

HUCK FINN

Is that a full moon Tom?

TOM SAWYER

No Huck, it's the sun. Which means that leads outside. Come on Huck help me up first.

HUCK FINN

I thought you said you knew the way out?

TOM SAWYER

I do, and this is it. Now help me up.

(CONTINUED)

*Huck lifts Tom up and puts him on his shoulders and the two walk around the stage with Tom shouting directions, which Huck TRIES to follow but just can't seem to manage. Finally they exit SR as the curtain opens. Everyone is looking for Tom and Huck.*

AUNT POLLY

Tom! Tom! Oh bother, where IS that boy? Tom! Yoo-hoo!  
(She sees Syd)  
Have you seen your brother, Syd?

SYD SAWYER

No ma'am.

AUNT POLLY

Are you sure? Where did he get off too, I reckon?

SYD SAWYER

I'm positive Aunt Polly.

AMY LAWRENCE

Yeah, we were just playing hide and seek and well, I guess Tom and Huck won.

BECKY THATCHER

I can't believe it. That little pip squeak actually won the...

AUNT POLLY

What do you mean, won? Won the what?

AMY LAWRENCE

Well, you see Aunt Polly...

SYD SAWYER

It's like this...

MARY SAWYER

We kind of bet Tom and Huck...

SYD SAWYER

...that we could beat them at hide and seek.

BECKY THATCHER

And I guess Tom actually won.

TOM SAWYER

(OS, muffled)  
HA! I knew it! I won!

*At the sound of Tom's voice everyone looks around, wondering where the voice is coming from. Suddenly Becky holds up her hands to quiet everyone.*

(CONTINUED)

BECKY THATCHER

Tom, where are you?

TOM SAWYER

(OS; muffled)

Ha! You have to find me! I told you I was the best.

*Becky has been listening for where Tom's voice is coming from, holding her finger up for silence. She creeps over to the outhouse and opens it up, revealing Tom to the kids, Aunt Polly and the audience. Or rather Tom's head, which is stuck in the seat of the outhouse. Tom's eyes widen.*

TOM SAWYER

Pull me down Huck, pull me down!

*Huck enters backwards, SR, still in the cave, and pulling a pair of legs.*

HUCK FINN

I can't Tom, you're stuck.

### **This is Not the End of the Play**

### **Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**