

HOWLING TWAIN

a musical adaptation of Mark Twain's twin novellas
Puddn'head Wilson and *Those Extraordinary Twins*

Libretto, Music and Lyrics by Robert Locke
Orchestrations by Philip Howard

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I used to write on my title pages something like: "All Rights Reserved: Nobody can use this unless they contact me or my agent in writing." But I just turned 70; so screw that. This is a good play. If you want to do some scenes from it, go ahead and be my guest. But I hope that you will at least tell me about it, and give me the writing credit for it. If I am still alive —and that's growing more and more doubtful— contact me at boblocke@csus.edu

HOWLING TWAIN

Book, Music and Lyrics
by Robert Locke

based on Mark Twain's novels
PUDD'N'HEAD WILSON and *THOSE EXTRAORDINARY TWINS*

SCENE ONE: FRONTIER LANDING, MISSOURI, May 1, 1836

Opening. *In black, sound of wind,
then a cappella tenor voice, BLACK
CHORUS* echoing. (N = tongue click)

BLACK CHORUS

W'LE W'LAY, KRO YO NAH (FOUR REPEATS)
NYI KA W'LE W'LAY SE KUN (TWO REPEATS)
NADIE-E, NADIE-E-E (TWO REPEATS)
NA MO ME-E NADIE, NADIE-E (TWO REPEATS)
NADIE-E...

*Still in black, wind has faded.
WHITE CHORUS* overtakes the tune.

WHITE CHORUS

AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND
THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME.
I ONCE WAS LOST BUT NOW I'M FOUND
WAS BLIND BUT NOW...

Black Chorus, bellicose.

BLACK CHORUS

BREAK THESE CHAINS, LORD, BREAK THESE CHAINS
BREAK THESE CHAINS, LORD, BREAK 'EM, BREAK THESE CHAINS
CHAINS, GRACE, CHAINS, GRACE, CHAINS, GRACE...

*White Chorus repeats "Grace" and
Black Chorus "Chains", setting up a
soft rocking that a lone slave,
ROXY, takes up in a lullaby. As she
sings to the crying baby in her
arms, a pool of light comes up on
her standing high on a Mississippi
River levee.*

ROXY

FLOATIN', YOUR CRADLE ROCKIN' ON THE RIVER,
FLOATIN', NOWHERE TO GO AND NOTHIN' TO DO,
DREAMIN'...

*A pool of light rises on PUDD'NHEAD
WILSON, a white man, a dreamer.*

PUDD'NHEAD

DREAMIN', DREAMIN'

ROXY

...YOUR HEAD FILLED UP WITH SUGAR NOTHIN'S,
DREAMIN', IN A WORLD THAT'S ALL FOR YOU.

*A pool of light rises on JASPER, a
slave. Jasper sings a troubled
melody as Roxy croons a descant.*

JASPER

AWAY BELOW YOU, THE WATER'S CHURNIN'
ROCKS ARE GRINDIN' AS THE RIVER KEEPS A-WINDIN',
EVER TURNIN' IN HIS BED.

ROXY

SAY NEVERMIND AND DON'T YOU WORRY,
WATCH THEM BANKS OF TROUBLES SLIDE ON BY,
AIN'T NO HURRY, WHILE MAMMY SINGS HER LULLABY.

*Lights come up full as ROXY puts the
crying baby into one end of a large
baby-wagon. Fifteen-sixteenths
white, Roxy could easily "pass" but
she speaks with an uneducated
slave's dialect and is dressed as a
slave. She has an easy, high and
sassy carriage when among slaves,
but with whites, she is meek.*

*As Jasper moves into Roxy's area,
lights stay dim on Pudd'nhead.*

JASPER

Say, Roxy, how does that new baby of yours come along?

ROXY

Hush now, you Jasper. I just got Marse Tom asleep.

JASPER

Call me Kwombo, I finish with that Jasper slave name. (*looking into wagon*) Which of these little ugly pinky babies yours, Roxy?

ROXY

You hush that trashy mouth. That one there mine, ain't he pretty?

JASPER

Say, how come you got that red dress of yours under that baby's head? You told me you was savin' that dress to wear just for me.
(takes red dress out of the wagon, a baby cries)

ROXY

Oh, look now see what you done, mudcat! Come on up here, Happy, oh!
(takes a baby from the other end of the wagon, this one not dressed finely like the first, but wrapped in a rag.) I said I was keepin' that dress for the man I love, and here he be! And I got saved...

JASPER

Again! Most religionest gettin' woman I ever see!

ROXY

...and I ain't 'sociatin' with trash like you no more. I got this here baby now to think about, and if somethin' happen to him, and he so sweet, he goin' straight to heaven, and I got to make sure I get there too. *(to the baby)* Oh, no, darlin', hush, don't you mind that Jasper cat.

Roxy sings the same lullaby to this baby, but with less reverence and more bounce and fun. Jasper joins her flirtatiously.

ROXY/JASPER

MY BABY'S FLO-WO-WO-WOATIN', HIS CRADLE ROCKIN' ON THE RIVER,
AND MAMMY'S DO-WO-WO-WOTIN', 'CAUSE HER BABY'S SO PRETTY AND FINE.
MY BABY'S LA-YA-YA-YAFFIN' 'CAUSE HIS MAMMY'S MAKIN'...

JASPER

MY BABY'S SHAKIN', MY BABY'S BAKIN' AS SHE'S MAKIN'...

ROXY/JASPER

...FACES AT HIM.

ROXY

AND MAMMY'S LA-YA-YAFFIN' TOO, 'CAUSE HE'S MY BABY
AND HE'S ALL MINE!

JASPER

That baby not your baby. That baby belong to Marse Lancaster.

ROXY

(turns violently away)

LET MISTER RI-YI-YIVER CHURN, LET HIM GRIND AND LET HIM WIND,
HE'S JUST A-HEADIN' FOR THAT SAME OLD SEA

WHERE SOME DAY YOU AND ME... *(SLOWING)*

WILL END UP LA-YA-YAFFIN' STILL, THE ANGELS SINGIN' OUT THEIR WELCOME

YES, IN THE END WE'LL HAVE OUR LA-YA-YA-YAF IN

THAT SWEET OL' LAND OF KINGDOM COME...

JASPER

(laughs) Kingdom Come! Kingdom Gone, you mean, old Africa.

The first baby cries in the wagon.

ROXY

Hush, I say! You hear the way you make Marse Tom cry! Hand him to me up out of there! Mind his head.

Jasper takes the other baby out of the wagon and gives him to Roxy, so that she cradles in one arm her own baby and in the other the master's handsomely dressed baby.

ROXY

YES, YOU AND YOU AND ME, ALL THREE,
WE'LL FINALLY BE ...

JASPER/PUDD'NHEAD

DREAMIN', DREAMIN'.

ROXY

FLOATIN', FLOATIN' FREE.

JASPER

Say goodbye to heaven, Roxy. Angels is white, got whitey hair, and they don't maintain no nigger gallery in heaven.

Pudd'nhead strolls into Roxy and Jasper's area, the lights coming up full. He takes a contraption from one of his innumerable pockets and tinkers with it as he strolls. Roxy and Jasper don't see him at first as they put the quieted babies back into either end of the wagon.

ROXY

Well, my baby look white. Got twice't again as much white blood as his mammy, and maybe he fools the angels, and maybe I fools 'em too.

PUDD'NHEAD

Why, Roxy—

ROXY

Oh, Mr. Wilson, don't think bad of Roxy, I's just foolin' this here Jasper fool. *(to Jasper)* You git! *(Jasper slinks back but stays.)*

PUDD'NHEAD

Mornin', Kwombo.

JASPER

Yessir, Mr. Wilson, sir.

ROXY

Mr. Wilson, please, you won't tell Marse Lancaster what I said about foolin' the angels, will you?

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, Roxy, I— I wish— Say, let's see that fine son of yours! Why, which one is he, Roxy? One just as handsome as the other!

ROXY

Why, bless your soul, Mr. Wilson, that's pow'ful nice of you. This one here my boy.

PUDD'NHEAD

Phenomenal! Like the proverbial peas in the pod! What did you end up naming him, Roxy, you've been so long about it.

ROXY

Yessir, I was mighty partic'lar, but yesterday he just smiled up at me so pretty, and then it come to me. Happy!

PUDD'NHEAD

Happy? But Roxy that's not a name, it's an adjec— oh, pardon.

ROXY

Beggin' your pardon, Mister Wilson sir, but sure it's a name! It's Happy's name! Ain't it, Happy? *(to the other baby)* Marse Tom, you got the colics, honey? *(to Pudd'nhead)* Poor motherless chile. I think Old Mistus' milk turn bad just before she died, may she rest, and now poor Marse Tom got to get used to Roxy milk. But these breasts got plenty for bof'em.

PUDD'NHEAD

(clears his throat in embarrassment, turns quickly to the wagon) Let me just get their finger marks for my collection.

Pudd'nhead takes glass plates from pockets, bends over the wagon.

ROXY

Happy, don't you kick Marse Tom now, honey, he's your little marster. *(to Pudd'nhead, laughing)* Oh, them glass plates of yours just make everybody laugh so!

PUDD'NHEAD

(drily) Yes, ha ha.

ROXY

Oh, Mister Wilson, don't you fret, I spec' you about the smartest white man in this town. *(glances lovingly at Jasper, a look Pudd'nhead does not miss)* What I mean to say is, uh, beg pardon, Mister Wilson sir, them glass plates of yours is pow'ful innerestin', and smart, too, and I spec you got just about every person in Frontier Landin', black or white, in that c'lection, don't you?

PUDD'NHEAD

Just about. *(labels plate)* "Happy, son of Roxy."

ROXY

Happy, son of Roxy.

PUDD'NHEAD

See, Roxy, that's how his name looks written out.

ROXY

Oh, ain't it purty, most purty as he is, ain't it?

JASPER

h-a-p-p-y. I can teach you to read, Roxy. If you want. You can do it.

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, would you look at this!

ROXY

What is it? Don't tell me!

PUDD'NHEAD

See this little line here right across his palm? It says Happy is going to be rich!

ROXY

Glory be! You hear that, Happy? Maybe he can buy his freedom!

PUDD'NHEAD

Maybe.

ROXY

'Cause my mammy told me, Mr. Wilson —my mammy was smart like you, and could read the hands and tell fortunes and such like—she tol' me I got a angel hoverin' 'round 'bout one of my shoulders and a witch hoverin' 'round 'bout the other, and one day the two of 'em goin' fight it out for my soul, and I'll be free!

PUDD'NHEAD

(labeling other plate) "Thomas Driscoll, May 1, 1836, right palm."

ROXY

Mammy alluz say, "You fight, gal! You stand up for yourself. And if you can't fight, then kick, and if you can't kick, then bite."

PUDD'NHEAD

Your mammy sounds like quite a woman, Roxy. What happened to her?

ROXY

Oh, they killed her.

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, I am so sorry, Roxy! Who?

ROXY

Them, the white folk 'round 'bout down in Arkansas where I come from. They lynched her, you know. But they splained it to me real good. They splained it was her black blood made her so mean and wayward. One part black and seven parts white, but that one part was p'ison.

PUDD'NHEAD

You can't believe that, Roxy!

ROXY

Oh, yes sir, they splained it, and I guess white blood ain't all that pow'ful, you see.

PUDD'NHEAD

(going back to his plates) Yes, well there I might agree with you.

ROXY

But me, I got fifteen parts white, so that little bit of black p'ison don't cause no one no trouble at all. And Happy here, he got half

again less of it so he good as gold. Though I like to die with missin' my mammy, and got sick and puny. But then Marse Lancaster come along specalatin', him and Marse York, and I kotch their eye, and Marse Lancaster bought five of us and brought us all up here to Frontier Landin', me and three mules and a hog.

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, Roxy, I wish— couldn't you— Roxy, that's no way to think of yourself!

ROXY

Oh, I do beg pardon, sir. I do beg pardon. I's thinkin' wrong somehow, sir, and I do beg pardon.

JASPER

Ha! That down-river pinky monkey don't even know what you mean!

PUDD'NHEAD

Jasp—! I mean Kwombo!

JASPER

Yes sir.

PUDD'NHEAD

Your master, because he is my cousin and because I pleaded with him, was good enough to allow you to come into my schoolroom. And learn! Where Roxy came from, she did not have that advantage; she had NO advantage, and I will not allow you to embarrass her, do you hear? (*Jasper does not respond.*) Do you hear me, Kwombo?

ROXY

(*shyly inserting herself between them*) Oh, Mister Wilson, don't mind Jasper, please. Jasper, I said you git! (*as Jasper withdraws a bit*) But you right, Mr. Wilson, sir, they a hard lot down the river, they know how to work a nigger to death. Anyway, when we got here, Marse Lancaster set to work and slaughtered the hog, and sold the mules for a right good profit to a family headed west. But he keepin' me for a breeder. And see, I's doin' right good for him. (*to the baby*) I got Happy, didn't I, honey?

PUDD'NHEAD

Cousin Lancaster is not— is not the father of this child, is he?

ROXY

Oh, no sir! But, beggin' your pardon, Mr. Wilson, you mustn't ask a question like that, please.

PUDD'NHEAD

It was wrong of that man, Roxy, whoever he was, to father a child into slavery.

ROXY

Is that why you-- *(he moves away, Roxy sneaks a look at Jasper who is standing aside)* --Is that why you don't come right out and ask, Mr. Wilson? Oh, I 'spec Roxy knows why you been hangin' 'round, the way you keep lookin' at me.

Pudd'nhead, morbidly shy, moves away but does not leave, works on his plates. Roxy rocks the wagon, singing to the babies as much as to Pudd'nhead.

ROXY

OH, IT'S OKAY, MR. WILSON IT'S OKAY.
A LOT OF WHITE MEN SNIFF 'ROUND ME THIS A-WAY.
IT'S JUST YOUR NATURE THAT'S STEWIN'
THE BLOOD INSIDE YOU BREWIN'
IT'S OKAY, MR. WILSON, IT'S OKAY.

JASPER

(aside)

OH, IT'S OKAY, MR. WILSON, SHE JES' A SLAVE.
SHE DON'T HAVE NO EMOTION SHE JES' A SLAVE.
IT DON'T MATTER IF YOU DON'T LOVE HER
WHAT THE HELL IF I LOVE HER?
I'M JES' A SLAVE, MR. WILSON, IT'S OKAY.

PUDD'NHEAD

YOU MUSTN'T THINK, ROXY, THAT ALL MY PEOPLE ARE BAD,
YOU MUSTN'T THINK, ROXY, I'D EVER MAKE YOU SAD,
YOU MUST BELIEVE, ROXY, WHEN I TELL YOU TRUE,
THAT I'M SO IN--
THAT THAT I'M SO IN--(CAN'T FINISH)

JASPER

OH NO, DON'T THINK, ROXY...

PUDD'NHEAD

(hands Roxy something from his pocket)

Here.

JASPER

...THE MAN IS BAD...

ROXY

What is it?

JASPER

...OH NO, DON'T THINK, ROXY...

PUDD'NHEAD

It's a ... a device I invented.

JASPER

...THE MAN'LL MAKE YOU SAD.

ROXY

What's it do?

JASPER

...OH NO, DON'T THINK, ROXY...

PUDD'NHEAD

It, uh, well, it uh...

JASPER

...YOU'RE IN THE PINK....

PUDD'NHEAD

...it will protect you...

ROXY

A charm?

PUDD'NHEAD

It will keep you from having a baby.

JASPER

OH NO, DON'T THINK, ROXY. ROXY, DON'T THINK.

ROXY

(embarrassed but encouraged) Oh, that's okay, Mr. Wilson. While I's nursin' I's okay, and after that I got a potion that my mammy give me. You take dead honey bees, and boil 'em down good, and then—

PUDD'NHEAD

That's superstition, Roxy. This appliance is scientific.

ROXY

(fingering it) What's it made of?

PUDD'NHEAD

A hog's intestine.

ROXY

Oh, sir, I don't know!

PUDD'NHEAD

No, it's quite... serviceable. Of course, I would need to, uh... fit it on you, uh, personally.

ROXY

(disappointed, after all) Oh. I spec' you want me to come 'round to your room tonight then?

PUDD'NHEAD

How— how— how old are they, Roxy?

ROXY

Bof the same age, sir, one month zac'ly, born the first of April.

PUDD'NHEAD

Ah, April first, ha ha, the day upon which we are reminded of what we are on the other three hundred and sixty-four. *(laughs nervously)*

ROXY

That device, Mister Wilson... a man wouldn't be able to ...

PUDD'NHEAD

Detect it? I ... shouldn't think so. *(clears his throat)*

ROXY

You just kinda shy, ain't you? You can be free with me, Mr. Wilson. How they all be, I know.

PUDD'NHEAD

Free? That's funny ... you tellin' me I can be free. But you're so wise, Roxy. A man can be chained in many ways.

ROXY

How you chained, Mr. Wilson?

PUDD'NHEAD

Chained by this town, chained by the ignorance, chained by my own inability to just ... simply ... do something. Right there across the river is Illinois. If we were on that soil, you'd be free and I ... could—. Oh, you must think I'm a fool.

ROXY

What was that you just said, Mr. Wilson, 'bout me bein' free?

PUDD'NHEAD

Just a quirk of geography, Roxy. (*taking another glass plate from a pocket*) Those little feet could just about fit on one of these plates; think I'll get them, too.

ROXY

That green over there? That lan' I see is free?

JASPER

The lan' no, but the people.

ROXY

Laws, Jasper! Look across the river from Arkansas all you see is Mis'sippi. But that green over there—Heaven! Oh, if—

JASPER

Don't dare wish on it, Roxy. You go and drownd yourself. You can't swim, and that river wider'n you think and stronger'n you think, and even if you did make it across, they'd take the hounds and drag you back. They thrash you. You seen the scars on this back?

ROXY

If—... if—

PUDD'NHEAD

IF SOMEONE...

JASPER

IF SOMEONE...

PUDD'NHEAD

ROXY, IF SOMEONE...

ROXY

MR. WILSON, YES, IF SOMEONE?

PUDD'NHEAD

...IF SOMEONE WERE TO COME ONE DAY AND TELL YOU...

ROXY

TELL ME, YES.

PUDD'NHEAD

...TAKE YOU IN HIS ARMS AND TELL YOU,
BEND YOU CLOSE TO HIM AND TELL YOU...
TELL YOU... TELL YOU...

ROXY

TELL ME, YES!

PUDD'NHEAD

TELL YOU THAT HE CARES...
BUT I DON'T DARE...

JASPER

NO HE DON'T DARE...

ROXY

IF SOMEONE, GOD'A'MERCY, IF SOMEONE...

PUDD'NHEAD

ROXY, YES, IF SOMEONE...

ROXY

...IF SOMEONE...

JASPER

IF SOMEONE...

ROXY

...IF SOMEONE LIKE YOU COME ONE DAY AND TOL' ME,
TOOK MY BABY'S HAND AND TOL' ME,
READ THE LINES IN IT AND TOL' ME,
MY CHILD... MY CHILD ONE DAY'D BE FREE!
HE TAKE MY CHILD AND CARRY HIM CROSS THE RIVER
INTO FREEDOM LAN'. THAT MAN I'D LOVE... THAT MAN I'D LOVE...

Riverboat whistle.

JASPER

Riverboat a-comin'! (*calls offstage*)
RIVERBOAT A-COMIN'!

PUDDN'HEAD

No, Roxy, no, it's impossible.

JASPER

(breaking in frantically) Mr. Wilson, here come the riverboat!
Roxy, stop it! Mr. Wilson, I say there's a riverboat a-comin'!
RIVERBOAT A-COMIN'! RIVERBOAT A-COMIN !

ROXY

RIVERBOAT A-COMIN'!

Frontier Landing folk rush on, among them YORK DRISCOLL, a judge and country gentleman dressed in subdued tones, and PEMBROKE HOWARD, a lawyer.

YORK

Lancaster? Lancaster? *(hurrying to Pudd'nhead)* Oh, afternoon, Cousin Dave.

PUDD'NHEAD

Afternoon, Cousin York.

YORK

I'm looking for that brother of mine. You haven't seen him, have you? Lancaster hates to miss a riverboat landin'!

PUDD'NHEAD

(wryly) Yes, all that trade.

YORK

RIVERBOAT A-COMIN!

JASPER

RIVERBOAT A-COMIN'!

YORK

Jasper, run find my brother, and tell him a riverboat's landin'!

Jasper goes off reluctantly as the riverboat comes on, carrying MANLEY WESTON, HOPE DARLING and other passengers. (Boat can be stylized with passengers carrying cut-out prow, rails, smokestacks, etc.)

MANLEY

(in prow of boat, straining forward eagerly)

I'M HEADED WEST,
MY DESTINY IS MANIFEST
THROUGH THE MISSOURI GATEWAY!

HOPE

I'M HEADED NORTH,
MINNESOTA BY JULY THE FOURTH
STRAIGHT UP THE MISSISSIPPI!

CHORUS

WE'RE TRAVELIN' ON,
CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON, OREGON,
TO BUILD A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE AMERICA!
SO COME ON ALONG
UP THE RIVER AND JOIN OUR SONG
OF A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE FROM SEA TO SEA AMERICA!

YORK

(a drawly, waltzy tune)

BUT STAY, BUT STAY, BUT STAY,
FRONTIER LANDIN'S HERE TODAY.
THERE'S NO NEED TO PURSUE
FUTURE RED, WHITE AND BLUE
WHEN TRUE HEAVEN FOR YOU
IS RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES,
FRONTIER LANDIN'!

PUDD'NHEAD

THE GREAT MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

YORK

Cousin, you misrepresent us to these friendly travellers! *(to passengers)* Please allow me to introduce ourselves. I am York Driscoll, the judge here in Frontier Landin'. My twin brother Lancaster Driscoll unfortunately is not at hand at the moment, but—

PEMBROKE

And I am Pembroke Howard, I represent the law—

YORK

Yes, this is Pembroke Howard, one of our fine, fine lawyers in town, and this is my cousin David Wilson, another—

PEMBROKE

Only most folks hereabout call him PUDD'NHEAD Wilson *(laughs)* and so please feel free to follow suit.

YORK

I say my cousin DAVID Wilson, educated at Yale, another of our fine, fine lawyers—

PEMBROKE

Only no one's ever given him a case to represent and so he serves as Frontier Landin's' volunteer schoolmarm.

YORK

And so we beg you to consider, in your long and arduous journey up the river, our little hamlet of Frontier Landin' to turn aside, and eddy, and settle.

MANLEY

I'M HEADED WEST,
MY DESTINY IS MANIFEST...

YORK

Oh, please, wait. My brother Lancaster will be wantin' to talk with you. I'll just go find him. Cousin Dave, Pembroke, talk to the people. Tell them of our fine, fine town. (exits)

PEMBROKE

WE'VE LINEAGE..
AND TUTELAGE...
AND PRIVILEGE..
AND GRACE...
SO STAY...
STAY...
STAY...
FRONTIER LANDIN' WILL REPAY

EVERY MOMENT SPENT
IN THIS MUNIFICENT... ..
MUNICIPALITY
OF FRONTIER LANDIN'.

PUDD'NHEAD

FIRST FAMILY OF VIRGINIA
I'LL CRAM THE LEARNIN' IN YA
BEST DAMN SLAVES OF ABYSSINIA
GRACE...
ON THE RIVER
ON THE RIVER
FOR YOU MUST REALIZE
FRONTIER LANDIN' WILL REPAY
AND HE DON'T TELL NO LIES!

...INCIPIENT
MUNICIPALITY
OF FRONTIER LANDIN'...

PUDD'NHEAD

THE GREAT MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

MANLEY

I'M HEADED WEST
MY DESTINY IS MANIFEST
THROUGH THE MISSOURI GATEWAY!

HOPE

I'M HEADED NORTH,
MINNESOTA BY JULY THE FOURTH
STRAIGHT UP THE MISSISSIPPI!

CHORUS

WE'RE TRAVELIN' ON,
CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON, OREGON,
TO BUILD A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE AMERICA!
SO YOU BETTER COME ON ALONG
UP THE RIVER TO THE FUTURE AND JOIN OUR SONG
OF A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE WITH LIBERTY
FROM SEA TO SEA, AMERICA!

(SEVERALLY)

WE'RE FELLIN' THE TREES,
AND BREAKIN' THE SOIL,
AND PLANTIN' THE CROPS,
AND BUILDIN' THE ROADS,
AND PUTTIN' UP FENCES,
AND RAISIN' UP TOWNS,
AND GETTIN' THE VOTE,
ELECTIN' THE SHERIFF,
WIPIN' OUT INJUNS,
OR MAKIN' 'EM CHRISTIANS,

(TOGETHER)

TO BUILD US A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE AMERICA!

*LANCASTER DRISCOLL enters (played by
the same actor as York Driscoll).
He is dressed in loud clothes, and
is louder, more aggressive and
businesslike than his genteel twin.
Jasper accompanies Lancaster.*

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, Cousin Lancaster! Cousin York is lookin' for you.

LANCASTER

Dad-blame it! He was supposed to send his nigger to fetch me.
Jasper, I almost missed the dad-blame riverboat!

JASPER

Sorry, Marse Lancaster.

LANCASTER

They haven't sold anything, have they?

PUDD'NHEAD

No, Cousin York was just tryin' to convince them to—

LANCASTER

People, people, people!

(sings)

PAY NO MIND TO WHAT MY BROTHER SAID,
HIS EFFETE ACCOUNT, I KNOW, MAKES US SOUND DEAD,
BUT WE'RE VERY MUCH ALIVE,
EVERY BUSINESS MAN IN TOWN WILL STRIVE
TO PUT FRONTIER LANDIN' ON THE MAP.

PEMBROKE

FOR THE RIVER'S OUR LIFE'S BLOOD.
WHAT THE HELL IF HALF OF HER IS MUD,
SHE'S OUR ARTERY TO ORLEANS.
THE FINEST TRAPPIN'S, THE SWEETEST SPOILIN'S
IN THE WORLD ARE OURS TO TAP.

LANCASTER

SPECULATION...
NEGOTIATION...
ACCUMULATION...
MAKES THIS NATION GREAT

PUDD'NHEAD

COTTON, HOGS, AND CATTLE
IN TRADE FOR HUMAN CHATTEL
HARK, THE DEATH RATTLE.
...SO GREAT!

PEMBROKE

GREAT! AND SO, MY FRIEN'S,
SAY GOODBYE TO ALL YOUR SUFFERIN'S.

LANCASTER

YOU HAVE FOUND OUR PARADISE.
NOWHERE OUT THERE COULD EVER BE SO NICE
AS THIS LITTLE BOOMIN' TOWN.
SEARCH RIVER UP, SEARCH RIVER DOWN,
(PEMBROKE JOINS IN) FRONTIER LANDIN'...

PUDD'NHEAD

...IS YOUR TRAP!

LANCASTER

IN THIS LATEST STATE...

PEMBROKE

AND THIS GREATEST STATE...

LANCASTER/PEMBROKE

NOT TO MENTION THIS STATELIEST STATE
OF THESE TWENTY-FOUR UNITED STATES:
MISSOURI!

PUDD'NHEAD

...STATE OF THE ART OF COMPROMISE.

CHORUS

WE'RE TRAVELIN' ON,
CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON, OREGON,
TO BUILD A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE
WITH LIBERTY FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA,
A FREE AMER—

LANCASTER

Say, what are those niggers doin' on that boat? Are those free niggers?

HOPE

No, they're my niggers. I'm takin' em to Minnesota with me.

LANCASTER

Well, you can't do that! Not and keep 'em too. Minnesota's free territory, ain't that so, Pembroke?

PEMBROKE

That's right. You take 'em north, west or east, you lose 'em.

LANCASTER

You'd best sell 'em here. We'll have us an auction.

HOPE

But they've always been in our family. They're like my children.

LANCASTER

They'll desert you as soon as they're over the Missouri state line.

PEMBROKE

What is your name, good woman?

HOPE

Darling. Mrs. Hope Darling, though my husband ... IS ... passed away.

PEMBROKE

Well, I do hope, Hope ... Darlin', that you have listened well to the messages of the Mess'rs Driscoll here, and that you will abide with us in Frontier Landin'.

HOPE

But I've got family in Minnesota.

PEMBROKE

You could achieve family here.

MANLEY

Or in the West, where a man is a man, with a woman like you needin' protection of her assets.

PEMBROKE

I'm a lawyer!

MANLEY

And I'm a man!

LANCASTER

And I'm startin' off the biddin' on the buck, two hundred dollars.

MANLEY

Two hundred! He's worth more than three times that!

LANCASTER

You're in Missouri now. Two hundred, do I hear a higher bid? Two hundred once, two hundred twice—

MANLEY

(to Hope who is torn) Don't take less than three hundred!

LANCASTER

Two twenty-five.

HOPE

Will you give them a good home?

LANCASTER

Why, of course! Goin', goin'—

HOPE

Well, if they're just goin' to desert me anyhow, I suppose so then.

LANCASTER

Gone! Two hundred twenty-five dollars. *(counts out money)*

PEMBROKE

You got their papers, darlin'? I mean, uh, Hope ... Darlin'?

Hope takes the papers from her bag.

LANCASTER

That wench looks sickly. I'll start off the bidding at one hundred.

HOPE

But she's with child! You got to pay something for the child.

LANCASTER

From the looks of her, I don't think that baby's got much of a chance of gettin' out alive. One hundred ten, goin' once, goin' twice—

HOPE

Oh, all right.

LANCASTER

Gone, gone, gone! (*pays Hope*) You two get down off that boat.

HOPE

They're house servants, not field hands. And I always give them an extra portion of bread and gravy along in the afternoons. Oh, Pearly! (*sobs, throws her arms around the slave woman*)

As the slaves get off the boat to be examined by Lancaster, who feels body parts and checks teeth and ears, Roxy and Jasper stand apart, singing to Happy in Roxy's arms.

ROXY

NO, HONEY BABY, IT'S BEST TO TURN AWAY YOUR EYE.

ROXY/JASPER

FOR ON THE RIVER, YOUR LIFE IS MISERY, AIN'T WORTH LIVIN'
ON THE RIVER, YOUR LIFE'S JUST DRIFTWOOD FLOATIN' BY.
OH, ON THE RIVER, THE WATER EDDIES,
NEVER RESTIN', EVER EBBIN', EVER CRESTIN',
DOWNIN' JETTIES, BREAKIN' LEVEES,
DROWNIN' SOULS ALONG ITS WAY.

PEMBROKE

You're going to have time up in St. Louis, Hope Darlin', to think about us down here in Frontier Landin', and your children here, and ... remember, darlin', Pembroke Howard, lawyer and single.

MANLEY + HOPE

(more slowly)

I'M ... HEADED ... WEST!
OUR ... DESTINY ... IS MANIFEST
THROUGH THE MISSOURI GATEWAY!

The riverboat starts to move upstream again. The chorus brings the tune up to tempo.

CHORUS

WE'RE TRAVELIN' ON,
CALIFORNIA, WASHINGTON, OREGON,
TO BUILD A BIGGER AND BETTER AND FREE AMERICA!
SO YOU BETTER PACK YOUR THINGS AND COME ALONG
UP THE RIVER CROSS THE PLAINS AND THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS TO THE VALLEY
BY THE OCEAN OF THE FUTURE AND JOIN OUR SONG
OF A VERY MUCH BIGGER AND A VERY MUCH BETTER
AND A VERY VERY VERY VERY FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE
A FREE AMERICA!

*The riverboat is gone and the
townspeople go offstage severally.*

LANCASTER

What a steal! What a rare steal! Turn around there boy, let me see
that back! Look at those arms, Pembroke! Ain't he a specimen!

PEMBROKE

He is!

LANCASTER

Down Arkansas with the market they got goin', I'll pull at least six
hundred for him.

PUDD'NHEAD

Cousin Lancaster, he's a house servant. Down the river on the
plantations, they'll work him to death!

LANCASTER

Why, that body was born to work the fields. *(to Slave Woman)* Is that
his pup you're carryin'?

PEARLY

He my husban', yes sir.

LANCASTER

Good, let's hope it's a buck and he takes after his pa. Pembroke,
that slave trader who passed through here last week going up to St.
Louis? When did he say he was going back downriver?

PEMBROKE

Said he's taking the Pride of N'Orleans back down next week.

LANCASTER

I'll commission the buck to him and hold onto the wench until after
she gives up the pup. Jasper, carry these two over to my place and
tell the overseer he'd best lock them up.

JASPER

I belong to Marse York, not to you.

LANCASTER

My brother's nigger is my nigger! You'll do as I say or take a whippin'!

Jasper leads the two slaves off.

PEMBROKE

Uppity! These Missouri niggers!

LANCASTER

That's what comes from you know who (*indicating Pudd'nhead*) tryin' to put ideas into that monkey's head.

PUDD'NHEAD

Cousin Lancaster, you promised those people—

LANCASTER

Cousin, will you take your pointy nose out of my affairs!

PUDD'NHEAD

One day, one fine, terrible day the northern states WILL rise up and right these wrongs. And that day, Cousin Lancaster, Pembroke, I shall stand with the North against you — without compromise!

PEMBROKE

You looky here, Pudd'nhead Wilson. North is North and South is South and that twain ain't never gonna meet!

LANCASTER

And furthermore, Cousin, that twain ain't never even gonna pull out of the station!

*With a gesture of huge frustration,
Pudd'nhead stalks off. Hiking up
his pants in victory, Lancaster
approaches Roxy and the baby-wagon.*

LANCASTER

Which of these tads is mine, Roxy?

ROXY

(*quaking*) That Marse Tom there, sir.

LANCASTER

Smile for me, Tom. Tickle him, Roxy! (*laughs*) Look at him, Pembroke, takes after his daddy, don't he? (*eyes other baby*) Your brat's lookin' good, Roxy. Real good. You feedin' him right?

ROXY

Yes sir.

LANCASTER

Good. Good. You take care of him now. (*to Pembroke as they start off*) Think I'll have that trader take a look at Roxy's pup, too, so he can be settin' up a buyer downriver once Roxy gets him weaned.

*They go off, leaving Roxy alone,
riveted with horror.*

ROXY

OH NO! OH NO! HE CAN'T! HE SHAN'T!
OH NO! I'LL DIE FIRST, I'LL KILL YOU FIRST!
(*to Lancaster's baby*)

WHY CAN'T MY CHILD HAVE SOME OF YOUR LUCK?
GOD WAS GOOD TO YOU,
WHY WARN'T GOD GOOD TO HIM?
GOT THE LIFE OF A DOG,
THE LIFE OF HIS MA!
AND THAT'S WORSE'N NO LIFE AT ALL!

(*picking up her own baby*)

You see that green over across the river, honey? That's where we gonna aim, iff'n I can find a log to carry us. I ... I can't hardly swim. But I can kick! I'll strap you on the log and I'll kick and I'll kick, and I'll push you and push you till we reach. And then we just goin' run! And if we don't reach ... if we don't reach ... well then ... you better off, honey.

COME ALONG, SWEET LAMB,
COME ALONG WITH YOUR MAM,
WE'LL GO ALONG DOWN TO OLD MR. RI-YI-YI-YI-VER.
WE'LL TRUST IN THE RIVER AND IF HE CARRY US DOWN,
THEN ALL THIS WORLD'S TROUBLES IS GONE.
THERE'S A PLACE IN GOD'S HEAVEN FOR YOU AND ME.
THEY DON'T BUY AND SELL SOULS IN GOD'S HEAVEN, YOU'LL SEE.
IN GOD'S HEAVEN ALL THE PEOPLES LIVE FREE.
COME ALONG, DON'T BE AFRAID,
COME ALONG CHILD, WITH ME.

But no, I ain't goin' be fished out with everybody gawkin' at me in this mis'able old linsey-woolsey and this slave rag on my head!

GO TO MY GRAVE WITH MY HAIR FIXED LIKE WHITE FOLK, YOU BET!
GO TO MY GRAVE IN MY ONLIES' BES' DRESS...

(takes red dress out of wagon wistfully)

...AIN'T EVEN WORE IT YET.
I BEEN SAVIN' IT
FOR THE NIGHT WITH THE MAN I WILL LOVE,
FIRST SWEET KISS,
I BEEN SAVIN' IT, NOW I KNOW,
FOR THIS.

OH NO! OH NO! I CAN'T! I WON'T!
OH NO! I MUST! FOR YOU CHILD, I MUST!

OH NO, DARLIN', DON'T YOU WORRY,
MAMMY AIN'T GONNA TREAT YOU SO.
ALL THEM ANGELS'LL ADMIRE YOU
JUST AS MUCH AS THEY DO YOUR MA.
AIN'T GONNA HAVE 'EM
FLINGIN' THEIR ANGEL WINGS UP BEFORE THEIR EYES
SAYIN' "BLESS MY SOUL! THAT CHILD IS DRESS'
TOO INDELICATE FOR THIS HERE PARADISE."
OH NO, OH NO, YOU'LL BE FINE, YOU'LL SHINE.
OH NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT,
MAMMY'S WITH YOU IN THE NIGHT.

(begins to exchange the babies' gowns)

MARSE TOM, YOU DON'T MIND,
NOW DO YOU SWEET THING,
IF HAPPY TAKE YOUR LITTLE GOWN,
FOR TO GET INTO ANGEL TOWN?
HE'S JUST YOUR LITTLE CRADLE FRIEND, HAPPY,
OUR HAPPY, SWEET THING,
AND HE WILL BLESS YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS
FOR ALL ETERNITY AND TO THE END ... OF ...

(The gown exchange complete, she breaks off.)

Why, Happy! I never knowed you was so lovely! Now who be thinkin' a
little gown could make the diff'ence of—

(recoils, then)

OH MY CHILE! OH MY CHILE!
GOD'A'MERCY, YOU'RE SAVED!
BUT IF THEY FIND OUT—
BUT THEY WON'T FIND OUT!
WHO BUT ME IS HERE TO SAY?
OH, LORD, HELP ME!
MARSE TOM, HELP ME!
I'S SORRY FOR YOU, CHILE,
BUT I GOT TO DO WHAT I GOT TO DO,
AND IT'S YOU THAT'S GOT TO PAY.
OH NO! OH NO! OH, YES!

AND WHEN WE GET TO GOD'S HEAVEN—

(music continues)

ONLY, LORD, I DON'T S'POSE
I'LL SEE YOUR HEAVEN NOW.
BUT IF I DO,
AND I MEET YOU,
AND YOU,
AND YOU MEET ME,
MARSE TOM ... HAPPY ...

(corrects herself, fixes new names in her head)

HAPPY! MARSE TOM! HAPPY, MARSE TOM. HAPPY! HAPPY!
FORGIVE ME!

*(As her last note hangs on the air,
the lights fade out.)*

SCENE TWO: FRONTIER LANDING'S CEMETERY — AUGUST, 1858

HAPPY

(offstage) Marse Tom! Marse Tom! Please don't!

*HAPPY runs onstage with TOM chasing
him, beating Happy with his hat.
From this point on, the name "TOM"
is used for Roxy's real child, and
the name "HAPPY" is used for
Lancaster's child. Tom and Happy are
both 22 years of age now.*

TOM

Hap! I told you to keep that fellow away from here!

HAPPY

But he a white man, Marse Tom! I can't keep a white man from—

TOM

You'll do as I say or take a whippin'! *(starts hitting him again)*
Damn your eyes!

HAPPY

I do what I can!

TOM

You tell him this is my father's funeral here and he ain't welcome,
but I'll be a rich man tomorrow. Tomorrow, you hear? You tell him
that. But tell him we got to get the will read first. I'll pay him,
every cent I owe him, tomorrow or the next day. Got that?

HAPPY

Marse Tom, you bes' stop that gamblin'

HAPPY

You worthless nigger, shut up your mouth tellin' me what to do, or I'll shut it for you. You just go do as I tell you to do and get that man away from here before anyone sees him.

Roxy runs on.

ROXY

Marse Tom, honey, please don't be beatin' Happy, honey. Happy, you run off now and do what Marse Tom tell you to.

Happy runs off.

Marse Tom, honey—

TOM

Get your nigger hands off me, wench! It's repulsive, ain't I told you again and again, yet you can't keep your hands off me?

ROWENA

(offstage) Cousin Tom? Cousin Tom?

ROXY

Oh, Marse Tom, honey, it's just all these years I been takin' such care of you, but please, Marse Tom, the folks is comin' down from your pappy's grave, and please don't let 'em see you mean like this.

TOM

Take your nigger—

ROWENA DRISCOLL runs onstage, nineteen years old and a lovely naif dressed in black.

ROWENA

Oh, Cousin Tom, I've been lookin' everywhere for you. *(calls offstage)* I found him, Pa!

York Driscoll enters, also in black.

YORK

Tom, how could you run off like that from your father's graveside?

TOM

My grief, Uncle! My grief was so great that I could not bear to watch the earth devour my poor father's coffin!

ROWENA

Cousin Tom, you must be strong.

TOM

Cousin Rowena, thank you! Oh, Uncle, Uncle, let me look on your face, so like his, and— Oh, my father's loving friends!

Tom joins entering funeral guests. Among the whites are Pembroke, Hope Darling on his arm, and Pudd'nhead, tinkering with a contraption. Among the slaves are Jasper with a young black woman, GLORY. Happy joins them. Also, for the first time, are DISENFRANCHISED FOLKS in Native American, Chinese and Mexican garb, drifters who have settled in Frontier Landing and are silent onlookers, not part of either the white or black societies.

HOPE

Pembroke, honey ... why don't you settle the Roxana business first?

PEMBROKE

Good idea, Hope, darlin', to get that out of the way. Oh, York, may I speak with you for a moment about Roxy?

YORK

Yes, good, Pem. Oh, Roxy, Mr. Howard here has something to read to you.

ROXY

(joining them) To me? Yes sir, Mister Howard, sir?

PEMBROKE

In the terms of your master's will, Roxy, he ... uh ... Let's see how he puts it ... *(reads from a paper)* "As for my slave Roxana, because of her unstinting devotion to my son Tom, tending him through sickness and health as though he were her own child— "

HOPE

(warning Pembroke that Pudd'nhead is reading over his shoulder) Ah, Pembroke!

PEMBROKE

(folds up the will pointedly) Exeteray, exeteray. When your master hired ME, Roxy, to execute his will, he entrusted me with this. Here. Your letter of manumission, signed by his own hand, Lancaster Percy Driscoll... *(puts the letter in her hand)* ...and delivered. Oh, Tom!

*As Pembroke joins Tom upstage,
Rowena rushes to Roxy.*

ROWENA

Roxy, your manumission! How good, how generous of Uncle Lancaster!

YORK

(softly) Your manumission, Roxy. Congratulations.

*As York and Rowena join the others,
Roxy turns to Pudd'nhead.*

ROXY

My man-you-which?

PUDD'NHEAD

Manumission. You're free, Roxy.

ROXY

This piece of paper means I's free?

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes, these words here.

ROXY

(after a long moment) And then what?

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, and then ... you can ... go wherever you want, do whatever you—

ROXY

I got to leave Marse Tom?

TOM

(to Pembroke) What?! What are you telling me?! Nothing!

PEMBROKE

Your father's speculations grew, to put it most charitably,
unwise ... in the extreme. In the end, he lost everything.

TOM

The house at least? And the land?

PEMBROKE

They must be sold to cover the debt and, of course, my small fee.

ROXY

Oh, Marse Tom!

YORK

(with his arm around Rowena) You have a home with us, nephew, as long as you want it.

ROXY

And Marse Tom, I can still work for you even though—

TOM

Yes, I've still got the slaves. I can sell them and—

HOPE

Well, no, Tom, you don't. I am not surprised your father did not tell you, but when I came back to Frontier Landin' and saw the way he had taken my Jake from my Pearly and sold him down the river despite my entreaties— *(breaks off, weeping)*

YORK

Hope came to me, Tom, and pleaded with me to buy Pearly and her little Glory from your father which I did. Otherwise he most certainly would have sold them down the river as well, no doubt separately. At that same time I bought Happy to save him from that same fate, though I knew he would never part with Roxy.

TOM

So, then—

YORK

You may still have the use of Happy as your manservant, as always, but you cannot sell him. As for Roxy—

TOM

Yes, I've still got Roxy at least, and she should fetch—

YORK

Your father freed Roxy in his will.

HAPPY

(running to Roxy, with covert jubilation) Oh, Mammy!

TOM

My God, Lord almighty, why have you forsaken me!

*Tom wanders off in abject self-pity,
while the guests also drift off,*

murmuring in sympathy. Roxy would follow Tom, but is immediately surrounded by Happy, Jasper, and Glory.

HAPPY
(*swinging her around*) Mammy, you's free!

GLORY
Free!

JASPER
Free?

ROXY
Free?

JASPER
What you goin' do now, Roxy? You goin' to leave us, ain't you?

ROXY
I 'spec I got to now. Spec' I got to make ... money, I 'spec.

GLORY
Go off and be a chambermaid on the river! I alluz dream of it!
GO OFF CHAMBERMAIDIN' ON THE RIVERBOATS!

HAPPY
YEAH, CLEAR OUT AND SEE THE LAND.

GLORY
GO OFF AND MAKE A LITTLE MONEY—

HAPPY
MAKE A LOT!
AND DON'T COME BACK TO TOWN WITHOUT A BAND.

GLORY
GO OFF AND ...

HAPPY
GO OFF AND ...
(*they stop befuddled*)

ROXY
Go off and what?

GLORY

GO OFF AND DIG FOR GOLD IN CALIFORNIA.

HAPPY

YEAH, STAKE YOUR CLAIM AND STRIKE IT RICH.

GLORY

BRING ME HOME A NUGGET!

HAPPY

MAMMY, BRING THE WHOLE DAMN LODE!
MY PALM IS EMPTY BUT IT'S GOT AN ITCH!

GLORY

THEN WE'LL HAVE A CAKEWALK—

HAPPY

...WE'LL THROW A JUBILEE!
YEAH, CALL THE FOLKS FROM ALL AROUND.

GLORY

TO WELCOME HOME OUR RICH AND DARLIN' ROXY!

GLORY/HAPPY

THEN WE'LL CAKEWALK YOU RIGHT BACK OUTA TOWN.

*They collapse on each other,
laughing. Then Glory pulls away.*

GLORY

Roxy, me and Happy we got a surprise, too, for you.

HAPPY

Yes'm. You goin' be a gran'mammy! Howzat now?

ROXY

Oh, Laws!

*As Happy and Glory tickle each
other, Jasper comes forward.*

JASPER

(slowing the tune)

GO OFF AND MAKE A HOMESTEAD SOMEWHERE IN THE NORTH,
I'LL RUN OFF AND JOIN YOU —

ROXY

Jasper!

JASPER

I GOT A PLAN.

ROXY

Jasper, you don't!

JASPER

OHIO, ILLINOIS OR INDIANA.

WE'LL BE FREE MAN AND WIFE...

HAPPY

(with his hand on Glory's belly) So, howzat Mammy?

Roxy puts her head in her hands and walks offstage.

JASPER

...IN A FREE LAN'.

(caressing Glory's nape) Your mammy and pappy would be so happy for you, honey.

Jasper sadly follows Roxy. Happy and Glory dance a sensual duet ending with their four hands coming to rest on her belly. The lights change.

SCENE THREE: YORK DRISCOLL'S PARLOR

York Driscoll reads a newspaper as Pudd'nhead enters.

YORK

Morning, Cuz.

Pudd'nhead takes plates from his temporary pocket-boxes and puts them into his permanent collection of many larger boxes in a bookcase.

PUDD'NHEAD

Morning, Cuz! I got four brand new hand specimens! That new family moved in west of town. *(pauses briefly as he puts plates in order)* Uh, Cuz, now that Tom has moved into the house, I would understand completely if— what I mean to say is— if you would prefer that I vacate the premises—

YORK

Now, Dave, we have been through this—

PUDD'NHEAD

It is one thing for a poor relation to linger on a month or two, but it has been twenty-two years—

YORK

Twenty-three years, but who's countin'? And, Cuz, may I remind you that you are the single other charter member of our Society of Freethinkers of Frontier Landin'. I can't lose you!

PUDD'NHEAD

(laughing) Thank you, Cousin. I only wish the rest of Frontier Landin' had the faith in me that you do.

YORK

Oh, I have no faith in you, I just find you entertainin'. Now, don't you worry, Dave, we're establishin' Frontier Landin' a township in just a matter of months, and there's no one fool enough to run against me for mayor, and then this town starts payin' you for your schoolmarmarin'.

PUDD'NHEAD

But I should be lawyerin'! I should have been lawyerin' all these years! But when my own cousin, on his deathbed and dictatin' his will, calls for Pembroke Howard—

YORK

Well, Cuz, if you would just put away your toys, or at least not display them so flamboyantly—

PUDD'NHEAD

And just what toys are you talking about?

YORK

And just what's that you've got in your hand? And that thingamabob you got hanging on the lightning rod with the arms and wheels and—

PUDD'NHEAD

My gyro-atmostat, yes, to harness the lightning bolt! One day it will light up every house in Frontier Landin', yes!

YORK

(pointing to the collection of plates) ...and your palm-readin' stuff there on every shelf, and goin' around collectin' toenail clippin's, and I don't know what all—

PUDD'NHEAD

I do not collect toenail clippin's! My plates represent a very serious, scientific— Oh, Roxy.

Roxy has come in hesitantly.

YORK

Why, Roxy, what brings you here?

ROXY

Yes sir, I was wonderin' sir— maybe you got some work for me, sir?

YORK

Oh, I'm afraid, Roxy, we've got all the ... servants ... we need.

ROXY

Yes sir.

YORK

But you have your letter of manumission now, Roxy. You take it, and you go up north and look for a position there. Or go west. Or go east. Or you could ... go ...

The pause stretches. Finally York reaches into his pocket and brings out a coin that he puts into Roxy's hand. All three are mortified. Finally Roxy turns to go.

PUDD'NHEAD

Roxy, I wish—

ROWENA

(offstage) Pa! *(running on)* Pa!

YORK

What, child?!

ROWENA

You said I could do it, Pa! You said so!

YORK

What?

ROWENA

You said if I could find a real and genuine, polished musician of refinement who would agree to come to Frontier Landin', that you would bring him here to give me lessons on the piano.

YORK

Well yes, so I did, and—

ROWENA

And I placed an advertisement in the St. Louis papers, and...

YORK

You placed an adver— ???

ROWENA

...here, at last, is an answer, and I think you'll find the gentlemen suitable.

(puts letter triumphantly in York's hand)

YORK

(reading aloud) "Honored Madam— "

ROWENA

I like that, Pa, don't you? It shows they're high-bred, even though I am unmarried and not yet a madam.

YORK

"My brother and I have seen your advertisement— "

ROWENA

The writin's so beautiful and smooth, Pa. Don't you think so, Cousin Dave?

PUDD'NHEAD

Very smooth.

YORK

"...and beg leave to respond. We are twenty-four years of age, and twins— "

ROWENA

Twins, Pa! Just like you and Uncle Lancaster, only both still livin', of course. I do hope they're handsome, don't you, Cousin Dave, and I just know they are!

YORK

"We are Italian by birth— "

ROWENA

Italians! It's so romantic! Just think, there's never been one in this town, and everybody'll want to see them, and they're all ours!

YORK

"...but have toured the various countries of Europe, performing in all the greatest concert halls there."

ROWENA

Just think what wonders they've seen!

YORK

"Our names are Luigi and Angelo Cappello— "

ROWENA

Perfectly beautiful! Not like Jones and Robinson and such.

YORK

"...and though you desire but one instructor, dear madam, we will not discommode you, for we will accept one salary, and sleep in the same bed. We have always been used to this, and prefer it."

ROWENA

Oh, exeteray, exeteray! (*snatches the letter back*) He goes on to say they will be down Tuesday, and that's today, and I haven't—

HAPPY

(*offstage*) God a'mighty!

YORK

My land!

HAPPY

(*running in*) God a'mighty, Marse York, they's a witch a-comin'!

Following Happy come LUIGI and ANGELO CAPPELLO, Siamese Twins who are joined along the side. They have adapted to their condition and move with ease and grace, if perhaps a bit crablike. Though twins and extremely handsome, they are alike in neither looks nor personality. Luigi is dark and fierce of mien and wears a scarlet cravat; Angelo is fair-haired, soft-voiced and shy and wears a delicate pink cravat.

Pudd'nhead, York and Rowena stand stunned while Happy ducks behind the settee. The Twins doff their hats in a flurry of hands, and bow with

*elaborate formality, speaking in
very heavy Italian accents.*

LUIGI

I crave the honor, sirs, ladies, to introduce to you my brother,
Count Angelo Cappello. *(the other head nods)* And myself, Count
Luigi Capello. *(the speaking head nods)*

YORK

York Driscoll, I'm sure. *(reaching for hand after hand, not knowing
which to shake)* And this is my daughter, uh, uh...

PUDD'NHEAD

Rowena.

YORK

Yes, Rowena, I'm sure.

ROWENA

I'm glad to make your acquaintance, sir— I mean, gentlemen.
Acquaintances.

PUDD'NHEAD

And I'm David Wilson. Welcome to Frontier Landin'.

ROWENA

Both of you, he means. *(looks to York for hospitality)* Pa?

YORK

Uh ... Uh ...

ROWENA

Won't you sit down? You do sit?

ANGELO

Oh, yes! With pleasure!

ROWENA

Hap, bring us— Happy, what are you standin' around gawkin' at! Our
guests will think we have never seen ... that ... our slaves are
rude! Bring us— I don't care what, just bring us something.

HAPPY

Mammy?

ROXY

Close your head, chile. *(sweeps Happy offstage but turns back to
admire the twins)* Ain't Jesus wonderful!

ANGELO

They are sleffs? But they appear white, the pitiful things.

PUDD'NHEAD

Would they be less pitiful if they were coal black?

LUIGI

Mr. Wilson is right, Angelo. We are all sleffs, each to the other.

ANGELO

Luigi, you hurt me. I am devoted to you, you know that.

LUIGI

But dear brother, we mustn't quarrel, we are here under audition for Miss Driscoll. I see I was wrong to address you in my letter as Madam. You are very young—

ANGELO

And very lovely ... very, very lovely.

ROWENA

Oh! Thank you!

LUIGI

What my brother means, Miss Driscoll, is that it appears you will be an apt pupil.

ROWENA

Oh, Pa, do you hear?

YORK

Uh... uh...

PUDD'NHEAD

Mr. Driscoll is a bit stupefied at the moment. Perhaps he should hear you play before he makes a decision. Here's the piano, gentlemen.

The Twins move to the piano and knock out a four-hand medley of Hungarian Rhapsody #2, Schubert's Piano Trio in Eb, Andante con moto, and Camptown Ladies.

ANGELO

We played theesa before Louis Napoleon in Parigi...

LUIGI

...Theesa in London for their dreadful queen...

ANGELO

And in New Orleans, theesa by your own Estefano Foster! (*singing along as they launch into "Camptown Ladies"*) And finally, a modest little composition of our own. When we introduced it in New Orleans, ladies swooned.

They end with a rollicking bit of bravura stolen from Gottschalk. Rowena swoons. The twins rush to her, Angelo a bit careless where he puts his hands.

ROWENA

Sir! I mean, sirs! I mean, uh ... Angelo ...

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, if that ain't the slam-bangiest finger work I ever saw! I mean the piano playin'. Did you see that, Cuz?

YORK

Uh, uh.

ROWENA

(revived and agog) I think I can speak for Pa. You're hired! *(to Happy, who has come back in meanwhile with a tray but nothing on it, Roxy steadying him)* Hap, show the Counts to the guest room. Both of them, I mean. To the one room, I mean. *(the Counts take both her hands and kiss them simultaneously; she nearly swoons again.)* Oh!

ANGELO

Until later.

ROWENA

Yes, I'm sure.

PUDD'NHEAD

(with a glance at the still trembling Happy) Uh, Roxy, let's just accompany Happy, shall we, to make sure he doesn't lose them? This way, gentlemen.

All leave but Rowena and York.

YORK

(finally getting a voice) Always been used to sleeping in the same bed ... in fact prefer it!

ROWENA

Now, Pa...

YORK

Did you ever see such a wormy squirming of arms! I'm just giddy from it!

ROWENA

Pa, you oughtn't to begin by gettin' up a prejudice against him.

YORK

A body situated such as that young man is—

ROWENA

I'm sure he is good-hearted. Both of his faces show it.

YORK

I don't know. The one on the left— I mean the one on its left— the one that was west of the other as they came in the door—

ROWENA

That's Luigi.

YORK

...hasn't near as good a face as its brother.

ROWENA

That's Angelo. *Don't* he have a noble face, Pa! Just royal, you may say, and his eyes so kind and gentle! Angelo, like an angel.

YORK

Child, have you gone round the bend?

ROWENA

We must throw a reception!

YORK

A reception! For him!

ROWENA

THEM, Pa, you ought to say THEM. It's nearer right. A reception! They're going to cause such a stir in this old town, and they're all ours! (*shaking his head, York exits*) Oh, he's so Eye-Talian!

WAS THERE EVER SO WINSOME A SWAIN?

ANGELO THE ANGEL!

WAS THERE EVER SO NOBLE A PROFILE?

AND SO GOLDEN, LUXURIANT A MANE?

HAIR OF AN ANGEL!

I THINK I LOVE HIM—

OH, YOU MUST BE INSANE!

(arguing back and forth, interrupting herself)

HOW CAN YOU LOVE HIM,

YOU KNOW YOU JUST MET HIM,

AND REMEMBER THERE'S ONE OTHER LITTLE QUESTION—

OH, I KNOW YOU, YOU'LL SAY HE IS TOO TALL—

THAT'S NOT THE CASE AT ALL,

BUT IF YOU WILL RECALL

I HAVE NOT YET EXPRESSED MY SMALL SUGGESTION,

THAT MATHEMATICALLY,

AND MORE DRAMATICALLY,

WITH SIX OF ONE... (HOW MANY OF THE OTHER?)

ON YOUR WEDDING NIGHT—

PLEASE I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT,

AND ANGELO JUST MIGHT—

OH, HE IS QUITE ALL RIGHT,

BUT WHAT ABOUT HIS BROTHER?!?!

WILL YOU LISTEN TO HEAD OR TO HEART?

WILL YOU LISTEN TO REASON OR ROMANCE?

TO ARITHMETIC, LOGIC, OR ART?

I ONLY KNOW I LOVE HIM—

WELL, THAT'S NOT VERY SMART.

*Lights come up on Angelo and Luigi
in bedroom, changing from coat into
a lounging jacket. Sleeves fly.*

ANGELO

WAS THERE EVER SO LIMPID AN EYE?

LUIGI

ROWENA THE COW.

ANGELO

WAS THERE EVER SO LACY AN EYELASH?

AND SO SHAPELY, SO COMELY A THIGH?

LUIGI

THE HAM OF A SOW.

ANGELO

I THINK I LOVE HER!

LUIGI

OH, I THINK I MAY CRY!

HOW CAN YOU LOVE HER,

YOU KNOW YOU JUST MET HER,
AND REMEMBER THERE'S ONE OTHER LEETLE QUESTION—

ANGELO

OH, I KNOW YOU, YOU'LL SAY SHE IS TOO SMALL—

LUIGI

THAT'S NOT THE CASE AT ALL,
BUT IF YOU WILL RECALL,
THERE IS THE SIMPLE QUESTION OF CONGESTION.
THE BED IS CROWDED AS IT IS
UNDOUBTEDLY BECAUSE
YOU TOSS AND TURN—

ANGELO

WELL, YOUR FEET ARE TOO FREEGEE-DA!

LUIGI

(indicating urination)

THEN NIGHTLY YOU ANOINT US—

ANGELO

WILL YOU COME TO THE POINT!

LUIGI

THE POINT IS WE ARE JOINT, I HATE TO DISAPPOINT,
BUT WHAT ABOUT LUIGI?!?!

ANGELO

WILL YOU LISTEN TO HEAD OR TO HEART?

LUIGI

WHOSE-A HEAD, WHOSE-A HEART?

ANGELO

WILL YOU LISTEN TO REASON OR ROMANCE?
WILL YOU BE WHOLE, OR WILL YOU BE PART?

LUIGI

DEPENDS-A WHICH-A PART.

ANGELO

WHAT IF I LOVE HER?

LUIGI

WHAT IF I DEPART?

ANGELO

(GASPS) CAN IT BE THIS IS PUSH COME TO SHOVE?

ROWENA

OH, I AM CONFUSED!

LUIGI

CAN THIS BE HAND ABANDONING GLOVE?

ROWENA

AND I'M NOT AMUSED!

CAN I BE BOTH LIKE TURTLE AND DOVE?

ANGELO/LUIGI

HOW I AM ABUSED!

ANGELO/LUIGI/ROWENA

IN THIS WORLD OF HELL AND HEAVEN,

AM I WAND'RING BELOW OR ABOVE?

AM I WAKING FROM DAYDREAM OR NIGHTMARE?

AM I/IS HE THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING OF?

I THINK I'M/HE'S INSANE—

NO, I/HE MUST BE IN LOVE!

Lights change, The set changes to...

SCENE FOUR: IN FRONT OF YORK DRISCOLL'S HOUSE

Pudd'nhead comes on, tinkering with a contraption, and sees in a window a young woman, her bonnet veiled, absorbed in a dancelike endeavor.

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, would you look at that! A member of the fair sex in Tom Driscoll's bedroom! Why, Tommy, Tommy, who could she be?

Roxy enters, sees the young woman in the window and sees too that Pudd'nhead has observed.

ROXY

(in a voice deliberately loud) Mister Wilson!

Young woman, alarmed, shuts curtain.

PUDD'NHEAD

Roxy, I am so glad to see you!. I was afraid you had left Frontier Landin' without saying goodbye.

ROXY

I am fixin' to leave, Mister Wilson, but it's hard leavin' family and home.

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, I'm afraid the curtains are closed now, but I do believe I saw someone movin' in Tom's room. Perhaps I should go up and rouse him for you.

ROXY

No! I mean, don't trouble him, please, I can come back. What I mean to say is, well, we ain't proper said our own goodbyes, have we, Mister Wilson?

PUDD'NHEAD

Roxy, I am ... so ... deeply touched.

ROXY

(lowers her voice, shyly) You're the only white gentleman that was ever ... a REAL gentleman with me, and I 'preciates it. You had opportunity, but you never took it.

PUDD'NHEAD

Without your free will, Roxy, and, and, I could see how it was with you and Kwombo, but now, but now, Roxy, you ARE free, and, and I was thinking—

Behind Pudd'nhead's back, the young woman slips out Tom's back door.

ROXY

(seeing the woman has slipped away) Oh, beggin' your pardon, Mister Wilson, beggin' your pardon, sir, there's a thing I got to do. *(runs off after the woman)*

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, I am such a fool!

Pembroke and Hope enter.

PEMBROKE

Hey, Pudd'nhead, where's this human pair of scissors come to town?

HOPE

We hear he's got two sets of everything but he's only got one—

PUDD'NHEAD

Mrs. Howard, please! Pembroke! They'll be comin' out for the reception any minute, and I trust y'all brought your Missouri hospitality with you. Oh, here they come now.

York and Rowena usher Angelo and Luigi onto the veranda. Happy and Jasper bring trays of drinks and food.

YORK

Good evening, Pembroke, Hope. I'd like to introduce you to our guests. Count Luigi Cappello, Mr. Pembroke Howard, Mrs. Howard.

LUIGI

Most happy!

PEMBROKE

(devouring stare, mixed up handshake) Glad to meet you.

HOPE

Likewise.

ROWENA

Good evening, Mister Howard, Mrs. Howard. Present you to Count Angelo Cappello.

ANGELO

Most happy!

PEMBROKE

(devouring stare, mixed up handshake) Glad to meet you.

HOPE

Likewise ... too ... and again.

PEMBROKE

(handshake, devouring stare) Glad to meet you ... too.

YORK

But Counts ... uh, Counts Cappelli ... your drinkin' hands, I mean whichever they are, are conspicuously vacant. Hap, offer the Counts Cappelli something to drink.

LUIGI

Oh, no, my brother is a Tee-Total Abstainer.

ROWENA

That is to your credit, Angelo.

LUIGI

(taking from Happy two glasses) But not I, my good man, and therefore I shall have two more.

ANGELO

Please, no more, Luigi. I am lightheaded already!

ROWENA

But if you don't drink yourself ... ?

ANGELO

We share the same blood. *(hiccups)*

LUIGI

I drink for two, and leave him with the headache.

ANGELO

But you must not think it is one-sided. I take Luigi's medicine for him.

ROWENA

You are a saint!

LUIGI

Oh, he doesn't mind. He has no taste at all.

ANGELO

It's true! *(Luigi takes another swig.)* Luigi, please stop! We don't want another scene!

PEMBROKE

And so how is it that the two of you tolerate each other?

ANGELO

(petting Luigi's hair)

"A mastiff dog
May love a puppy cur for no other reason...
Than that the twain..."

LUIGI

"Than that the twain... *(puts Angelo's hand back on his own person)* ...have been tied up together." *(swig)*

ANGELO

Alfred Lord Tennyson. (*hiccup*s) Luigi, no more!

*More guests have been arriving,
SHERIFF ALEXANDER MATTHEWS among
them.*

MATTHEWS

Why, Pudd'nhead, looky here at all these hands and feet for your collection. (*to Twins*) Has he printed you up yet, your Royalties?

LUIGI

I am sorry?

YORK

Sheriff Alexander Matthews, the Counts Cappelli.

MATTHEWS

(*shaking their hands*) Has he gotten your finger marks onto his glass plates yet? You see, Pudd'nhead here is supposed to be a lawyer, but his practice is flaggin' a little, and—

PUDD'NHEAD

It is true, gentlemen, that I do not practice law, that I have never had a case because, well, the town considers me a little eccentric.

PEMBROKE

A little eccentric! (*laughs with Matthews*) Gentlemen, what would you think of a man who keeps a glass collection of all the greasy paw prints in the county just to tell fortunes by?

LUIGI

(*turning suddenly to Pudd'nhead*) You have the geeft?

PEMBROKE

Geeft? Uh, gift? But you don't believe in this stuff, Count?

LUIGI

(*thrusting his hand at Pudd'nhead*) Try theesa hand.

Guests grow attentive.

PUDD'NHEAD

(*taking the hand nervously*) Well, I'm better at the past than the future... (*laughs*) ... or at least nothing I've ever read in the future has come true yet.

LUIGI

The past then.

PUDD'NHEAD

(tracing the lines) You have had a ... hard life, and it has left a bitterness in you, though you have a resilient spirit. There was a time when you were ... incarcerated or...

LUIGI

Enslaffed, yes.

Crowd gasps.

ANGELO

(very tipsy, leans his head on Luigi's shoulder) We are all sleffs, Luigi. *(hiccup)*

PUDD'NHEAD

Your father, it appears, was African.

PEMBROKE

(a significant look to Matthews) African!

Others softly repeat the word.

LUIGI

Moorish, yes. Our father was a Moroccan prince.

PUDD'NHEAD

(taking Angelo's hand) And your mother was fair, and royal, too.

ANGELO

She was a princess from Sweden, *(to Rowena)* and very lovely. We were their only child.

LUIGI

They were killed, murdered in an Italian insurrection and we were stolen while still in the cradle, and sold from circus to circus all over Italy, a cheap sideshow.

ANGELO

Chained at night to keep us from running away.

ROWENA

It's like out of a storybook.

ANGELO

Finally, a Mr. Barnum bought us and shipped us to America!

ROWENA

America, and then you were free!

LUIGI

Hardly! But Angelo, you tell too much. You are spoiling Mr. Wilson's excellent performance.

PUDD'NHEAD

(looks up suddenly from Luigi's palm) Here is record of an incident which you would perhaps not wish me to—

LUIGI

Bring it out.

PUDD'NHEAD

It's rather delicate. Perhaps I should whisper it to you.

LUIGI

That will not do. We want to show these people your talent. I tell you what, I shall write what I think you have discovered in my palm, and then you say it out loud.

PUDD'NHEAD

Very well, if that is your wish.

ANGELO

(warningly) Luigi—

*Luigi writes on a slip of paper,
folds it, hands it to Pembroke.*

LUIGI

Now, Mr. Wilson, what have you to say?

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, did you ...ever ... kill someone?

LUIGI

Mr. Howard, please read what I have written.

PEMBROKE

(reading) I killed a man.

Gasps from crowd.

YORK

Caesar's ghost!

ANGELO

It was for me! He is too modest to tell you, but he did it to save my life!

PUDD'NHEAD

And you used a— something ... very sharp and deadly. It has left its trace, its very essence in your hand.

LUIGI

It was a dagger, yes, a very rare and valuable dagger, the fabulous dagger of the Maharajah of India. It was the maharajah's concubine who had come to kill Angelo out of jealousy, but—

ANGELO

Luigi, tell them no more. You remember the last time?

LUIGI

But my brother is right. We must not send your guests home, Judge Driscoll, with tales of nightmare.

ANGELO

Home. Ah! Won't you all come into our lovely home?

LUIGI

Angelo, you should say judge Driscoll's lovely home.

YORK

Indeed, yes! It is still my home!

Angelo sings as he (and Luigi) begin herding people up the veranda and into the houses, guests joining in with gusto.

ANGELO

HOME, HOME, SWEET SWEET HOME,
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME,
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

As the last of the guests go into the house, the mysterious woman enters stealthily, still veiled, her bag now full. She starts around toward the back door, but a couple of men come out and linger to light

cigars and have a chat. The woman slips by them unseen and heads for the front door, but sees the people just inside. Off comes the bonnet and veil, and then the dress, revealing Tom in his own clothes beneath the disguise.

Tom stuffs the dress and hat and veil into the bag and starts to shove it under the veranda.

Roxy comes in behind him.

ROXY

(whispers) Marse Tom!

TOM

Roxy! Damn! You scared the pee-waddin' out of me!

ROXY

Marse Tom, I got sump'n to ax you.

TOM

Get out of my sight, wench!

ROXY

But Marse Tom, it seem I got to leave you, but if you could just gimme a dollar now and then ... well, I's kindly crippled in the arms now, but I can still do light work and—

TOM

A dollar! You ignorant nigger, you ain't gettin' a red cent from me.

Tom starts up the stairs but stops when he hears the new, menacing tone in Roxy's voice.

ROXY

You had your chance, you mean piece of trash, and you trompled it under your foot. When you get another one, you'll get down on your knees and beg for it.

TOM

(chilled) What are you talking about?

ROXY

(keeping her voice low) You think you can disguise your walk from me? All that sashayin' in them women's clothes. I been watchin' this boy walk for twenty year! And so I followed you tonight, in and out of every house in this town with all the people here at the reception. Stealin' everythin' that's not tied down! Maybe I'll just go into the parlor now and tell your uncle, "Oh, Marse York, why don't you go take a gander what Mars Tom's shoved up under the veranda!"

TOM

(coming a few steps down the stairs) Well, well, Roxy dear, I guess I can spare a dollar now and then for an old friend like you.

ROXY

Yo' po' little rag dollar.

She pushes past him and starts up the stairs.

TOM

Wait!

ROXY

Look-a-here, what was it I tol' you?

TOM

You— you— I don't remember anything.

ROXY

I tol' you the next time I give you a chance, you get down on your knees and beg for it.

TOM

Roxy, you wouldn't! They're right inside!

Guests move back and forth inside the door. Roxy keeps her eyes on them.

ROXY

Ignorant nigger? This gal got herself sold up the river; this gal here in front of you today is free! Yessir, this one ignorant nigger, and you can't sell this gal, no and you can't whip her, not no more! Yessir, and today this ignorant nigger be the one standin' up and you be the one goin' down on your knees and beggin', and I give you just one chance more, and that's now, and it lasts only a half second, you hear?

TOM

(slumps to his knees) You see I'm begging, Roxy, and it's honest begging, too. Don't tell uncle, please. Please, Roxy, let me up before someone comes out!

ROXY

(laughs) I's seed what I wanted. Get up, we goin' talk business! Let's see that truck you stole.

Roxy pulls the bag partly out from under the veranda, squats and paws through the loot. Tom takes a flask from his pocket and drinks deeply.

ROXY

That whisky? *(He nods)* Give it here. *(He hesitates)* You goin' give me that whisky, and you goin' drink after me, after my lips, you hear what I tell you? *(He gives her the flask, she swigs on it.)* It's prime. *(She hands him back the flask.)* Now you. *(He hesitates.)* You take it and you drink, and don't wipe it first. *(He does so. She laughs and returns to picking through the loot, holds up a wicked looking dagger.)* Who this knife come offa?

TOM

That two-headed freak in there. I lifted it from their room this afternoon. Put it back.

ROXY

(threateningly) It could make a big hole in somebody. Probably has. *(tosses it back into the bag and pushes the bag back under the veranda)* Now, how much you owe them gamblin' men?

TOM

How do you know about that?

ROXY

You think I don't know everything there is to know about you! Gambling! Carousin' in Saint Louis! Gimme that whisky.

TOM

(giving her the flask) Oh, Roxy, they said they'll kill me if I don't pay. And I can't tell Uncle or he'll disinherit me.

ROXY

Disenwhich you?

TOM

He's put me in his will, same as Rowena. But he'll cut me out again if they put me in jail. *(She hands the flask back to him.)* If I could just get some luck behind me, I'd win it all back in one night. I've done it before.

ROXY

And lost it right back again. You listen to me now, you ain't goin' to gamble no more, you hear? You ain't goin' to gamble one single gamble. *(grabs the flask back from him, but he is now drunk)* And you ain't goin' to drink, no you ain't, nary a single drap. Now, how much allowance does Marse York give you?

TOM

Fifty dollars.

ROXY

A year!

TOM

A month.

ROXY

Fifty dollar a month! My child, my child, my child! I was told you was goin' be rich! And how much you figger we pull down for all this truck, in Saint Louis mind you, not here.

TOM

Five hundred, maybe, if we're lucky, not counting the freaks' dagger which is worth maybe—

ROXY

Worth maybe nothin'. You sell that knife, you go to jail, 'cause that knife is a monster, and everybody 'member a monster and the man that sold it. No, you wait till next time you go down to Orle'ans and sell it there. Now, altogether —and no lyin'— how much do you owe them gamblers?

TOM

Eleven hundred.

ROXY

Laws!

TOM

(drunk, crying, slips to the ground and hugs her legs) What am I going to do, Roxy?

ROXY

Oh, don't you worry, honey, your old nurse mammy here now, and she goin' to set all this to rights.

FLO-WO-WO-WOATIN', AIN'T NOthin' ROUND YOU NOW BUT LOVE.

When you was sick, and outen your head with the fever, I took care of you, didn't I? And I take care of you now, honey. You my little baby, you alluz was.

ROWENA

Tom, I've been lookin' all over for you! Why, Tom, are you ill?

ROXY

Oh, don't you fret, Miss Rowena, Marse Tom just appreciatin' too much of your pappy's hospitality tonight.

ROWENA

But where have you been all night, Tom?

ROXY

Why, right here, Miss Rowena. Right here with me all night. I's been 'splainin' to Marse Tom how to get honey from the honey tree without gettin' stung up. But look now, here come your gentleman friends.

*Angelo, with a reluctant Luigi,
stumble onto the veranda.*

ANGELO

Rowena!

ROWENA

Angelo! (*sigh of distaste*) Luigi.

ANGELO

A promenade, perhaps? (*takes her by the arm, starts offstage*) In the garden? In the moonlight? With the smell of the magnolias?

LUIGI

And the sound of the hogwashing? (*The three exit.*)

ROXY

Get up, honey. I got the plan now, and she'll win, sho'. These days I see darky women my age goin' for five hundred on the block, but I's prime, an' any man see me know that, the way they come sniffin' after me. So you don't take a penny less than six hundred, I can still fetch it! That six hundred and the money you get sellin' this truck, make that eleven hundred to pay off these men.

TOM

Roxy!

ROXY

And you goin' to put aside that fifty dollar Marse York give you each month, and next year you goin' buy me free again, you hear? One year! You hear me when I say that?

TOM

It's lovely of you, Roxy, it's just lovely!

ROXY

Oh, say it again! And keep on sayin' it! It's all the pay a body want in this world. Laws bless you honey, when I's slavin' around and they abuse me, if I know you a-sayin' that, way off yonder som'eres, it'll heal up all the sore places, and I can stand 'em.

TOM

I do say it again, Roxy, but, but how am I going to sell you? You're free.

ROXY

Much diff'ence that make! White folks ain't partic'lar. Course you can't sell me 'roun' here. You take me up to Saint Louis where they don't know me, and— (*slowly*) ...No, I tell you what you do. You goin' to ax six hundred and FIFTY dollar for me, and you goin' to take that extry fifty and buy me a dress, a red dress, and not no slave dress neither but a white woman dress, and you goin' take me out on the town of Saint Louis! I's goin' to keep my mouth shut, fix up my hair like a white woman, and on just this one night in my life, I's goin' strut and cakewalk all over that town!

TOM

You wouldn't!

ROXY

I will! And who's goin' stop me, you? No, 'cause you goin' be right at my side, my young, white gentleman ... companion!

TO

(*laughs*) A nigger in the Palace Ballroom! Can you just picture it!

ROXY

(*laughs*) Two niggers, honey.

TOM

Yes, I have crawled on my knees to a nigger wench. I'm never going to sink any lower than that.

ROXY

We'll see, honey.

*York comes onto the veranda in a
fury.*

YORK

Rowena! Tom, have you seen Rowena and that ... that ... those ...

*Rowena rushes on with Angelo (and
Luigi) following.*

ROWENA

What is it, Pa? You sound like a bull in heat.

ANGELO

But, Rowena, bulls don't go in heat.

*Pudd'nhead comes out quickly, with
other guests coming out severally
after him.*

PUDD'NHEAD

Why, Cuz! You are right. It is much cooler out here! Aren't you
coolin' off, Cuz?

YORK

Why, why, yes, Cuz, you are right. Yes, I AM coolin' off. Rowena,
come here, my child, where I can see you better.

ANGELO

Luigi, now!

LUIGI

No, I say no!

ANGELO

It is my turn with the legs!

LUIGI

Oh, all right! Rowena, my brother would like to ask you something but
is too shy, and so has delegated me to make his request.

ROWENA

Yes, Count Luigi? For, Pa, they ARE counts, remember that they ARE
counts.

LUIGI

You might not think it to look at him, Rowena, but Angelo is renown in the ballrooms of Europe for his grace upon the dance floor, and he wonders if you would be so kind as to grant him a waltz?

ROWENA

Why ... that ... would be ... lovely, I'm sure, but ...

ANGELO

Oh, Rowena, you have made me the happiest man in the world.

ROWENA

... But Angelo, where would Luigi be?

ANGELO

Why, right at our side!

Angelo takes Rowena in his arms and they waltz to "In Love or Insane". Luigi, as graceful as Angelo, accompanies them with champagne glass held aloft.

The Frontier Landing folks are rapt. York fumes silently.

PUDD'NHEAD

Gracious, Counts, what a dancer you are!

The Twins end their waltz with Rowena with a couple of dazzling maneuvers which the Frontier Landing folks greet with cheers and applause as the lights and set change to ...

SCENE FIVE: THE PALACE BALLROOM IN SAINT LOUIS

Cheers and applause for MINSTRELS in blackface singing Stephen Foster's "Camptown Ladies" and dancing for happy drunks and loose women.

MINSTRELS

DE CAMPTOWN LADIES SING DIS SONG,
DOO-DAH, DOO-DAH
DE CAMPTOWN RACETRACK FIVE MILE LONG
OH, DOO-DAH DAY.
GWINE TO RUN ALL NIGHT,

GWINE TO RUN ALL DAY,
BET MY MONEY ON DE BOBTAIL NAG,
SOMEBODY BET ON DE BAY.

*Tom and Roxy enter. She is stunning
in her red dress.*

MINSTREL

Fresh blood! Who's your gal, Tom?

TOM

Just look at these voracious wolves! Roxy, you better sit here, out
of harm's way.

RIVERS

You got my money, Driscoll?

TOM

I'll have it in a couple of hours.

RIVERS

You better!

ROXY

Why, Marse Tom, those men ain't black men!

TOM

Shoe black.

ROXY

Oh, Lord, why in the world would they!

ANNOUNCER

And now, fresh... and I say *FRESH*... from her engagement in Saint
Loeey's pearl of a sister to the south, New Orleans— (*boos*)

NEW ORLEANS MAN

Hey, my family come from New Orleans, and I resent that!

RIVERS

Aw, shut up!

ANNOUNCER

...I give you Delilah Delight!

*DELILAH enters, a very large man in
blackface drag. His voluminous
dress is white stars on blue with
red satin foofaraws. Crowd roars.*

DELILAH

N'Awle'ns! I got nuttin' to do wid dat town now dat I's set eyes on St. Looey, de jool ob de ribber! Yes ma'am! St. Looey, you is sump'n to write home about... iff'n I could only write. (*crowd hoots*)

WHAT'S DE NAME OB DE TOWN,
DE RICHEST JOOL IN DE CROWN?

CROWD

Saint Looey!

DELILAH

SAINT LOOEY, YOURS TRULY, SAINT LOOEY!

WHERE BLACK IS WHITE,

AND DAY IS NIGHT,

WHAT'S UP DON'T COME DOWN!

(Obscene gesture, men cheer, women hiss)

SAINT LOOEY, YOU'S DE TOWN.

Delilah spots Roxy and brings her up onto the stage with her. He gets Roxy to do a cakewalk as he sings, Roxy's highkicking strut punctuating his song.

DELILAH

YOURS TRULY, SAINT LOOEY,

YOU'S DE TOWN WE LOVE, BOY, DO WE!

YOU ERUPTS, YOU EFFUSES, YOU EJACULATES!

(cheers, hoots)

YOURS TRULY, SAINT LOOEY,

YOU'S TOO RED-WHITE-AND-BLUEY

TO EMANCIPATE, OR TO EMASCULATE

THESE UNITED STATES, THESE BENIGHTED STATES,

THESE DELIGHTED STATES OF DESIRE OF AMERICA,

WITH DOO-DAH DAH-DOOEY,

WITH PIGCALL SOO-SOOEY-

RIVERS

Pigcall! Say, that's an insult to St. Louis!

NEW ORLEANS MAN

It certainly is, and well deserved!

DELILAH

WITH HORSELAUGH HAW-HOOEY!

SAINT LOOEY, I'S THROUGH WITH YOU!

Delilah makes another obscene gesture and struts off. New Orleans Man gives the place the horselaugh, and Rivers slugs him. A free-for-all breaks out. Tom stands as though to fight, but Roxy pulls him away, as lights and set change to ...

SCENE SIX: DOCKS OF ST. LOUIS

Roxy pulls Tom onstage, both of them laughing and winded.

ROXY

Oh, my chile, this is a night I ain't never goin' forget!

TOM

I'm glad, Roxy.

ROXY

No wonder you like Saint Louis so much. Ummmh!

TOM

I stashed the box for that dress behind these crates, Roxy. You'd better change back now. I told that man I'd have you ready by dawn.

ROXY

Yes, I bes' change back.

TOM

I'll save that dress for you, Roxy. You look mighty pretty in it.

ROXY

Will you, chile? Oh, I so thank you!

As Roxy starts behind the stack of freight to change, Jasper enters stealthily.

JASPER

(in a whisper) Roxy!

ROXY

Jasper! What you doin' here?

JASPER

I run off to be with you.

ROXY

No!

JASPER

You always tellin' me no!

ROXY

Jasper, you is the one man I can say no to. So, no! Help me out of this dress and hush up so I can think what to do with you now.

JASPER

(working on the dress) You always tellin' me to hush up and git and, Roxy, damn, I'm a man!

ROXY

You a slave!

JASPER

I'm a man!

ROXY

And now you a runaway slave, and I got to figger—

My lan', how does this fasten? And how you get this dress? He give it to you?

ROXY

Those buttons, and don't you rip it.

JASPER

I got it, I got it. Crazy white folk and their crazy ways.

ROXY

You know what they do in this town? They paint they faces with shoe black and caper about.

JASPER

Crazy.

ROXY

You follow us on the road? Anyone see you?

JASPER

I kept in the woods. Where you goin' with that rascal! I been watchin' you, in and out of these godforsaken places. He got a witch on you and he'll tear your heart out and feed it to the hounds. How come he give you this dress? What you do for him?

ROXY

That my business. I's free to go where I want now. Put it in that box, and mind you fold it purty. (*putting on her own dress*)

JASPER

Where you goin' now? I'm comin' with you.

ROXY

You ain't! They'll kotch you and wholp you, and what'll they do to me, helpin' a runaway, you ever think of that?

JASPER

No, but that's—

ROXY

Course not, leave me do all the thinkin'. You git home fast as you can go. With any luck Marse York still be sleepin', but if he awake and missin' you, you tell him ... you tell him you did run off, but outen love for the fambly, you come home on your own, and—

JASPER

No!

ROXY

Jasper, you go home!

JASPER

HOME, GO HOME!
SHOW ME THAT HOME!
OH ME, THAT HOME
AIN'T NO MAN'S HOME,
FOUR WALLS AND A DOOR,
GO IN OR GO OUT,
WITHOUT YOU THERE AIN'T NO HOME,
NO HOPE, NO JOY, NO PEACE,
NO PLACE FOR ME,
NO PLACE LIKE HOME.
WHEN WILL I SEE AND TOUCH THIS FACE AGAIN?

ROXY

ONE DAY.

JASPER

ONE DAY?

ROXY

ONE DAY. ONE DAY.

JASPER

WHEN EVERY DAY I LONG FOR THIS GRACE AGAIN,
ONE DAY'S TOO FAR AWAY!

ROXY

YOU THINK IT'S EASY,
DON'T I MAKE IT LOOK EASY!
AIN'T I HAVIN' THE TIME OF MY LIFE!
IF I LOOK HAPPY—
DON'T I LOOK HAPPY?
IT'S 'CAUSE THE BREAKIN' HEART
DON'T KNOW IT'S BREAKIN'
UNTIL IT'S BROKE,
BLEEDIN' AND SORE,
SO TENDER... SO RAW...
IT'S SO AWFUL LEAVIN' HOME,
MY HOPE, MY JOY, MY PEACE,
AIN'T NO OTHER PLACE FOR ME,
AIN'T NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

They reprise in counterpoint, ending with the whistle of a riverboat. SLAVE TRADER enters with a a line of chained slaves. Jaspers sneaks off.

Among the slaves is LOU with a swaddled baby in her arms. Tom follows the slaves on.

SLAVE TRADER

All right, move along there! The boat's comin' in.

Tom takes money from Slave Trader, then returns to Roxy, picking up the box containing the red dress.

TOM

I think you're goin' to like that man, Roxy. I told him, you be good to her because she's a first-rate nigger, and he swears he'll treat you good.

SLAVE TRADER

Yes sir, she is one fine piece. (to Roxy) Get over in that line.

ROXY

Yes sir. (beginning to weep) Goodbye, chile.

TOM

(weeping too) Goodbye, Roxy. God bless you!

As Roxy moves into the line, Tom starts off, stops, turns back reconsidering.

ROXY

You go on home now, Marse Tom.

Tom leaves.

SLAVE TRADER

(calling offstage to the boatman) What's the mark?

BOATMAN (OFFSTAGE)

Five fathoms.

SLAVE TRADER

Careful how you bring her in, the river's changed her bottom here, shallow on the starboard side.

Roxy, wiping away tears, turns and sees LOU who has slumped to the ground, her baby in her arms.

ROXY

Oh, you got a little baby there! Ain't it kind of 'em to sell you together!

LOU

They just smart. He too little. I spec' he die without me. And then what would become of me?

ROXY

I got a boy, too. And he just the sweetest boy!

LOU

You awful happy.

ROXY

(surprised) Yes, I IS! For the first and onlies' time in my life, I's happy!

LOU

What your name?

ROXY

Roxana. How 'bout you?

LOU

Lou.

OFFSTAGE VOICE

By the mark, four fathoms!

LOU

This chile so poorly. I ain't got much milk. Iff'n they cut my feed, the way they tell me they do down the river—

ROXY

What you talkin' about! We not goin' down the river. That boat goin' UPriver.

LOU

Oh, you poor chile.

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE TOWN WHERE THE RIVERBOATS TURN ROUN'?

ROXY

SAINT LOOEY.

LOU

SAINT LOOEY!

DELILAH DELIGHT

(offstage)

YOURS TRULY, SAINT LOOEY.

LOU

AIN'T THE NAME ON THAT BOAT THERE THE L'U'SIANA BOUN'?

OFFSTAGE VOICE

By the mark, three fathoms!

ROXY

L'U'SIANA BOUN'!

*Separate pools of light on Roxy,
Tom, Jasper and Pudd'nhead.*

JASPER/PUDD'NHEAD

HOME

HOME

ROXY COME HOME

ROXY

HE WOULDN'T DO THAT!

NO MY BOY WOULDN'T DO THAT!

TOM

FORGIVE ME, ROXY,

ROXY, THAT HOME

IS NO MAN'S HOME.

FOUR

WALLS AND A DOOR

GO IN OR GO OUT

WITHOUT YOU

WHAT ELSE COULD I DO!

ROXY

MY BOY, MY HONEY,
MY CHILD OH MY MASTER

TOM

I NEEDED THE MONEY!

ROXY

MY MASTER MY HONEY!

TOM

LIKE NEVER BEFORE!

ROXY

OH NO! OH NO!

TOM

WHERE IS THE DOOR?

ROXY

OH NO! OH NO!

TOM

GO IN OR GO OUT

ROXY

OH NO! OH NO!

OH NO, OH NO, OH NO...

The music has slowed so that Roxy's last notes are sung softly on a sostenuto in the orchestra.

OFFSTAGE VOICE

(in sostenuto) Mark twain! Ease her in!

Orchestra tumbles into last movement. The WHITE CHORUS waltzes on gaily while the BLACK CHORUS joins Pudd'nhead and Jasper. The lights come up full on the Frontier Landing Ensemble singing "Home Sweet Home" in counterpoint.

BLACK

HOME, GO HOME
SHOW ME THAT HOME
OH ME THAT HOME
AIN'T NO MAN'S HOME
FOUR
WALLS AND A DOOR
GO IN OR GO OUT, WITHOUT YOU
THERE AIN'T NO HOME, NO HOPE
NO JOY NO PEACE
NO PLACE FOR ME

WHITE CHORUS

YOURS TRULY SAINT LOOEY
IS THE TOWN WE LOVE, DO WE,
YOU ERUPTS YOU EFFUSES
YOU EJACULATES.
YOURS TRULY SAINT LOUIS
YOU'S TOO RED-WHITE-AND-BLUEY
TO EMANCIPATE OR TO EMASCULATE
THESE UNITED STATES
THESE BENIGHTED STATES
THESE DELIGHTED STATES

NO PLACE LIKE HOME
HOME, HOME,
NO PLACE LIKE HOME
NO PLACE LIKE HOME,
NO HOME, NO HOME

OF DESIRE, OF AMERICA
WITH DOO-DAH DAH-DOEY
WITH PIGCALL SOO-SOEY
WITH HORSELAUGH HAW-HOOEY
SAINT LOOEY, NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

ROXY/TOM

OH NO!

THE CURTAIN FALLS
END OF ACT ONE

ACT II
SCENE SEVEN

*In the dark a dog howls. Lights up
on White Chorus in church.*

WHITE CHORUS

AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND
THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME.
I ONCE WAS LOST BUT NOW I'M FOUND
WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE.

*As York and Tom continue "Amazing
Grace" in a minor key, at the other
side of stage, lights come up on
Happy and Black Chorus in their
church.*

HAPPY

ONE DAY I LOOK MY MAMMY BE GONE!
ONE DAY I LOOK MY MAMMY BE GONE!
ONE DAY I LOOK MY MAMMY BE GONE!
AND SHE BE SO FAR FROM HOME!
AND SHE BE SO FAR FROM HOME!

BLACK CHORUS

OH LORD HAVE MERCY ON THIS MOTHERLESS CHILD.
OH LORD HAVE MERCY ON THIS MOTHERLESS CHILD
OH LORD HAVE MERCY ON THIS MOTHERLESS CHILD
AND SHE BE SO FAR FROM HOME!
AND SHE BE SO FAR FROM HOME!

*A pool of light comes up on Roxy and
Lou. Lou has her dead baby wrapped
in rags. She sings descant to Roxy
as they bury the baby.*

ROXY

BIRD FLYIN' IN THE SKY,
PLEASE WATCH OVER THIS POOR MOTHERLESS CHILE.
WORM TURNING IN THE GROUND',
BE GENTLE WITH THIS POOR MOTHERLESS CHILE.
TREE GROWIN' FROM THIS SOIL,
BE CRADLE FOR THIS POOR MOTHERLESS CHILE.
FOR HE BE SO FAR FROM HOME.
FOR HE BE SO FAR FROM HOME.

LOU

SLEEP, MY BABY BOY.
SLEEP.

Jasper and Pudd'nhead on levee.

JASPER

ONE DAY, ONE WEEK, ONE MONTH
MY ROXY BE GONE!
ONE MONTH, TWO MONTH, THREE MONTH
MY ROXY BE GONE!
THREE MONTH! MONTH AFTER MONTH!
MY ROXY BE GONE!
AN' THIS AIN'T NO PLACE LIKE HOME! BREAK ... THESE
AN' THIS AIN'T NO PLACE LIKE HOME! CHAINS!

PUDD'NHEAD

ONE WEEK, ONE MONTH!
BREAK THESE CHAINS!
TWO MONTHS, THREE MONTHS!
BREAK THESE CHAINS!
MONTH AFTER MONTH!
BREAK THESE CHAINS!

White Chorus rejoins with "Amazing Grace", then lights down.

Lights come up on Luigi (and Angelo) pacing. Luigi walks up and down the stage, dootling Schubert's Piano Trio in Eb Andante con moto in time with his steps.

LUIGI

DOO DOO DOODEE DOO
DOO DEET DOO, DEET DOO! DOODEEDOO.

Rowena enters.

ROWENA

Angelo! I missed you in church. You claim to be a faithful Catholic, faithful if idolatrous, yet you rarely step foot in a house of worship.

ANGELO

But Rowena! Please try to understand! It is Luigi's turn with the legs!

ROWENA

Luigi, will you please tell the man walking beside you that I have nothing further to say to him.

ANGELO

Rowena!

LUIGI

Angelo, Rowena wants me to tell you—

ANGELO

I heard, Luigi! Would you please remove yourself from this conversation. Rowena, it is a simple matter of locomotion.

ROWENA

Loco Motion is right! I've never heard of anything so crazy! And Angelo, I have heard reports that you have again been seen going into and out of certain dens of iniquity such as the anti-temperance meeting of the Sons of Liberty!

ANGELO

I had to go! It was Luigi's turn with the legs!

LUIGI

He made up for it when he insisted upon being baptised in your godforsaken faith and almost drowned me in the river.

ANGELO

Luigi, how blessed it would be to die in such a circumstance; it would be martyrdom.

LUIGI

Angelo, I am already a martyr.

ROWENA

Angelo, you have been under my father's roof for three months, and you have been intoxicated every single night.

ANGELO

But I never drink!

ROWENA

That is nothing to the point; you get drunk and that's worse.

ANGELO

It is Luigi who—

LUIGI

You are always trying to take away my pleasures!

ANGELO

Your pleasures! I only ever hear of your pleasures!

LUIGI

Wherever we go, you—

ANGELO

Wherever we go, it's "Oh, Luigi, welcome!" "Oh, Luigi this, oh, Luigi that!" Nobody ever pays attention to Angelo! Rowena, say you love me. You know how I love you!

ROWENA

You say you love me, Angelo, but your actions hardly inspire confidence in your integrity.

ANGELO

But I do love you!

The dog howls.

LUIGI

Listen to the howling of the dog.

ROWENA

And as for marriage, which you propose, and which I believe I would accept, for I believe I do requite your ardent affection—

ANGELO

Oh, Rowena, you do?

ROWENA

...I say I believe I would accept, Angelo, but I do have one little cause for pause.

ANGELO

But whatever could that be?

The dog howls.

LUIGI

A dog chained; I know the feeling.

ROWENA

On our ... wedding night, Angelo, where would Luigi be?

ANGELO

Why, right at our side!

ROWENA

That is as I surmised. It seems a little immodest.

ANGELO

Perhaps he will be asleep.

LUIGI

I might read.

ROWENA

NOW LET'S NOT BE HASTY,
LET'S PAUSE TO CONSIDER,
A BRIDE MAY HAVE BUT ONE HUSBAND.
MORE IS FORBID HER.

ANGELO

ROWENA, ROWENA,
I'LL MAKE YOU MY QUEEN-A!

ROWENA

NOW LET'S NOT BE HASTY,
THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY.
A QUEEN WANTS JUST ONE KING
TO KISS . . . AND EX-ETERAY.

I PROPOSE A SOLUTION
TO YOUR SINGULAR CONSTITUTION,
SO SIMPLE IN EXECUTION,
AND THAT'S—

LUIGI

. . .NOT SELF-POLLUTION!

Rowena nearly swoons.

ANGELO

OH REALLY, LUIGI!
ROWENA'S SO SENSITIVE!
THIS IS NOT PARIGI!
YOUR JOKE IS OFFENSITIVE!
 (to Rowena)
ALL RIGHT, DEAR?

ROWENA

YES, THANKS.

ANGELO

YOU'RE SURE, DEAR?

ROWENA

YES, THANKS.

ANGELO

LUIGI'S SORRY.

ROWENA

IS HE?

ANGELO

SAY YOU'RE SORRY!

LUIGI

I'M NOT SORRY!

ROWENA

MY HEAD IS SPINNING WITH DUBIETY.
THERE'S HIM AND ME AND ME AND HIM AND I.
MAY A SINGLE GIRL WITH PROPRIETY
WED SUCH AN EXTRA-ORDINARY GEMINI?

ANGELO

ROWENA! ROWENA!

ROWENA

ANGELO! (WITH DISTASTE) LUIGI.

ANGELO

JUST-A PICTURE THIS-A SCENE-A,
MY LOVELY QUEEN-A, ROWENA.
JUST-A YOU AND ME SO SERENE-A...

ALL THREE

AND LUIGI IN BETWEEN-----A!

ROWENA

I MUST STATE MY OBJECTION.

ANGELO

WHATEVER IS IT, PERFECTION?

ROWENA

I KNOW IN SELF-PROTECTION,
ONE SHOULD SPEAK IN INDIRECTION,
BUT LEST I COMMIT PERJURY,
I MUST SPEAK THE PLAIN TRUTH:
ONE QUICK LITTLE SURGERY—

ANGELO

ROWENA! HOW UNCOUTH!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
MY TWIN I'D BE BETRAYING!
FROM HALF MY SOUL I'D BE STRAYING!

HALF MY SELF I'D BE SLAYING!
NOT TO FEEL HIS HEART BEATING
IN MY VEINS, MY HEART REPEATING!
NOT TO HEAR HIS SWEET BREATHING
IN MY EAR AS WE SLEEP.

LUIGI

BUT TO WALK ABOUT LIKE OTHER MEN!
JUST TWO LEGS—

ANGELO

GROTESQUE! IT'S MONSTROUS!
WE CAN'T BE LIKE OTHER MEN.
ROWENA, DON'T ASK US.

ALL THREE

(with three different subtexts)

TOGETHER FOREVER!
SEPARATE NEVER!
BONDS NO ONE MAY SEVER,
WHATEVER ENDEAVOR!
FOR NOW AND ETERNITY,
ONE: THIRD? HALF? NO WHOLE;
ONE: BROTHER, WIFE, AND HUSBAND;
ONE: BODY, MIND, AND SOUL.

*York Driscoll enters, Tom sauntering
on behind him.*

YORK

Rowena?

ROWENA

Yes, Pa?

YORK

Seems like I should be hearin' the sounds of piano practice. I'm payin' enough for those lessons.

ROWENA

Why, Pa, I practiced before church!

ANGELO

Yes, and her fingers tickle the ivory so beautifully.

YORK

Young man, I have a few words I'd like to address to you. Your attentions to my daughter have not escaped my notice.

ANGELO

Oh, yes? We are to be married!

YORK

You are to be no such thing.

ROWENA

Now let's not be hasty, Pa.

YORK

There can be no advantage to the race in the interbreeding of a lovely young normal girl such as Rowena with a schizopod such as yourself.

Pembroke and Matthews enter with some other men. During the scene, a crowd forms.

PEMBROKE

Count Luigi?

LUIGI

Yes?

PEMBROKE

Our little town of Frontier Landin' is on the verge of becoming a fine city, and the first charter election is in two months. I have been deputized by—

PUDD'NHEAD

(entering with Jasper and Glory) Well, to be sure irony is not for the slow of wit. Irony is—

PEMBROKE

Pudd'nhead! I am talkin' here! As I was pronouncin', I have been deputized by the Sons of Liberty to invite you, Luigi, to run for Mayor.

LUIGI

Mayor! But such an honor!

PEMBROKE

We have seen the sensation you have made, or rather the impact you have had on our community. You too, Angelo, in your small way. Why, there's never been a more popular personage walked these streets than you two.

YORK

But, Pembroke, we all agreed that I would run for Mayor on the Republican ticket.

PEMBROKE

The Sons of Liberty are breakin' away from the Republican Party, York. What with that damn Abe Lincoln across the river and all this intolerance talk from the Anti-Rum Party, we want a drinkin' man.

MATTHEWS

And Count Luigi here can put it away quicker and neater than anyone I've ever seen.

ROWENA

You're runnin' him on a Drinkin' Platform! Hope! Ladies! Our banner!

(Rowena whirls and leads the white women offstage, Hope, torn, following.)

YORK

Now be sensible, men. What we need in this town is Law and Order! Why, you can't even leave your house anymore for fear that burglar is going to rob you blind. Need I remind you men that he is still at large and still burglin'! And need I remind you of the burgler, Count Luigi, when he has even stolen that dagger of yours!

TOM

That *ALLEGED* dagger, Uncle. Did anyone in this town ever see that "fabulous" dagger before "Count" Luigi here claimed it burgled?

ANGELO

I saw it.

TOM

You don't count, "Count".

LUIGI

This is insupportable!

PUDD'NHEAD

Tom!

PEMBROKE

Now Tom, York, don't take on so. We already got a slogan and everything. Luigi for Mayor! How's that?

ANGELO

Oh, Luigi, so beautiful! Luigi for Mayor!

PEMBROKE

Well, not quite so trilly.

LUIGI FOR MAYOR!

FOR FRONTIER LANDIN' HERE'S A DRINKIN' MAN!

LUIGI FOR MAYOR!

HE'S GOT THE STUFF; HE'S SO RARE!

LUIGI FOR MAYOR!

WE AIN'T PARTIC'LAR 'BOUT A THINKIN' MAN;

A DRINKIN' MAN FOR FRONTIER LANDIN'S MAYOR!

WHITE WOMEN

(singing offstage)

ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO
CAPPELLO.

*White women re-enter, headed by
Rowena, carrying a banner with a
picture of the Twins on it, Luigi
Xed out and a halo over Angelo's
head.*

WHITE WOMEN

ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO THE ANGEL, ANGELO
CAPPELLO.

PEMBROKE

What in tarnation are you women doin' here? This is a political
meetin'.

HOPE

(torn, tries to stand up to her husband) We are bein' political.

ROWENA

Representin' the Anti-Rum Party of Frontier Landin', we have come to
ask Angelo the Angel to run for Mayor.

ANGELO

Oh, Luigi, do you hear!

LUIGI

Angelo, I forbid you to run!

ANGELO

Luigi! *(looks his brother square in the eye, then:)* Ladies, I accept!

WHITE WOMEN/ANGELO

ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO THE
ANGEL...

TOM

Well, if that ain't a laugh! They can't vote you in; they're women.

ROWENA

Yes, it is the injustice of this society that we have been denied the right to vote. But one day, through womanly perseverance and courage, we will change all that. This oppression of women is an affront to mankind!

HOPE

Why, we may as well be niggers!

TOM

Yes, and we may as well give the vote to niggers. (*howling dog lets out his loudest yelp yet*) My land! Whose dog is that?

PUDD'NHEAD

(*tinkering with a contraption*) I wish HALF of him belonged to me.

*MURMURS FROM THE CROWD: Half a dog?
Why would anyone want half a dog?*

PEMBROKE

Now why on earth would you want to own HALF that dog, Pudd'nhead?

PUDD'NHEAD

I'd kill my half.

*There is a stunned silence. Only the
Twins and Jasper laugh.*

PEMBROKE

Well, if that ain't the pudd'nheadedest thing you ever said! (*to crowd*) Says he'd kill his half! What does he reckon would become of the other half? Do you reckon he thinks it'd live?

MATTHEWS

Why, he must think it or he wouldn't say it!

ANGELO

But don't you see, if he kills his half—

LUIGI

...the other half must die, too! (*The Twins laugh again.*)

PEMBROKE

HE WANTS A HALF A DOG!
AIN'T THAT A LAUGH! A DOG
WHO'S CUT IN HALF'S NO DOG!
THE MAN'S AN IDJIT!
BUT THAT'S OUR PUDD'NHEAD,
THE STATE'S MOST WOODEN HEADED
INDIVIDJAL, MISSOURI'S MENTAL MIDGET!

ROWENA

But wait, maybe Cousin Dave has something here. If he owned one END of the dog, let's say the hind end, the useless end, maybe he COULD kill his end of it and—

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh, stop! Stop! Has no one in this town any appreciation of irony!

ROWENA

Well, of course we appreciate irony, Cousin! Just how do you think we all these dresses so neat and pretty?

JASPER

Ha! (*under his breath to black chorus*) You wanted to know what irony is? That's irony!

YORK

Jasper!

JASPER

Nothing, sir, said nothing, sir.

YORK

Irony, Cousin, is a have-nothin', do-nothin' sort of humor.

PUDD'NHEAD

I'll be more plainspoken, perhaps to the detriment of my sterling reputation in this town. Our society, our precious, manly, Caucasian

MATTHEWS

I'll thank you to watch your language; there are ladies present!

PUDD'NHEAD

...our half-a-dog society, is doomed unless we make ourselves whole and wholesome.

WE ARE BUT HALF A DOG!
THAT'S RIGHT, JUST HALF A DOG!
AND WE'LL STAY HALF A DOG
TILL WE GO WHOLE HOG,
AND GIVE THEM EQUALITY,
 (points to white women, who cheer)
AND GIVE THEM LIBERTY,
 (points to slaves; white women choke)
WHAT'S EVEN HARDER, FRIENDS, WE MUST GIVE THEM FRATERNITY!

Cries of outrage from all sides.

PEMBROKE

PUDD'NHEAD WILSON FOR MAYOR!

Everybody hoots and jeers.

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, why not? Sure, I'll stand for office!

DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
WHO'D SERVE YOU BETTER THAN A PUDD'NHEAD?
DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
I'D TAKE YOUR OATH! HOW I'D SWEAR!
DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
I COULD'VE STAYED IN BED BUT STOOD INSTEAD!
THIS PUDD'NHEAD WOULD SERVE YOU RIGHT FOR MAYOR!

TOM

But you people are gettin' distracted from the whole issue of this race. With these twice-counted no account Counts here...

...YOU'RE GETTIN' HALF A MAYOR!
ON YOUR BEHALF, THIS MAYOR
WILL DOUBLE-STAFF HIS MAYORALTY'S POSITION.
AND THEN WE'LL HAVE TO DOUBLE-PAY!
AND FIX ALL THE DOUBLE TROUBLE THEY
MAKE WITH EACH DOUBLY MUDDLE-HEADED MAYORAL DECISION.

And that's why I nominate...

YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
KEEP UP TRADITION, ONE MAN ONE VOTE!
YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
A SINGLE MAN WHO WILL CARE!
YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
DEFEAT SEDITION, GIVE ONE MAN ONE VOTE,
CAST DOWN THE DEV'LISH DOUBLE-DEALING PAIR!

ROWENA

But wait, wait, what I have been tryin' to point out to you is that if, like with that dog, you was to take these twins and cut the two of 'em in half...

...THAT IS TO HALVE THE TWAIN,
I'D PERSON'LY SALVE THE PAIN,
FOR THEY'D STILL HAVE THE BRAIN
TO FEEL EMOTION...
OVER THE RAVISHMENT,
OF THEIR ANTIDISESTABLISHMENT-
-ARIAN, THOUGH I'D SAY
VERY UNGODLY, BODILY DEVOTION.

And then...

ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO SOLO!

WHITE WOMEN

ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO FOR MAYOR, ANGELO THE ANGEL!

TOM AND YORK

(at the same time with the white women)

YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
KEEP UP TRADITION, ONE MAN ONE VOTE!
YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
A SINGLE MAN WHO WILL CARE!
YORK DRISCOLL FOR MAYOR!
DEFEAT SEDITION, GIVE ONE MAN ONE VOTE,
CAST DOWN THE DEV'LISH DOUBLE-DEALING PAIR!

PUDD'NHEAD

(at the same time)

DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
WHO'D SERVE YOU BETTER THAN A PUDD'NHEAD?
DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
I'D TAKE YOUR OATH! HOW I'D SWEAR!
DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!
I COULD JUST STAY IN BED BUT STOOD INSTEAD;
THIS PUDD'NHEAD WOULD SERVE YOU RIGHT AS MAYOR!

ADD MEN

(with all of above)

LUIGI FOR MAYOR!
FOR FRONTIER LANDIN' HERE'S A DRINKIN' MAN!
LUIGI FOR MAYOR!
HE'S GOT THE STUFF; HE'S SO RARE!
LUIGI FOR MAYOR!
WE AIN'T PARTICKLAR 'BOUT A THINKIN' MAN;
A DRINKIN' MAN FOR FRONTIER LANDIN'S MAYOR!

ADD JASPER AND BLACK CHORUS

(with all of above)

THEY'RE ONLY HALF A DOG!
THAT'S ALL JUST HALF A DOG!
THEY'LL BE JUST HALF A DOG
TILL THEY GO WHOLE HOG
AND GIVE US LIBERTY!
AND THEN EQUALITY!
AND IN THE END, FACE THE FACT, FRATERNITY!

All their melodies interweave in a crescendo. Throughout, the white women and men alternately wheel Angelo then Luigi about the stage. As the music climaxes, it becomes a tug-o-war, and Angelo and Luigi are threatened with the severance Rowena has proposed.

LUIGI/ANGELO

Oh, please, please stop!

Luigi and Angelo flee offstage with the crowd in pursuit, leaving Pudd'nhead and York Driscoll alone together on the stage. Jasper also remains, aside.

YORK

Ah me, Cousin, now I've gone and been unchivalrous to our guests.

PUDD'NHEAD

It's this damn town, Cuz; it pulls you apart, and you lose yourself.

YORK

And too, I'm worried about Tom.

PUDD'NHEAD

All these trips to Saint Louis?

YORK

Yes, coupled with a general dissolution. I promised Lancaster I would treat Tom as my own. Rowena is a lovely child, but a man's life is not whole without a son.

PUDD'NHEAD

What does Tom do in Saint Louis, Cousin?

YORK

I shudder to think.

PUDD'NHEAD

A young woman, perhaps? Has he told you about ... a young woman in his life?

YORK

No, though I have no doubt the sin of venery is strong in his veins. He is, after all, his father's son.

Tom enters with Happy sidling after.

HAPPY

(whispering urgently) Marse Tom!

TOM

Didn't I tell you to keep away from me! You stink!

YORK

Ah, speak of the devil.

TOM

(to York and Pudd'nhead) Those duplicates better watch out or that crowd is goin' to make them single gents after all.

YORK

I'd best go find them and make my apologies. It's my duty as a gentleman.

PUDD'NHEAD

Cousin, perhaps I'd best come along *(laughs)* just to make sure it's civility that wins out.

York and Pudd'nhead exit. Tom throws himself onto the porch swing.

TOM

Oh, honor! When will we see it for the fraud it is!

HAPPY

(whispering) Marse Tom!

TOM

Oh, Hap, Hap, Hap, what a pathetic little critter you are. I am feelin' philosophical today, Hap, so come on over here and rub my back.

HAPPY

Marse Tom! I got a message for you. From a man.

TOM

(sits bolt upright) What man?

HAPPY

He'll be waitin' for you tonight at eight at the ha'nted house.

TOM

What man? Was his name Rivers?

HAPPY

He says don't let anyone see you. *(exits)*

TOM

Oh, my God, my God. *(exits the other way)*

Jasper looks off after first Happy, then Tom, and finally he chooses to follow Happy, as the lights and set change to...

SCENE EIGHT: THE HAUNTED HOUSE -- NIGHT

A man, ominous in a black overcoat and a broad-brimmed hat drags a chair to warm himself beside a lantern. Tom enters stealthily, dressed in his woman's disguise.

TOM

(whispering) Rivers? Rivers?

ROXY

It ain't Rivers.

TOM

Roxy!

Slowly, menacingly, the man turns up the wick of the lamp, and we see that the man is indeed Roxy.

ROXY

I come for my revenge. And I want to see clear. Oh, and you dressed for the occasion!

TOM

If you try to do anything to me—

ROXY

Sell a person down the river! What kind of dog is you!

TOM

That man said he was going to be good to you, and keep you as a house servant.

ROXY

BUT DID YOU TALK TO HIS WIFE!
SHE CAME AT ME STRAIGHT OFF!
BECAUSE HER MAN WAS USIN' ME
SHE STARTED IN ACCUSIN' ME
AND WORKED UP THE OVERSEER
WHO STARTED IN ABUSIN' ME
SENT ME OUT TO THE FIELDS
WITHOUT NOTHIN' TO EAT
STARVIN' ME! STARVIN' ME TO DEATH.
BUT THERE WAS THIS POOR SICKLY WOMAN CALLED LOU
WHO BURIED HER BABY AND HALF OF HER HEART.
AND I LOVED LOU AND, POOR THING, LOU LOVED ME.
SHE'D SNEAK ME HER BREAD
STARVIN' HER OWN SELF FOR ME, DON'T YOU SEE.
BUT THE OVERSEER HE CATCHED HER
AND DRAGGED HER BY THE HAIR TO THE SHED.
HE WRAPPED HER WITH WIRE
AND STRUNG HER TO THE FENCEPOST
AND WHIPPED HER WITH HIS BELT WITH THE BUCKLE END OUT.
HE PICKED UP A STICK, THICK AS A BROOM HANDLE
AND WHALED ON HER 'TIL SHE MOST BLACKED OUT,
WALLERIN' LIKE A CRIPPLED SPIDER
HANGIN' ON THAT FENCEPOST TANGLED UP IN WIRE.

YOU FIGHT, GAL!
AND IF YOU CAN'T FIGHT,
THEN KICK, GAL!
AND IF YOU CAN'T KICK,
THEN BITE, GAL!

I GRABBED THAT STICK OUTEN HIS HAND
AND I AIMED TWIXT HIS EYES
AND BROKE OPEN HIS HEAD.
I WANTED TO KILL HIM, I HOPE I KILLED HIM,
I PRAY TO GOD THAT HE'S DEAD!
AND I TURNED AND I RAN
AND I NEVER LOOKED BACK.

AND AS FOR THAT POOR SICKLY WOMAN, THAT LOU,
WHO BURIED HER BABY AND HALF OF HER HEART,
I LEFT HER HANGIN' THERE BLEEDIN' INTO THE GROUND...
—WALLERIN' LIKE A CRIPPLED SPIDER—
I LEFT HER...
I LEFT HER...
I LEFT HER BEHIND.
AND ALL THIS TIME SINCE
I BEEN GOIN'
I BEEN GOIN' OUTEN MY MIND.

ROXY

(cont., almost in same rhythm but without singing) I been walkin,
coverin' the miles, Hidin' out by day, travelin' by night. Stole me
these man clothes, cropped my hair. Made out like I'm deaf and dumb.
Walkin' every step of every mile, to reach my boy, who ain't only a
dog.

TOM

Roxy, I didn't know that—

ROXY

That's one thing you got to stop, honey! You can't call me Roxy same
as if you was my equal. Children don't speak to their mammies like
that. You call me ma or mammy—

TOM

Don't you get high-handed with me, you sassy wench—

ROXY

Because you is my chile! My blood chile, right outen my womb. *(Tom
gives a short laugh of stun.)* And your name's Happy, and you ain't
got no fambly name 'cause niggers *DON'T* have 'em.

TOM

What in hell are you talkin' about?

ROXY

And that poor boy you been abusin' this mornin', and a-kickin' and a-
cuffin' every day of his poor life, is your marster, and *HIS* name Tom
Driscoll! And I'm the one should know, 'cause I'm the one that put
you in his place.

TOM

You're lyin'!

ROXY

It ain't no lie, and you goin' to know it. Who but a mammy give her life for her chile, like I did for you? Who but a mammy, a blood mammy? Who?

TOM

You're not lyin'. My God!

ROXY

(rears back laughing an ugly laugh) Oh, your face! Your face!

Tom pulls the Twins' dagger out of his dress and lunges for Roxy, but she disarms him skillfully.

ROXY

You pup! You think you can scare me with your knife? It ain't in you nor the likes of you, though I reckon you shoot me in the back if I give you the chance. But if I get killed, this all come out, Happy, 'cause it's all down in writin', and in safe hands, too, and the man that have it know where to look for the right man iff'n I don't show up. Oh, bless your nigger soul, if you put your mammy up for as big a fool as you is, you pow'ful mistaken.

TOM

You mean it.

ROXY

What do you think I's talkin' about, Happy! I's talkin' about revenge! And the look on your face is worth a million dol—
(bursts into tears) Oh, honey, honey, my chile! Sell a person down the river! Your own mammy, down the river!

TOM

My God!

ROXY

But I guess I should have knowed it, raised by Lancaster Driscoll. He'd have sold his mammy down the river if he could have.

TOM

You're my mother. And I'm— I'm a— My God! My God! My God!

Roxy laughs with each ejaculation, not so much vindictively now as in genuine amusement as each new wave of realization sweeps over Tom. Holding the lantern in one hand to

see better and the dagger in the other, she crouches and wheels around Tom as, at each "My God!" he first worries his head in his hands, then shakes his fist at the heavens, then drops to his knees, and at the last "My God!" sinks onto the floor.

TOM

(finally) That means... that... was Lancaster Driscoll my father?

ROXY

What does it matter?

TOM

Tell me! Was my father white, at least?

ROXY

It don't make no difference, but yes, he was white! And so was all the pappies on my side, my pappy and my grandpappy and his pappy before him, and all dogs that didn't even say hello to their pups, but sold 'em as slaves. The only blood you got occasion to be proud of come from too far back to remember, except all the mammies passed the names down ... to me ... and now I pass them to you. And his name was W'le W'lay and her name was Nadie, and they was a king and queen outen Africa, and you remember them names. *(sings from opening)* Nadie-e. W'le W'lay. That's them, callin' each other 'cross the river. Then come the slave traders. You ain't got enough blood from them to show in your fingernails —one part black, and thirty-one parts white— but you is ALL slave.

TOM

My God!

ROXY

(still laughing, gives him back the dagger) Here, kill yourself, Misery. Oh, hush up, honey, don't you cry. Now I'll tell you what you goin' do, Hap.

TOM

Hap! My God, Hap!

ROXY

You goin' get the money to pay off that man down in Arkansas, and buy me back. You hear me when I say that, Hap?

TOM

But I don't have any money. I was cleaned out again.

ROXY

Damn you, chile! Then you goin' to Marse York for it.

TOM

But if he finds out, he'll bust the will to flinders. I can't!

ROXY

You can't NOT, Happy. 'Cause I'll go to him and tell him you one of his niggers and he'll sell YOU to get me the money.

TOM

(quickly) All right, Roxy, I'll get the money somehow.

ROXY

I tol' you once and I's not goin' tell you again. From this minute out, you call me Mammy.

TOM

All right ... Mammy ... I'll get the money. *(exits quickly)*

ROXY

NADIE-E. W'LE W'LAY. FLOATIN'. DREAMIN'.
LET DIRTY MR. RI-YI-YIVER CHURN,
LET HIM GRIND AND LET HIM WIND,
HE JUST A-HEADIN' FOR THAT SAME OLD SEA
WHERE SOMEDAY YOU AND ME
WILL END UP LA-YA-YA-YAUGHIN'...!

*She breaks off laughing a laugh
which becomes a howl of anguish.
Lights fade, to come up on...*

SCENE NINE: YORK DRISCOLL'S PARLOR -- NIGHT

*There is a lamp burning. York
Driscoll is asleep on the settee.*

*In a moment Tom enters stealthily,
still dressed as a woman. He checks
York's breathing, then goes to the
desk and uses the dagger to break
the lock on a drawer, from which he
takes a cashbox.*

*Waking, York rises, steals up on
Tom, and grabs him from behind.*

YORK

Help! I've got the burglar! Help!

Tom struggles, twisting around to come face to face with York. His hat comes off in the fight.

YORK

(letting him go) Tom!

Tom drives the dagger home. York sinks to the floor. Tom looks at the bloody dagger, then throws it down in horror.

LUIGI

(offstage) Mr. Driscoll!

ANGELO

(offstage) Are you all right?

Tom flees just as the Twins enter.

ANGELO

There!

LUIGI

He's been hurt.

They kneel beside the body, turning York over. With his dying breath, York grabs onto Luigi's nightshirt, bloodying him. At this moment Pudd'nhead enters, Rowena following.

PUDD'NHEAD

Luigi, Angelo, what's happened?

LUIGI

I think he's dead.

ROWENA

(rushing to her father, kneeling) Pa!

ANGELO

Rowena, don't look!

LUIGI

We saw a woman running away as we got here.

Happy, Jasper and Glory crowd in at the door.

PUDD'NHEAD

Happy, run quick for Sheriff Matthews.

TOM

(rushing in, in his nightshirt) Uncle! Oh, God in Heaven! Uncle!

ANGELO

(helping Rowena up from her father's body) Rowena, come away.

ROWENA

Luigi! You have blood on you!

TOM

OH, UNCLE, TALK TO ME UNCLE, UNCLE, UNCLE
UNCLE, PLEASE TRY TO STAND...
HE'S DEAD!

A crowd has begun to form.

CHORUS

GOD'A'MERCY ON HIS SOUL.

TOM

IS THIS A DAGGER I SEE BEFORE ME,
THE HANDLE TOWARD HIS HAND?
(points to Luigi)
ASSASSIN, COME FROM ANOTHER LAND!
THERE'S AN ASSASSIN, ASSASSIN AMONG US!

CHORUS

...ASSASSIN!

TOM

ASSASSIN, ASSASSIN, COME FROM A FAR OFF SHORE!
YOU KILLED ONE MAN WITH THAT DAGGER
AND NOW YOU'VE KILLED ONE MORE!
OH, SATAN, GET THEE BEHIND THE DOOR!

CHORUS

OH, SATAN, GET THEE BEHIND THE DOOR!

ROWENA

NOW LET US PAUSE FOR REFLECTION...

TOM

...LYNCH HIM! LYNCH HIM!

ROWENA

...TAKE STOCK OF OUR SANITY

TOM

OH, LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!

PUDD'NHEAD

WE MUST PRESERVE OUR LAW AND ORDER,...

CHORUS

...LYNCH HIM!

PUDD'NHEAD

...JUSTICE AND LIBERTY...

CHORUS

OH, LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!
THERE'S AN ASSASSIN IN FRONTIER LANDIN'
ASSASSIN, ASSASSIN, COME FROM A FAR COUNTRY.
YOU KILLED ONE MAN WITH THAT DAGGER,
NOW TWO BUT YOU WON'T KILL THREE.
OH, LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!
OH, LYNCH HIM...! (GUNSHOT!)

Sheriff Matthews has come to the door and now silences the crowd.

MATTHEWS

Hold on there, you mob you! This man, Luigi Capello, is goin' to get a fair trial here in Frontier Landin'! Then we'll lynch him.

Matthews takes Luigi in hand and pulls him (and Angelo) roughly offstage. The crowd rushes behind them with shouts of "Lynch him!"

ROWENA

Angelo! (weeps) Oh, Pa!

Pudd'nhead holds Rowena, as set and lights change to...

SCENE Ten: THE HAUNTED HOUSE -- MORNING

Roxy is pacing as Happy and Glory run in.

ROXY

What in the world was all that noise last night? Sounded like the whole town was—

HAPPY

Mammy, the Twins done killed Marse York!

ROXY

Killed him!

HAPPY

Yes'm, and now I's goin' to light out of here for the free states, 'cause I ain't goin' to be no property to Marse Tom. That man'll kill me sure, he hates me so!

GLORY

And I's goin' with him, me and our baby!

ROXY

Wait, hold on! Marse Tom goin' to be your marster now, and I got a plan a'brewin'. You two don't start runnin' yet. Promise me.

HAPPY

All right, Mammy, but if he starts in whalin' me—

Jasper enters.

ROXY

Jasper! Oh, you look good enough to eat, standin' there.

JASPER

You hidin' out here, you don't even send me a hello, I got to sneak along after your chile to find you?

ROXY

I was goin' send word.

JASPER

Is this what it is to be free, Roxy? You more chained now than ever.

HAPPY

(looking out window) Here come Marse Tom! Come on, Glory. *(pulls Glory off with him)*

JASPER

Chained to that no-good white pup! What's he got on you?

ROXY

Jasper, you git too.

JASPER

You always tellin' me to git! I want to be with you. I want to take care of you, all beat up and ragged and just breakin' my heart!

ROXY

I's fixin' to take care of you. But I got to talk to Marse Tom first. Go on, quick, before he see you?

JASPER

I ain't afraid of him.

ROXY

He your master now! You best be afraid. Go, quick.

Jasper goes off one side, and Tom comes on the other.

TOM

(shows her a stack of banknotes) Mammy, your slavin' days are over!

ROXY

Hush, put that away. *(makes sure Jasper is gone)*

TOM

What is it?

ROXY

Thought I heard something.

TOM

You got nothing to worry about any more, Mammy. Your boy's going to buy you free. Those Twins murdered Uncle last night, and today I'm a rich man. Uncle named Pudd'nhead executor to the will— *(laughs)* his first job as a lawyer, and he got it through family!— So I beat him down first thing this morning to give me an advance on the estate. I told him you got yourself messed up down in Arkansas and lost your papers and was taken up as a slave again and ... Mammy, I think Pudd'nhead's a little soft on you anyway 'cause—

ROXY

You come here a-singin' and a-laughin'. Ain't you got no distress for Marse York layin' out there dead?

TOM

Why should I? Are you forgetting? He's not *my* uncle.

ROXY

No, he yo' pappy.

TOM

My God! (*after a moment*) Well, all the better! He deserved it, leaving his child a slave, leaving my mammy to raise me all by herself! We should get down on our knees to those freaks in gratitude for dispatching the old hypocrite!

ROXY

That man was good to you!

TOM

How good was he to *Happy*! He thought *Happy* was his son.

ROXY

He bought him, didn't he? To keep him out of his brother's mean hands. I's goin' to that trial, and when those outlandish devils is swingin' at the end of their ropes, I's goin' to lift up just one hooraw!

TOM

Well, so will I, Mammy; they made us rich. Uncle— I mean my father— put me down halves with Rowena in his will. And I'm going to give my old mammy an allowance of twenty-five dollars a month! What do you think about that!

ROXY

I think you'll give me fifty, the same as Marse York always give you.

TOM

Well, I guess you're worth it.

ROXY

And another thing, you goin' to give that boy his freedom.

TOM

Happy? But Mammy, I just inherited him, and he's worth—

ROXY

You'll do it or I'll go straight to Mister Wilson and—

TOM

All right, all right. I guess I owe him that much, although he's never going to amount to anything, Mammy; he's always going to act like a nigger now, being brought up one.

ROXY

There's niggers and there's niggers; take a look at you. But you leave that to my conscience. And after you give Happy his freedom, you goin' to buy Glory free from Miss Rowena and—

TOM

What in the world for?

ROXY

Because they in love, which you wouldn't know nothin' about. And you goin' to set Jasper free, and buy that Lou, down in Arkansas, iff'n she still alive.

TOM

Now what am I going to do with a sickly nigger wench like that?

ROXY

You ain't goin' do nothin' with her, 'cause you goin' set her free.

TOM

Rox— *(she rises threateningly to him)* I mean ... Mammy. All right, all right, Mammy, dear.

ROXY

Now, come on, I want to see Mister Wilson.

Roxy leaves with Tom following her, disgruntled, as the set and lights change to...

SCENE ELEVEN: THE JAIL -- DAY

Luigi (and Angelo) are behind bars, with Rowena holding Angelo's hands through the bars. Sheriff Matthews sits nearby, tying a noose. Pembroke enters.

PEMBROKE

Alex, I just want to have another look at that prisoner. I suppose you know what's botherin' me here, don't you?

MATTHEWS

Can't say I do. Murder?

PEMBROKE

Not just that. That prisoner is African, ipso facto a slave, and in Missouri, you can't hang a slave, even for murder.

MATTHEWS

You was gonna run him for Mayor.

PEMBROKE

That was different. As Mayor we had him where we wanted him.

ROWENA

Pembroke Howard, you can't be—

PEMBROKE

And that was before he murdered your pa! Now we see him more clearly, as property in danger of a noose.

MATTHEWS

What about that blond one he's hooked up with?

PEMBROKE

It's a complication. I've got some ideas. But one step at a time. I got that trial tomorrow, and justice must be served. See you in court. *(exits)*

ANGELO

Rowena, please go home, my dear. You must sleep.

ROWENA

Please, please, Angelo, I beg you again to let me go to St. Louis to see if a doctor there will undertake this surgery.

ANGELO

Never.

LUIGI

Angelo, perhaps Rowena is right.

ROWENA

If they hang Luigi or sell him into slavery—

ANGELO

Hush, my dear. *(puts her hand on his heart.)* Do you feel my heart?

ROWENA

Yes.

ANGELO

And can you feel that other heartbeat? The echo?

ROWENA

Yes.

ANGELO

WE MUST PAUSE IN LIFE'S JOURNEY,
REFLECT THROUGH THE MANY TEARS,
WE DID NOT COME INTO THIS WORLD ALONE.

LUIGI

NO, WE SHARE THIS LIFE TOGETHER,
COMFORT EACH OTHER'S FEARS,
AND WE DON'T TRAVEL THROUGH THIS WORLD ALONE

ANGELO/LUIGI

IT WAS THE SOFTEST SIGH OF OUR MOTHER,
OH, BROTHER, BROTHER, YOU'RE NOT HERE ALONE.
AND IN THE END WHEN WE'RE LEAVING
FOR A FUTURE THAT'S STILL UNKNOWN,
OH, BROTHER, YOU'RE NOT HERE ALONE.

ROWENA

AND IF YOU GO BEFORE ME,
I'LL CARRY YOU IN MY HEART,
AND I'LL NOT TRAVEL THROUGH THIS WORLD ALONE.
I WILL PRESERVE YOUR LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP
TILL THE DAY THAT I DEPART,
AND I'LL NOT LEAVE THIS WORLD ALONE.

ROWENA/ANGELO/LUIGI

IT IS THE ECHO OF CENTURIES BEFORE US,
REMEMBER, REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT HERE ALONE.
AND IF THE VOICES SEEM MUTED
THE WORDS ARE ENGRAVED IN STONE,
OH, REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT HERE ALONE.
OH, REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT HERE ALONE.

Lights fade, to come up on...

SCENE TWELVE: YORK DRISCOLL'S HOUSE -- SUNSET

*On the veranda, Jasper, Happy and
Glory hum a Stephen Foster tune,*

"Hard Times". Pudd'nhead is in the parlor examining his glass plates with a magnifier. Hearing the humming, he comes to the door and sings the melody. After his first line, he returns to his plates just before Roxy arrives in the yard with Tom. Roxy joins the humming of the slaves, gesturing to Tom to stand off. Tom is annoyed but obeys, watching with envy as Roxy caresses Happy's nape and Happy requites her love.

JASPER, HAPPY, GLORY
+ PUDD'NHEAD + ROXY

HMMMMM, HMMMM, HMMMM

THERE ARE FRAIL FORMS FAINTING AT THE DOOR.

THOUGH THEIR VOICES ARE SILENT, THEIR PLEADING LOOKS WILL SAY

OH! HARD TIMES, COME AGAIN NO MORE.

T'IS THE SONG, THE SIGH OF THE WEARY;

HARD TIMES, HARD TIMES, COME AGAIN NO MORE;

MANY DAYS YOU HAVE LINGERED AROUND MY CABIN DOOR,

OH! HARD TIMES, COME AGAIN NO MORE.

Jasper, frustrated, leaves the slaves and interrupts Pudd'nhead.

JASPER

No more! No more! Mister Wilson? Didn't old Marster say anything in his will, anything at all about me, nor Happy, nor Glory?

PUDD'NHEAD

I am so sorry, Kwombo. I know that Cousin York intended to free all of you before his death but— *(Roxy enters the parlor with Tom.)* Roxy! Oh, Roxy, my dear, what did they do to you! *(takes her in his arms, rocking her gently)* Roxy, Roxy, Roxy, Roxy! *(pulls away after a moment)* Oh, Kwombo, I do beg pardon. Forgive me both of you. But Roxy... *(touches her gingerly on her cheek)* Look at you.

ROXY

Yes sir, it's been a hard time.

TOM

Roxy wanted me to bring her in person to thank you, Cousin, for the advance you gave me on the will.

PUDD'NHEAD

Tom, I explained to you that is not an advance. The will is in probate and we can't guess when it will be settled. You must repay every cent of that money. What I gave you is everything I have in this world.

ROXY

Oh, Mister Wilson!

PUDD'NHEAD

And it is to be spent on buying back Roxy's freedom and on no other single thing, do you understand?

ROXY

Marse Tom!

TOM

Now, Roxy, I told him— Pudd'nhead, I told you that I was going to pay you back every red cent. Why, Roxy is like family to me. Roxy, I told him that.

PUDD'NHEAD

Roxy, did Tom have anything at all to do with your gettin' into that trouble down there?

ROXY

Oh, no, Mister Wilson. You see, Marse Tom, he give me the money for the fare for the riverboat, and so he kindly feel responsible, but it was just foolish me that took the wrong direction. And once't I got down the river there, and the white folk hear me, my way of talkin', they knowed straight off I was a nigger and they took me for a runaway, and that the reason they was abusin' me so bad, you see. And why Marse Tom, he feel so bad for me now.

PUDD'NHEAD

Didn't you show them your letter of manumission?

ROXY

Well sir, no sir. I left that ... up here, that paper, with Marse Tom, for safekeepin', you see.

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, then, it's not a matter of buying you back. I'll just travel down there with your letter of manumission and—

TOM

Now, Cousin, Roxy is my responsibility, and I'm goin' to be the one to handle all this. It is my duty, and Roxy, it is my pride.

JASPER

Mister Wilson, I need to tell you what I seen in Saint Louis.

ROXY

Jasper, you ain't never been to Saint Louis and Mister Wilson, he don't care to hear none of your nigger stories and superstitions. And Jasper, I need you outside a minute. Beggin' your pardon, Mister Wilson, if Jasper could come out to the well and draw me up some water. I's pow'ful thirsty and they crippled up my hands so.

PUDD'NHEAD

(unsure) Of course, Roxy.

ROXY

I thank you, I thank you, sir, for helpin' poor foolish Roxy. You a man too good for this world. Come along, Jasper.

Roxy pushes Japer out into the yard, whispering angrily.

TOM

(at the desk, picking up plates and examining them in the light) Why looky here, Cousin! Back to playing with your crystal doo-hickeys? What fortune do they give out for tomorrow? Your first day in court representing that murderin' freak, and your last! Ha!

PUDD'NHEAD

(wiping plates clean after Tom handles them) Luigi and Angelo saw a strange woman runnin' away. I am goin' through the plates of all the women in town to see if—

Jasper starts back up the stairs, but stops when Happy comes to wrestle-hug Roxy.

JASPER

Happy, look up here at me, honey.

Happy beams up at Jasper who recognizes something but is puzzled. Roxy, worried, pulls Happy offstage with her. Jasper returns to parlor.

ROXY

Come along, baby. Let's go find Glory.

TOM

But see here now, this one's got my name on it. Thomas Driscoll, May 1, 1836, I was just one month old!

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes, Tom, your plate was the first I got out; I must say, I was disappointed.

TOM

I thought you were looking for a woman.

PUDD'NHEAD

A certain thought ... crossed my mind.

TOM

(as he goes out) You mean there was actually a thought that made its way from one side clean through to the other? What a point it must have had on it! Ha!

Tom exits laughing. Jasper goes to desk, picks up Tom's plate by the edges and examines it against light.

JASPER

So that IS it then! Mister Wilson?

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes? Oh, Kwombo, watch your fingers. If they're at all greasy—

JASPER

Yes sir, you done tol' me. But if you look, sir, you see it's Marse Tom with the greasy fingers.

PUDD'NHEAD

Give it to me then. I have a solution that will clean it.

JASPER

I think you best not clean it. I think you best examine it.

PUDD'NHEAD

(exasperated) Kwombo, I've already—

JASPER

Didn't you once say a body's marks don't change?

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes, that's true but— *(pause)* Why?

Jasper hands the glass plate to Pudd'nhead who raises it to the lamp, as the lights change to ...

SCENE THIRTEEN: COURTROOM

The chorus shouts "Lynch Him" as Luigi (and Angelo) are led to the dock. But for York Driscoll, Pudd'nhead and Jasper, the entire cast is here, blacks separate.

MATTHEWS

All rise for Justice Robinson.

JUSTICE ROBINSON takes his place, raps with his gavel.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Luigi Cappello, you are charged with the murder of York Driscoll. How do you plead?

LUIGI AND ANGELO

Not guilty, Your Honor.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

And, do you have counsel?

LUIGI

We were to be represented by David Wilson, but—

Pudd'nhead and Jasper rush on carrying large pieces of board.

PUDD'NHEAD

Here we are, Your honor. Sorry we're late.

PEMBROKE

Well, isn't this just like you, Pudd'nhead.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Mr. Howard, you may open for the prosecution.

PEMBROKE

(as Schubert Piano trio starts softly in orchestra) Your Honor, members of the court, the State's case is simple and incontrovertible. We will show by a chain of evidence without break

or fault that the prisoner has committed a most cruel and bloodthirsty assassination. His motive, greed. Greed not only for the victim's money in the cashbox found at the site of the murder, but greed for public office in the upcoming charter elections for which York Driscoll was the acknowledged favorite, and greed finally, for the frail flesh of the victim's daughter. (*sits with a flourish*)

CHORUS

OH LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Opening for the Defense, Pudd'n— I mean, Mr. Wilson.

PUDD'NHEAD

Waive opening, your Honor.

MATTHEWS

Waive opening?!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Did I hear you correctly? You waive your opening statement?

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes sir.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Very well, Pudd'n— uh, Mr. Wilson. Mr. Howard, call your first witness.

The witnesses line up, and step quickly into the box when called.

PEMBROKE

Sheriff Alexander Matthews. Describe the murder scene, if you will.

MATTHEWS

York Driscoll was layin' on the floor in a puddle of blood, a dagger beside him, the marks of the murderer's hand in the blood on the handle.

PEMBROKE

Is this the dagger?

MATTHEWS

That is the dagger.

PEMBROKE

Exhibit A for the Prosecution, and on the handle the dried and crusted blood, and in the blood the marks of the murderer's foul hand.

CHORUS

OH LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Cross examination?

PUDD'NHEAD

No questions.

MATTHEWS

No questions?!

PEMBROKE

Call Rowena Driscoll. When you found your father, dead, whom did you find kneeling over his body, with blood on his breast?

ROWENA

Count Luigi Cappello.

PEMBROKE

Alone?

ROWENA

I... I don't remember.

PEMBROKE

His brother, Count Angelo? You don't remember if his brother might have been beside him, kneeling over your father's dead body?

ROWENA

I... I have no memory at all of that.

PEMBROKE

I remind you Rowena Driscoll that you are under oath. You did not see Count Angelo Capello kneeling beside Count Luigi Capello?

ROWENA

He is innocent!

PEMBROKE

Are you in love with Angelo Cappello?

ROWENA

Yes.

PEMBROKE

Did your father approve of this ... extra-ordinary romance?

ROWENA

He said he would never permit us to marry so long as he lived.

CHORUS

OH LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Cross examination.

PUDD'NHEAD

No questions.

MATTHEWS

No questions?!

PEMBROKE

Call Thomas A Becket Driscoll. Is it not true that both Luigi and Angelo Cappello admitted to killing a man with that very dagger?

TOM

Well, Angelo admitted that Luigi did it but Luigi claimed it was self-defense, but Angelo argued that Luigi was trying to save HIM, so *I ask you. (laughs derisively)*

PEMBROKE

And does this dagger, with the bloody marks of the murderer's foul hand still upon the handle, fit the description Count Cappello gave?

TOM

To a T.

PEMBROKE

Did either of the Counts Cappelli show you the knife when they first mentioned it?

TOM

No, Count Angelo went upstairs for it, but he came back saying that it had been burgled. *(snorts)*

PEMBROKE

And what did the murder victim, your uncle, later confide to you about that dagger?

TOM

He said that the Twins would probably lay their hands on it again when they needed it to assassinate somebody *else!*

CHORUS

OH, LYNCH HIM FROM THE TALLEST TREE!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Cross Examination?

PUDD'NHEAD

No questions.

MATTHEWS

No questions?! No questions?!!! No questions?!!!!!!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Mr. Wilson, am I correct in my assumption that you are throwing up your hands in the face of this evidence and denying your client the right to defense?

PUDD'NHEAD

No, Your Honor, I am just waiting for Pembroke to run down.

PEMBROKE

Prosecution rests.

PUDD'NHEAD

And about time.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Mr. Wilson, call your first witness.

PUDD'NHEAD

No witnesses, your Honor.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Mr. Wilson!

PUDD'NHEAD

I have other evidence, and better. May it please the court, the claim most aggressively and defiantly insisted upon by the prosecution is this —that the person whose hand left the blood-stained finger-marks upon the haft of that knife is the person who committed the murder. *(pause)* We grant that claim. *(Huge gasp from onlookers.)* I beg the indulgence of the court while I make a few

remarks in explanation of some evidence that I am about to introduce. Kwombo, my glass plates.

Jasper hands Pudd'nhead the box of glass plates, and the crowd bursts into laughter.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Now, Pudd'nhead, we all recognize those little crystal playthings of yours, but—

PUDD'NHEAD

Please, Your Honor, let me continue. You will see the point shortly.

CHORUS

POOR PUDD'NHEAD.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Very well.

PUDD'NHEAD

Every human being carries with him from cradle to grave certain physical marks which do not change their character, and by which he can always be identified. These marks cannot be counterfeited or disguised. They are the delicate lines or corrugations on the insides of the hands and soles of the feet. If you will look at the balls of your fingers, you will observe that these dainty curving lines form patterns, and that these patterns differ on the different fingers.

CHORUS

WHY THAT'S SO!

JUSTICE ROBINSON

I never noticed that!

PUDD'NHEAD

The patterns on the right hand are not the same as those on the left.

CHORUS

WHY THAT'S SO!

PUDD'NHEAD

And your patterns differ from your neighbors.

CHORUS

WHY THAT'S SO!

PUDD'NHEAD

And one twin's patterns are not the same as the other's.

MATTHEWS

It's certainly so!

PUDD'NHEAD

(suddenly lifts the dagger in the air) Upon the haft of this dagger are the finger marks of the murderer! There is but one man in the whole earth whose hand will match. And please God we will produce that man before that clock strikes noon!

Outburst from crowd.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Order in the court.

PUDD'NHEAD

For more than twenty years I have amused my compulsory leisure with collecting hand-prints, as all of you know. *(titters from crowd)* In my collection I have hundreds of them, each and every one labeled with name and date; not labeled the next day or even the next hour, but in the very minute that the impression was taken, as you all can testify. I have studied some of your signatures so much that I know them by heart. Now, while I turn my back, I beg that several persons will be so good as to pass their fingers through their hair and then press their thumbs upon this pane of glass, and that among them the accused may set *THEIR* thumb marks.

He turns his back and various people rise, with Jasper collecting their prints on the pane of glass.

PUDD'NHEAD

(back turned) Sheriff Matthews, Your Honor, you will please join the others? And remember, folks, these are your signatures, so get your thumbs good and greasy and make your signatures distinct, right or left hand, or both, it matters not to me.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

All right, Mr. Wilson, you may demonstrate.

PUDD'NHEAD

(pointing at appropriate places on the glass) This is Count Luigi's left thumb, this one three signatures below, is Count Angelo's right thumb. *(gasps from crowd)* In between, there is the signature of Mr. Justice Robinson, and up here in the corner, trying to trick me, that is Sheriff Alexander Matthews, left thumb upside down. *(applause)*

after each) I cannot name the others, but I have them all at home and could identify them all by my records. Kwombo, the knife.

JASPER

You don't want the twins first?

PUDD'NHEAD

Oh! Good thought.

(as Jasper sets on the easel two of the pieces of board, enlarged fingerprints)

Now, then, we have here the finger-marks of the two accused, thrown up to many times their natural size using my pantograph. —*Patent pending!*— I will ask your Honor to compare these marks with the finger-marks of the accused upon the pane of glass, and tell the court if they are the same.

He hands the Judge a magnifying glass, and the Judge makes his examination of the pane.

MATTHEWS

WHAT'S HE AFTER?

CHORUS

WHAT'S HE DOING?

PEMBROKE

WHAT DOES ALL THIS PROVE?

JUSTICE ROBINSON

They are identical.

PUDD'NHEAD

(as Jasper holds up a third drawing) Now please compare this third drawing with the fatal thumb mark upon the haft of the knife.

JUDGE

(making examination) They are identical! Here is our murderer!

PUDD'NHEAD

Now compare these three drawings with one another.

Jasper places the third drawing beside the first two.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

They do not even resemble!

PUDD'NHEAD

So it is proved that neither of the Counts Cappelli left those
finger-marks upon the murder weapon!

LUIGI

Impeccable logic!

ANGELO

Implacably laid!

PUDD'NHEAD

But who did?!? We will now proceed to find the guilty.

Intense hush. Tom fidgets.

PUDD'NHEAD

(taking a plate from the collection) Your Honor, please compare the
thumbprint on this plate with the thumb print on the knife.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

They are identical! Here again is our murderer!

PUDD'NHEAD

Please read the name on the label.

JUSTICE ROBINSON

Happy, son of Roxy!

Crowd gasps and turns to Happy.

HAPPY

(stands, unable to run) Before God, no!

PUDD'NHEAD

Do not lay a hand on that man! I have more to reveal. *(the crowd
quiets)* Happy, put both your thumb marks on that pane of glass.
*(Jasper has taken the pane to Happy, now gets the marks and next
takes them to the judge.)* And your Honor, I will ask you please to
compare Happy's marks, when Jasper brings them to you, to those on
the murder weapon. Again, please use your magnifying glass ...
and ... ?

JUDGE

They do not even resemble!

PUDD'NHEAD

Because that man is not the son of Roxy, not a negro, not a slave; he is as white and free as anyone in this court. (*Indignation from crowd.*) The prints on that plate were made May 1, 1836, when this man was but one month old.

JASPER

I was there. I saw them made. I saw the writing.

PUDD'NHEAD

He was in a baby-wagon with another baby. And some time between that day and this, the mother of the other baby ... (*must catch his breath, for he begins to cry*) ... a slave woman ... exchanged those two babies in the cradle.

ROXY

(*quietly*) Lord have mercy on my soul.

PUDD'NHEAD

(*weeping outright, he wheels on Tom*) Happy, son of Roxy, negro and slave, make upon this pane of glass the finger marks that will hang you!

The clock begins to strike twelve and the crowd turns, stunned, to Tom. Pudd'nhead brings Tom the pane of glass and Tom dully puts his prints on it. Lights begin to change as Justice Robinson moves to examine the prints, then brings Tom downstage where he begins to remove Tom's white man's clothes.

Meanwhile, Roxy on the other side of the stage gently removes Happy's clothes, as she did when he was a baby. With Tom and Happy standing naked, Roxy carries Happy's clothes to Tom, hands him the clothes, then takes Tom's clothes from Justice Robinson and carries them back to Happy. Lights change to ...

SCENE FOURTEEN: YORK DRISCOLL'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Hope and white women march across the stage, carrying the same banner as earlier, only now both Angelo and Luigi are Xed off, and beside them is a picture of Pudd'nhead.

CHORUS

DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR! DAVE WILSON FOR MAYOR!

Rowena comes onto the veranda, followed by The Twins and Pudd'nhead.

ROWENA

Shall we have coffee on the veranda?

ANGELO

Oh, yes, please, my angel! Isn't it a beautiful day!

LUIGI

All days will be beautiful now, thanks to Dave!

ROWENA

(pouring coffee) Sugar?

ANGELO

Yes?

ROWENA

No, I mean do you want sugar, Sugar?

ANGELO

Oh, yes, please! Sweet.

ROWENA

(clears her throat, calls into the house) Tom. *(has difficulty with the name, tries again)* Oh, Cousin Tom?

Happy comes onto the veranda, dressed in Tom's clothes but carrying the shoes.

HAPPY

Yes 'm?

ROWENA

Coffee? Cousin Tom?

HAPPY

Oh, yes'm, thank you'm.

ROWENA

Sugar? Cousin Tom?

HAPPY

Oh, yes'm, thank you'm.

ROWENA

You must call me Rowena, Hap— (*snaps her fingers*) You must call me Rowena, Tom. And I will call you Tom. For you are Tom, Cousin Tom.

HAPPY

Yes'm.

PUDD'NHEAD

And you must call me Cousin Dave.

HAPPY

Yes sir.

ANGELO

And you must call us Cousin, also, for we are soon to be your cousin.

ROWENA

Well, one of you, yes... Tom, we all have ... adjustments to make.

LUIGI

And what about Roxy, Dave?

PUDD'NHEAD

I am having her brought here.

Glory enters.

GLORY

Miss Rowena?

ROWENA

Yes, Glory?

GLORY

Could I talk to ... Marse Tom?

Happy looks to Rowena beseechingly.

ROWENA

Go ahead, Tom. It's your home, too, now.

Happy goes to Glory like a haven. They touch hands in tentative confusion, then hold onto each other tightly. Pudd'nhead, Rowena, and the Twins look away in embarrassment.

HAPPY

Mister Wilson, sir?

PUDD'NHEAD

You must call me Cousin Dave, Tom.

HAPPY

Oh, yes sir. Mister Wilson, sir, Glory and me wants to get married, now that I's free.

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, Tom, it's not just that you're free, but you're white. In this state it is against the law for whites and blacks to intermarry. You may, uh, BUY Glory from Cousin Rowena, if you wish, and, uh, keep her as your concubine. Our society generally overlooks that.

HAPPY

But then, wouldn't our baby still be a slave?

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, yes, but it would be, uh, *YOUR* slave. (*sees Roxy as she enters with Jasper*) Oh, Roxy.

ROXY

They told me at the jail that I was to come here.

PUDD'NHEAD

Yes, Roxy. As you know, it is against the law of our country to enslave a white man. For having enslaved Tom here, therefore, you would spend the rest of your life in jail, but Tom has graciously decided not to press charges.

HAPPY

Yes'm, Mammy, I put the X there for you on the paper, like Mister Wilson said, and you free again! Howzat?

ROXY

(to Happy, though she is unable to look directly at him) I 'spec they don't make hearts no bigger'n that in heaven.

PUDD'NHEAD

I'm afraid I wasn't able to do so well with Happy. He was to be hanged...

ROXY

Oh, Laws!

PUDD'NHEAD

...but Pembroke Howard, as the principal unpaid creditor of the Lancaster Driscoll estate, argued that Lancaster sold the wrong baby to his brother York and therefore the real Happy must be counted as uninventoried property of Lancaster's estate. Pembroke has claimed Happy as his own and has, I'm afraid, sold him down the river.

Slave Trader crosses the front of the stage with chained slaves. Tom is the last slave in line, dressed in Happy's clothes.

SLAVE CHORUS

OH, ON THE RIVER, YOUR LIFE IS MIS'RY, AIN'T WORTH LIVIN',
ON THE RIVER, YOUR LIFE'S JUST DRIFTWOOD FLOATIN' BY.

PUDD'NHEAD

Roxy, I once told you I would never father a child of yours into slavery. And now, in the name of blind justice, I have.

ROXY

You done what you had to, Mister Wilson.

JASPER

(putting his arm around Roxy) Roxy, have you dropped that white man's baby now for good and all?

ROXY

He my child, Jasper.

JASPER

Cut him away from you.

ROXY

I made him what he is.

PUDD'NHEAD

We have all made him what he is, Roxy. It's not him, it's not his blood, or your blood in him, it's us, this damn nation.

ROXY

I's goin' to go to work now, Jasper, and get the money to buy you free. Then together, if you will, we goin' work to buy my boy free.

JASPER

I'm your man, Roxy. You know I do what I can.

PUDD'NHEAD

I'll help. What I mean is, it appears as though—as incredible as it may seem—I may become the first mayor of Frontier Landin'.

ANGELO

Luigi has kindly bowed out of the election.

LUIGI

As has Angelo.

ROWENA

For reasons of domestic disharmony.

PUDD'NHEAD

And as mayor I would be finally pulling down a living wage and I figure that I can put aside some money and help buy Kwombo and—

ROWENA

Cousin, I have been giving thought to all this. As Jasper's legal owner couldn't I simply fr— fr— what I mean to say is, free him?

PUDD'NHEAD

That would be entirely within your legal authority!

ROWENA

Then ... let it be done, so be it, amen, caveat emptor, ex-eteray ex-eteray. And I suppose ... Glory?

HAPPY

No, ma'am, Miss Rowena, I got my own money now, Mister Wilson says, and I's payin' top dollar for that woman there, and then we goin' some place with diff'ent laws ... we can do that, Mister Wilson? ... and Glory, will you have me as your husband ... my dear?

Glory goes to him in tears.

ROXY

Glory! Happy! Jasper, did you hear?

JASPER

This ain't nothin' possible in my belief.

PUDD'NHEAD

And ... and then Kwombo, once you're free... I know that as mayor I could sure use a man of your intellect in my cabinet.

JASPER

Mister Wilson, you take care now else that be your first and last appointment!

PUDD'NHEAD

Well, then we'll leave this town, why not? Just leave the damn state with Happy and Glory here! There's a lawyer just across the river in Illinois up in Springfield, making a lot of noise there.

ANGELO/LUIGI

"A house divided against itself..."

ROWENA

"...cannot stand." Oh, mercy no!

PUDD'NHEAD

You've heard the man then, Abraham Lincoln? Can't the man talk though! Well, he's got a law firm over there, and I'm thinking I'd like to join up with that man, why not?

JASPER

Why not, Mister Wilson?

ROXY

Why not, Mister Wilson?

ROWENA

Why the hell not?

(as Hope and white women cross again with banner)

SAY, SISTERS WON'T YOU MEET US ON THE MISSISSIPPI SHORE?

WON'T YOU PUT SLAVERY MOLD'RIN' IN ITS GRAVE, COME BUY AND SELL NO MORE.

AND IF YOU WON'T...

(to Pembroke and Matthews passing by, hooting in derision)

What are you laughing at?

PEMBROKE

I'm laughin' at a pretty little gal with a big mouth, got herself linked up with a pudd'nheaded politician, a pair of freaks and a gang of slaves.

JASPER

Beggin' your pardon, Mr. Howard, sir, but that man there, he be Marse Tom now, and he ain't no slave.

PUDD'NHEAD

And Kwombo has his freedom now, Pembroke, so he's no slave either.

GLORY

And that woman there, Roxana? She as free as the wind.

HAPPY

Yes sir, and she been like a mother to me! And this young lady here, sir, well she ain't goin' be no slave much longer 'cause I's goin' buy her free. With my own money! And we goin' be married! And my chile's goin' be born free, yes sir, howzat!

ROXY

And that man there you been callin' Pudd'nhead all these years, well sir, Mr. Howard, sir, I guess he kindly showed you in court, didn't he?

ROWENA

And this freak here is the man I am going to marry.

ANGELO

And that freak, sir, is my brother!

LUIGI

And that bigmouthed, handsome young woman, sir, is my sister!

ROWENA

So whatever you find so funny, Mr. Howard ... get used to it!

ANGELO/LUIGI

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WON'T YOU MEET US ON THE MISSISSIPPI SHORE.

ROXY, JASPER, HAPPY, GLORY

WON'T YOU PUT SLAVERY MOLD'RIN' IN ITS GRAVE,
COME BUY AND SELL NO MORE.

ROWENA, PUDD'NHEAD

AND IF YOU WON'T,

YOU'LL MEET US COMIN' AT YOU'N WE'LL BE WAGING WAR!

ALL EIGHT

OUR TRUTH IS MAR ... CHING —

Pembroke begins "Amazing Grace" with Matthews joining immediately. Pembroke snaps his finger at his wife and Hope, torn, joins him.

PEMBROKE/MATTHEWS/HOPE

AMAZING GRACE HOW SWEET THE SOUNT

THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME...

PUDD'NHEAD

BREAK THESE CHAINS, MAN!

BREAK THESE CHAINS, MAN!

BREAK THESE CHAINS! (ADD JASPER AND ROXY)

BREAK THESE CHAINS! (ADD ROWENA, ANGELO, LUIGI, HAPPY, GLORY)

OUR TRUTH IS MARCHING ON!

PEMBROKE/MATTHEWS/HOPE

...I ONCE WAS LOST BUT NOW AM FOUND

WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE...

ROWENA/ANGELO/LUIGI/HAPPY/GLORY

PEMBROKE/MATTHEWS/HOPE

GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH! GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH!

GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH —

It is a musical free-for-all, with Black Chorus joining Pudd'nhead's "Battle Hymn" and "Break These Chains" themes, White Chorus joining Pembroke's "Amazing Grace" theme.

The Disenfranchised Others look on, quietly.

The musical free-for-all crescendoes and holds, then the lights dim, leaving only Pudd'nhead, Roxy, and Jasper in light, holding hands in union.

PUDD'NHEAD/ROXY/JASPER

DREAMIN', DREAMIN', DREAMIN'

THE END