

"SAM I AM"

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Rests a thinking man's three-story, eleven thousand square foot dream home of gables, bricks, brackets, and balconies. Twenty-five rooms in all.

Here, on its elongated porch stands...

SAM CLEMENS, age 49, an American scribbler.

SUPER: "Hartford House. 1885."

At his feet sits his family, the Clemenses: his dainty, yet strong-willed wife LIVY, age 39.

Eldest daughter and Sam's favorite, SUSY, age 13.

CLARA, the over-shadowed, middle-child, age 11.

JEAN, the baby, is an adorable little girl with long dark curly hair. A big white bow holds her hair on top, age 5.

Livy edits Sam's manuscript as the three girls observe over their mother's narrow shoulders.

Sam starts to pace.

LIVY  
Tsk. Tsk. Tsk.

SAM  
What?

Livy pencils out a paragraph.

LIVY  
Sheer indulgence.

SUSY  
Whoops!

SAM  
What you doin' there?

LIVY  
Girls, what does Momma always say?

GIRLS  
When in doubt...

LIVY  
Strike it out!

Livy crosses out another paragraph.

Sam grimaces. Aghast, he searches for sympathy upon his children's faces yet finds none.

SAM  
Dear woman, I bring you no ill  
will. Yet, each strike from your  
pencil is like a thick leather whip  
cross my bare back.

Livy grins and Xes out more.

LIVY  
Smack! Sam, how does that feel?

SAM  
Livy?!?

CLARA  
Yikes.

Jean looks up at Sam all sad.

JEAN  
Uh-oh.

SAM  
Girls! There's a sparkle of  
sadistic glee in your Momma's eyes.  
As if, my pain causes her great  
satisfaction.

Livy crosses out another paragraph. Then, she looks up and eyes her husband.

LIVY  
I thought you knew that about me?

SAM  
Susy. Jean. Clara. Children... must  
we remind Momma who I am?

SUSY  
America's Shakespeare!

CLARA  
A celebrity.

JEAN  
My Papa!

Sam scoops up Jean.

SAM  
True, I am all of the above.

Sam tickles her hard.

JEAN  
Stop that Papa!

Sam does.

SAM  
If I must...

Sam squeezes Jean.

Jean whispers into his ear.

JEAN  
I think Momma likes it.

LIVY  
Don't feed into him children. His  
vanity does not require it.

Livy finishes the manuscript. In character, she reads aloud  
and acts out Sam's written words.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
(as Tom)  
Your Pap doesn't have your money,  
Huck. Judge Thatcher still has all  
of it. Your Pap hasn't been seen  
since the day you disappeared.

The children draw closer and closer.

SAM  
(as Jim)  
He's never returning, Huck.

LIVY  
(as Huck)  
How do you know, Jim?

SAM  
(as Jim)  
Do you remember that house we found  
floating on the river? There was a  
dead man in that house. I looked  
carefully at his face, and the man  
was your Pap.

LIVY  
(as Huck)  
Tom's feeling well now, and there's  
nothing more to write about, and  
I'm happy to stop.

SAM  
(as Huck)  
If I had known what trouble it was  
to make a book, I would not have  
begun the job.

LIVY  
(as Huck)  
I may leave for the Indian  
Territory without waiting for Tom  
and Jim because Aunt Sally wants to  
make me her son and raise me in a  
proper manner.

SAM  
I cannot endure that. Well?

Sam waits for his muse's approval.

Livy ponders.

SAM (CONT'D)  
First thoughts?

LIVY  
Hmm.

Sam swallows hard.

SAM  
Any thoughts?!?

LIVY  
It's brilliant...

SAM  
Yet?

SUSY  
Uh-oh!

Sam starts to pace the stoop.

LIVY  
A few insignificant changes and the  
story will flow so much better.

SAM

Ahh! That.

Sam waves his hand as if swatting down a fly.

SAM (CONT'D)

Details.

LIVY

The difference between the almost right word, dear, and the right word is a large matter. 'Tis the difference between good and great.

SAM

Is it tiresome to be so right, all of the time?

Livy caresses the cover of the manuscript with her tiny fingers. The title page reads, The Adventures of Huck Finn.

LIVY

Sam, you have a true gift of breathing hellfire into your characters. They are so flawed, wrong, and alive.

CLARA

Is it good, Momma?

SUSY

Of course it is, silly. Papa wrote it.

Sam pats the head of his eldest daughter.

SAM

Thank you, child.

CLARA

I mean... Will people like it enough to buy it?

SAM

Is that important to you, Clara?

LIVY

Girls, your father wants it both ways. He wants to awe his critics and his fans.

SAM

So!

LIVY  
Samuel Clemens, it is more  
important if the story rings truth.

SAM  
Does it?

Livy taps her finger on her husband's pen-name, Mark Twain.

LIVY  
It does. Or as Huck would put it,  
human beings can be awful cruel to  
one another.  
(beat)

Sam gazes down at the woman he loves.

SAM  
Some more than others.

The front door opens as...

KATY LEARY appears, 29, a sturdy first generation Irish-American, who is a loyal family servant.

KATY  
Dinner.

LIVY  
Thank you, Katy. We will continue  
this conversation later.

Katy nods and leaves.

Sam offers his wife a hand up.

SAM  
Your righteousness, can I be of  
assistance?

LIVY  
How gentlemanly of you.

Their children GIGGLE at their play-acting.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Now girls. Watch out for boys like  
this one.

SUSY  
Why Momma?

LIVY  
Their vanity shall be their  
downfall.

Sam tugs up his wife.

SAM  
True, impertinence.

He hugs Livy hard. Then, he whispers in her ear.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I love you.

Livy pushes him off and gathers their children.

She and the three girls head inside the house.

Sam stands back and watches.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Mrs. Clemens, come back here...  
with my heart.

Susy turns.

SUSY  
Papa, you can have mine.

SAM  
Thank you, dear.

Livy nods down at her daughter. Then, she looks back at Sam.

LIVY  
There is love in this house, isn't  
there?

The three girls hold hands as they enter into...

THE ENTRANCE HALL

Their mother follows them in.

ON THE STOOP

Sam stands still now... alone.

The large, brown wooden front door CLOSES behind him.

SOUND: CLICK.



Sam, looks content with his present world. He turns out towards his groomed, picture-perfect grounds. Proudly, he grasps his lapels and stares out to what is his.

SAM

Hmm.. I reckon I'm the luckiest man alive.

Livy appears bent over in a nearby window.

LIVY

You coming, luv? Our suppah' is getting cold.

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - LATER DAY

The red-bricked monstrosity looms in the background as Livy storms across the front yard.

SUPER: "Four years later..."

LIVY

I'm going to kill him.

SUPER: "Hartford House. 1889."

Livy climbs the porch and enters her home.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - SAME TIME

Livy slices between CONSTRUCTION PEOPLE and SERVANTS that hold up flowers, fabrics, and correspondence.

She sees beyond these people to GEORGE, their butler.

LIVY

Where's Sam, George?

George points with his head.

GEORGE

On the kitchen phone, Mrs. Clemens.

Livy nods and cuts into...

THE DINING ROOM

Katy and other SERVANTS lift the long dining room table.

KATY

One. Two. Three. Lift!

The staff moves the large table closer to the wall.

LIVY  
Katy, what's all the fuss?

KATY  
We're getting ready for tonight's  
performance.

Livy notices a small stage is being constructed in the  
drawing room.

LIVY  
Ah, yes. Susy's play.

KATY  
They're rather good.

Livy nods.

From the drawing room, in a huff, Clara, now 15, approaches.

Livy raises her hand and motions her to stop.

LIVY  
Later, Clara. I need a word with  
your father first.

Clara stops and pouts.

CLARA  
Fine!

Livy storms into...

THE KITCHEN.

The COOK and KITCHEN STAFF prepares the day's supper.

Sam is in the corner on the telephone in mid-conversation.

SAM  
Paige. You know I'm just an Old  
River Rat.

LIVY  
(to the staff, overly  
polite)  
May I have a word with my husband,  
please?

The staff look to one another then flees.

Sam notices Livy's state as she picks up two long knives from the nearby block table.

Livy examines them hard. Then, she jabs and thrusts the blades into the air.

LIVY (CONT'D)

Ah! Ah!

SAM

Uh-oh. Livy is here. And her actions give me a chill. Can I call you back?

Sam hangs up and pushes his back against the wall.

SAM (CONT'D)

Hi, honey.

LIVY

When were you going to tell me?

SAM

About what?

LIVY

My money.

SAM

So, you've been to the bank?

LIVY

My personal accounts have been emptied. My inheritance is gone.

SAM

Not gone, luv. Re-invested.

Livy starts to shake as she looks at the knives.

LIVY

I better put these down.

She does.

LIVY (CONT'D)

Re-invested! In what now?

SAM

It's a sure thing.

LIVY

Put it back.

SAM  
I don't think I can.

Livy slams down her tiny hand hard atop the block table.

SOUND: SMACK!

LIVY  
Put it back!

SAM  
But...

LIVY  
Sam, I'm tired of your get rich  
quick schemes.  
(motions with her hands)  
Come here.

Sam does, one small step at a time, like a small child afraid  
of receiving his punishment.

SAM  
Remember, my huckleberry. The house  
is full of witnesses. Don't do  
anything rash.

Livy caresses Sam's cheek with the back of her hand.

LIVY  
Don't worry. I won't.

Then, with cat-like speed, she yanks Sam's moustache hard.

SAM  
Ow!!!

Sam uses his fingertips to make sure his moustache is still  
there and attached.

SAM (CONT'D)  
That hurt.

Livy turns and storms out of the kitchen.

LIVY  
Good. Call Paige. I want back my  
money!

George appears in a narrow doorway.

Sam sees him and shrugs his shoulders.

SAM

Women.

George shakes his head and turns around.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR LANDING - LATER

Sam sneaks up the stairs.

From nowhere, Clara appears. She startles her father.

SAM

Great Jupiter's ghost!

CLARA

Hi, Papa.

SAM

Oh, hi sweet child.

Sam nervously looks around the second floor.

SAM (CONT'D)

Is Momma around?

CLARA

Downstairs.

Sam relaxes.

SAM

Good.

CLARA

You in the doghouse again?

SAM

Looks that way, child. Come, let's talk.

He sits in a wooden bench built into the wall. Then, pats the wood beside him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sit for a spell.

Clara does.

SAM (CONT'D)

You excited about tonight?

CLARA

Hmm. I like the acting. But I never get the best parts in Susy's plays.

SAM

Then, you should write some of your own stuff. You, as the star.

CLARA

Sure. I can do that!

SAM

Of course you can.

Clara bursts up.

CLARA

I better get to it.

Clara hurries down the stairs.

SAM

Sound advice. Get writing. Hmm.

Sam looks up to the third floor.

SAM (CONT'D)

I don't mind if I do. Besides, I need to find a good place to shelter up.

Sam pops up and climbs the steps to...

THE THIRD FLOOR

As he approaches his writing slash billiard room, he hears a loud CRACK! coming from within.

INT. BILLIARD ROOM - SAME TIME

Sam slowly opens the door and peers in.

Susy, now 17, plays pool.

SAM

Hey girl!

SUSY

Hi, Pa.

Susy lines up her next shoot.

SAM  
Mind if I join you?

SOUND: CRACK!

SUSY  
Nope.

The cue ball bounces off two bumpers. Then, it drops the ball Susy was aiming at in the side pocket.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Though, you know, I like to win.

Sam grabs a pool stick from the wall and examines its straightness as he raises it like a lance.

SAM  
As do I, child. As do I.

SUSY  
Good. Small wager then?

SAM  
Our normal bet?

SUSY  
Deal. I will rack them.

Susy does. Then, she takes a bill from her pocket and lays it flat on the table's edge.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Here's my fiver.

SAM  
A fellow River Rat.

Sam liberates a fiver from his wallet and slams it down hard on the table.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Let's see what you got.

POOL SHARK MONTAGE:

- A) Susy breaks up the colored balls with great velocity.
- B) She makes shot after shot.
- C) Sam reacts to every made shot.
- D) Susy lines up the eight ball.

E) Sam chalks his stick.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I despise being hustled.

SUSY  
I learned from the best.

SAM  
Perhaps... but there's no need to  
run the table on your old man.

SUSY  
I like to win.

Susy purposely misses.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Damn.

SAM  
I will accept your pity.

Sam lines up his shot.

SUSY  
Who's Sieur Louis de Conte?

Sam misses his first shot.

SAM  
Mother...

SUSY  
Pa!

SAM  
You been snooping around here,  
girl?

Sam looks back to his writing desk in the corner.

SUSY  
Why Joan of Arc? You're an Anti-  
Catholic. You hate the French.  
Yet...

SAM  
I want to write a book about a  
French-Catholic-Martyr?

SUSY  
Yes.



SAM

Joan is different. By far, the most extraordinary person the human race has ever produced. A fascinating character.

SUSY

Normally, you've trouble writing women.

Sam CHUCKLES.

SAM

Well, I based her traits on someone, close. Someone, I cherish.

Susy HITS her last shot and the eight ball drops into the corner pocket. Then, she scoops up the money.

SUSY

I thought I liked her.

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - BILLIARD ROOM'S BALCONY - LATER

Sam prepares a cigar. As he STRIKES his match, he sees...

REV. JOSEPH H. TWICHELL, an old family friend, mid-40s, as he travels down the street.

SAM

Joe!

Sam hurries through his home and down his stairs. He starts to sing, Battle Hymn Of The Republic.

SAM (CONT'D)

*Mine eyes I have seen the glory of  
the coming of the Lord.*

Sam reaches the first floor.

Livy is waiting for him.

LIVY

My Mississippi River Rat... Where do you think you're going?

Sam flies straight by her.

SAM

*He's trampling out the vintage  
where the grapes of wrath are  
stored.*

LIVY  
Sam. You're impossible.

SAM  
I need a word with the man who wed  
us!

LIVY  
Poor Joe.

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - PORCH - SAME TIME

Sam emerges from his home.

Rev. Joseph H. Twichell is across the street. He sees Sam but  
continues on.

SAM  
Joe!

Joe quickens his pace.

Sam crosses the street in a rush to cut off Joe.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Joe!

Sam cuts him off.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Forgive me! Reverend Joseph  
Twichell of the Asylum...  
Congregational Church.

Joe stops. He wears a broad mischievous smile.

JOE  
Ahh, yes. Sam Clemens, a cherished  
member of my flock. I thought you  
were dead.

SAM  
Rumors of my death have been  
greatly exaggerated.

JOE  
So it must be my sermons?

SAM  
I've only missed a few Sundays.

JOE

A few?!? It's not wise to lie to a man of god.

SAM

Joe, sometimes I think you're worse than me. And I'm abominable.

JOE

So, what's all the fuss?

SAM

Susy's new play is today.

JOE

Is it?

Joe pulls out his pocket watch.

JOE (CONT'D)

What time?

SAM

Seven bells.

JOE

Harmony and I will be there.

SAM

I'll save both of you a seat.

Joe nods his thanks and moves on.

Sam crosses the street halfway and turns back to Joe.

SAM (CONT'D)

You know Joe... I mean Reverend Twichell.

Joe turns.

SAM (CONT'D)

There's more than a pinch of showmen in you.

JOE

Well, a good friend of mine once told me... No sinner is ever saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon.

SAM/JOE

So, it's best to stretch them out.

Sam nods and takes a deep low bow. Then, he pops up.

SAM  
See you tonight, Joe!

Joe waves back with his hat.

JOE  
Looking forward to it, Sam. I hope  
to see you once again in church!

Sam waves back to Joe as he walks away.

SAM  
Some day!

Sam heads to his home when he sees Jean, now 9, through the Conservatory's glass.

She's dressed as Cupid.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Jean, the play isn't for hours yet.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - CONSERVATORY - SAME TIME

Sam enters a room of framed glass, lush green ferns and a small running fountain. The room appears as a slice from a dark tropical rain forest.

Jean kneels before the fountain. She uses its rippling water as a pseudo mirror.

SAM  
Jean, what you doing all alone in  
the Jungle? You on some Tiger hunt?

JEAN  
Nope. Just practicing my lines.

SAM  
In costume? The play isn't for  
hours, child.

JEAN  
I can't make any mistakes.

SAM  
The day's imperfections are what  
matter the most.

JEAN

No. No. No. Susy won't like that at all. Last time...

SAM

Jean. You be you. Kind and caring.

JEAN

But Susy.

SAM

Jean. Tonight you will be surrounded by friends and family. All of whom, adore you. Especially Susy.

JEAN

Really?

SAM

Really.

JEAN

Papa?

SAM

Yes, girl.

JEAN

Why is it that Susy and Clara are so smart. So special, and I'm not?

Jean's eyes focus on the floor.

Sam uses the tip of his fingers to raise up Jean's chin.

SAM

You are perfectly made.

JEAN

I am?

Sam nods his agreement.

SAM

God and I shook on it.

JEAN

Is that one of your tall tales?

SAM

Nope! Now, what about us focusing on that Tiger Hunt?

Sam lowers and gets on all fours.

Jean hops on his back.

JEAN

Ride!

SAM

Aw!! Girl, what did you have for lunch?

JEAN

Shh, Pa. We're completely surrounded by man-eating tigers.

Sam with Jean on his back crawls into the deep foliage.

SAM

Well, then, we better be gettin'.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - LATER NIGHT

A packed house watches the opening night of A Love Chase.

The cast stands on the stage. The dining room's blood red curtains are drawn and loom in the background.

Sam sits next to Livy. He holds her hand tight. They watch their children perform in wonderment and delight.

At the end of the play, the room of friends and family reacts with thunderous APPLAUSE and get a standing ovation.

Joe and his wife, HARMONY, clap their hands and nod their approval of the play to the Clemens.

Sam nods back with pride.

SAM

That was rather good.

LIVY

They're growing up way too fast.

Livy leans into Sam.

Sam leans into Livy.

SAM

Kisses?

Livy coughs hard.

Sam offers her a drink.

SAM (CONT'D)  
You alright?

LIVY  
Yeah, just a tickle in the throat  
is all. Kisses makes everything  
better.

Nearby, ignites the white powder from a tri-pod camera.

SOUND: POOF!

Woof. The camera captures the cast members of A Love Chase.  
Their black and white image frames the screen. Forever now,  
captured in time.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MONTHS LATER NIGHT

Sam in his striped pajamas stands before his bed of ornate  
angels he and Livy purchased in Europe. He detaches a wooden  
angel from one of its posts.

SUPER: "Months later..."

SAM  
I have been on the verge of being  
an angel all my life. Hmm.

Sam replaces the wooden angel back to the post.

SAM (CONT'D)  
On the verge.

Livy enters in her night wear. Her eyes are swollen and red.  
She's been crying.

LIVY  
Well, it's all gone.

SAM  
I know.

Livy stands at a long distance to her husband.

LIVY  
Sam, you promised.

SAM  
I did. I just never thought...

LIVY

We are ruined. We must sell the house.

SAM

No, Pond has offered a solution.

LIVY

That showman!?! What now?

SAM

A world tour.

LIVY

A world tour? Of course.

SAM

Seventy-one cities, on four different continents.

LIVY

Seventy-one?

SAM

Yep. In a year, we're as good as new.

LIVY

One year? Sam.. the children. Their schooling? Their friends?

SAM

Seeing the world is a much better education on a young mind.

She coughs hard. She starts to wheeze.

SAM (CONT'D)

You alright?

LIVY

Yeah. Just worn down by the gossip.

SAM

Pond thinks this tour will spark book sales.

Livy slaps down her foot.

LIVY

Don't.

SAM

Don't what?



LIVY  
Place a rosy lining on this.

Sam stares away.

SAM  
What I did, I did for our family.

Livy tears up.

LIVY  
No... you didn't. You did it because  
you think you're smarter than  
everyone else.

SAM  
I never said...

LIVY  
Sam!?!

Livy coughs some more.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
I deserve to be mad. And you will  
not rob me of this emotion.

SAM  
Rose bud. You're right.

Livy points at Sam.

LIVY  
And you deserve to feel awful about  
your deceitful actions.

Sam looks down at his feet.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
I'm going to go sleep downstairs.

Livy leaves.

Sam sits down on the edge of his bed and speaks to the wooden  
angel on the bedpost.

SAM  
I'm fallen in her eyes now. Why am  
I so damn stubborn? Hmm.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - LATER DAY

Sam sits in a sheet-covered sofa. Around him, the household staff covers wood furniture with big white sheets.

Joe wanders in.

JOE

We're going to miss you, Sam.

SAM

I shall miss your sermons.

JOE

Hmm.

SAM

Ahh.. Joe. How are the church coffers?

JOE

Sam, the royalties from your books made you rich. Livy's inheritance made you rich. How has it come to this?

SAM

Easy come.

JOE

Easy go?

SAM

Oh, we're just shutting down our dream home until after the world tour. Saves us some money.

JOE

Yeah.

SAM

What's with the long face Joe. I'm not destitute yet. One must remember, I come from a long line of failed men.

JOE

On this world tour, Sam. You need to soul search. Ask yourself why you found it necessary to jeopardize the health and well-being of everyone that loves you.

SAM  
Pick'n you up a souvenir would be  
much easier task.

JOE  
Soul Search, Sam! Make it right  
with Livy.

SAM  
Hmm. I shall try. Thanks for  
stopping over, Joe.

Joe goes to leave. Then, he stops.

JOE  
Sam?

SAM  
Yes, Joe. This sermon on sin is not  
yet over?

JOE  
The Devil's weapons are pride,  
envy, gluttony, and...

SAM  
Greed.

Sam clears his throat.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Don't you worry about me. I'll be  
back on top!

Joe walks out. He reaches the foyer.

JOE (O.S.)  
That's your pride talking!

EXT. HARTFORD - TRAIN PLATFORM - LATER DAY

Sam and Livy walk to their awaiting train.

Mr. POND, the world tour's manager greets them.

POND  
Mrs. Clemens.

Pond nods his hat and bows.

LIVY  
Mr. Pond.

POND  
History awaits.

Pond nods to Sam. Then, he leaves to board the train.

LIVY  
I don't trust him.

POND  
He's our golden goose, imagine him  
laying a big fat...

Livy cuts him off.

LIVY  
Enough.

Livy moves to the train without speaking another word.

SAM  
Hmm. There was a time when Mother  
used to enjoy my tall tales.

Then, Susy appears amongst the boarding passengers.

Sam's spirits brighten.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Susy!

Susy rushes to her father and gives him a much needed hug.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I wish you were coming with us,  
dear.

SUSY  
I don't.

SAM  
What? Why? You would get to see the  
world.

SUSY  
Yes... the world... from the seat  
of a train, steamer or trolley car.

SAM  
It's still the world.

Susy reads from the Clemens' travel itinerary.

SUSY

Your itinerary includes... An around the world tour, one-hundred and twenty-two shows in seventy-one cities, in Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa. Timbuktu.

SAM

Timbuktu?!?

Sam grabs the itinerary.

SAM (CONT'D)

Aye, you got me girl.

SUSY

Why so grand?

SAM

I have substantial debts that need my attention.

Clara appears surrounded by porters carrying her large leather bags. Clara waves to them.

SUSY

At least, you will have Clara to take my place.

Sam eyes Susy.

Susy eyes Sam.

The two share a laugh at Clara's expense.

SUSY (CONT'D)

She's always has been an over packer.

SAM

She gets that from my mother.

SOUND: STEAM WHISTLE blows.

SUSY

Time for you to board. Now, remember to take care of Momma.

SAM

Watch over Jean.

SUSY

I will. She's turned into the most interesting creature.

SAM  
She's so pure. Good hearted.

SUSY  
She is.

Sam boards the train. Before he reaches the steps, he hears.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Restore our family to greatness,  
Mr. Clemens.

SAM  
I shall squeeze ever last dollar  
out of this trip, dear.

Susy goes to him, and grabs him by his lapels.

SUSY  
No. Not that. Write. Not as the  
caricature slash con man of Mark  
Twain. Write as the pure and un-  
paralleled genius of Samael  
Langhorne Clemens.

Sam is visibly shaken as his eyes full with tears.

SAM  
Is this my pep talk?

SUSY  
Pa, I will always be proud of you.  
No matter what.

Tears stream down Sam's cheeks.

SAM  
You may wish to share those  
sediments with your mother.

SUSY  
No.

SAM  
No?

SUSY  
I told her this was your penitence  
not hers. I asked her to stay home  
with Jean and I.

SAM  
You did?

Sam sees his wife through the train's open window as Livy moves down the aisle to take her seat.

SAM (CONT'D)  
She's quite a woman, isn't she?

SUSY  
It's not too late to win her back.

SAM  
Sound advice. How did you get so bright.

SUSY  
Mother.

Sam grins as he boards his train. As he takes his sit, he sees Susy still standing on the platform. He moves to a window and sticks his big head of hair out.

The train's engine comes to life in a cloud of steam. The noise is deafening.

SAM  
I love you, girl!

Susy smiles, as she stops and turns back.

Sam waves as the train starts to depart.

Susy rushes to the very end of the platform.

SUSY  
I love you too, Pa!!

Sam nods his appreciation.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Now, get!!!

Steam pours out of the train engine's chimney.

INT. WORLD TOUR STAGE - LATER NIGHT

Sam stands on a spotlighted stage as he smokes and talks. He's all dressed up in his white cashmere suit.

SAM  
If voting made any difference, they wouldn't let us do it.

Note: Pause different camera angle.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Sometimes I wonder whether the  
world is being run by smart people  
who are putting us on, or by  
imbeciles who really mean it.

Note: Pause different camera angle.

SAM (CONT'D)  
To succeed in life, you need two  
things, ignorance and confidence.

Sam blows a big cloud of cigar smoke at the CAMERA.

EXT. CRUISE SHIP - MAMALA BAY - NIGHT

In the distance lays the lights of Honolulu. To the right,  
the steep cliffs of Diamond Head jets up from the ocean.

EXT. CRUISE SHIP - DECK - MAMALA BAY - SAME

Sam in a tux appears with two folding chairs in hand. With  
great difficulty, he sets both up.

SAM  
Damn things should come with an  
instruction manual.

Livy appears in a fine dining dress.

LIVY  
Sam. Those chairs getting the  
better of you?

Sam steps aside. Both folding chairs are laid out and face  
the ocean and Honolulu.

SAM  
I showed them who's boss. May I  
offer you a seat?

Livy grabs Sam's hand and cautiously takes her seat.

LIVY  
Hoo. These wooden contraptions have  
minds of their own.

Sam sits as the chair MOANS.

SAM  
It's beautiful, isn't it?



LIVY  
Enchanting.

SAM  
Though, it's changed.

LIVY  
Who hasn't?

Sam looks to Livy.

SAM  
You.

LIVY  
You forget, I am impervious to your charms.

SAM  
Are you?

Sam looks out to the distance.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Livy. I am sorry.

LIVY  
I know.

SAM  
Poor men always feel the need to prove themselves.

LIVY  
Why?

SAM  
I don't understand it myself. Me, like my characters are so flawed, so self-absorbed, so...

LIVY  
Broken?

Sam nods.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Samuel Clemens, look at everything the world has given you. Fame. Family, and me.

SAM  
I know. Yet, I feel to be such a failure.

LIVY  
Failure?!? How?

SAM  
You're my muse. My Calliope. The  
only critic I care about.

LIVY  
And?

SAM  
Something died in your eyes for me  
with the bankruptcy.

LIVY  
I care less about the money we  
lost, Sam. But, the deceit?

SAM  
I know. Before we left Hartford,  
Joe warned me about the Seven Sins.

Livy leans her head closer to Sam's.

LIVY  
Did he say anything about Grace?

Livy kisses Sam hard on the lips. Then, she stops and pulls  
back. She eyes him hard.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Grace is offering an undeserving  
forgiveness.

SAM  
Would you?

LIVY  
I know you have always put me up on  
a pedestal, Sam. I too, are like  
you. Frail, flawed, and broken.  
When our baby boy died...

SAM  
Sweet Langdon.

LIVY  
A piece of me died with him.

SAM  
He was such a darling child. His  
big cubby cheeks.

LIVY

Sam, we are not long for this world. All we have is TRUST in each other, and the love from the children we've created.

SAM

Olivia Langdon Clemens... I love you with all my heart!

Livy moves in for another kiss.

LIVY

You Old River Rat, you better.

INT. THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

Sam stands in the light on a darken stage.

SAM

Though I would like to see my old ancestor, Satan. I have no special regard for Satan, but I think I can claim to have no prejudice against him. May even be that I lean a little his way on account of his not having a fair show. All religions issue bibles against him and say the most injurious things about him. But we never hear his side. We have only the evidence for the prosecution. And yet, we have rendered the verdict. Now to my mind this is irregular. It is un-English. It is un-American. It is French.

The CROWD erupts in LAUGHTER.

SAM (CONT'D)

I've heard a good deal all my life about heaven and hell. And as near as I can figure it, if a man goes to heaven he will put in all his time improving himself. He will study and study and study and progress and progress and progress and if that isn't hell I don't know what is.

The CROWD erupts in LAUGHTER.

SAM (CONT'D)

Well that California get-rich-quick disease of my youth spread like wildfire. It produced a civilization which has destroyed the simplicity and repose of life, its poetry, its soft, romantic dreams and visions and replaced them with a money fever, sordid ideals, vulgar ambitions and a sleep which does not refresh. It has created a thousand useless luxuries and turned them into necessities and satisfied nothing. It has dethroned God and set up a shekel in His place. Oh the dreams of our youth, how beautiful they are and how perishable.

The crowd looks at one another and ponders.

Sam senses the need to change the direction. He pulls out his cigar and lights it. He deeply inhales.

SAM (CONT'D)

Man is really the most interesting jackass there is.  
(nod to Hal Holbrook)

EXT. SOUTHAMPTON STATION, ENGLAND - LATER DAY

In a cloud of steam, the Clemens' train arrives.

Sam and Livy depart. Hand in hand, they talk and walk down the platform once again in love.

SUPER: "August. 1896."

Livy looks stunning.

SAM

The tour was more successful than imagined. We will be able to pay back our creditors... dollar for dollar.

LIVY

Good. For I'm ready for home.

SAM

Me too, luv. Me too.

A MESSENGER appears amongst the departing passengers.

MESSENGER

Mr. Twain?

SAM

Yes.

The messenger hands him a telegram. Then, he leaves them with a snap of the heels and a nod.

LIVY

What is it? Another message from the Queen?

SAM

No. Susy.

Livy reacts.

LIVY

What does she have to say?

SAM

She's not well.

LIVY

Not well!?!

EXT. STEAMER SHIP - DAYS LATER NIGHT

A deeply worried Livy and Clara gaze out to sea as the ship they are on heads back to America.

SAM (V.O.)

Livy and Clara sailed back the very next day.

EXT. STEAMER SHIP - GANGPLANK - LATER DAY

Livy and Clara hurry down the gangplank.

At its bottom waits Joe in a dark suit with his hat in hands. His eyes are swollen and red for he's been crying.

Livy's knees buckle.

LIVY

Dear God. Susy's gone.

SAM (V.O.)

Hmm. It is one of the mysteries of our nature that a man or woman, all unprepared, can receive a thunder-stroke like that and live.

The last thirteen days of Susy's life were spent in our own house in Hartford, the home of her childhood and always the dearest place in the earth to her. About her she had faithful friends, family, good ole' Reverend Joe. All had known her from her cradle and who had come a long journey to be with her. But not me. No. I was elsewhere.

EXT. FLORENCE, ITALY - FUTURE DAY

Italian theme music plays over a series of images from Florence. Each shot covers the various locations the characters shall stroll through. The last shot is the imposing façade of Santa Croce Church.

SUPER: "Florence, 1904. Eight years later."

INT. SANTA CROCE CHURCH - DAY

Walks a TOUR GUIDE before Michelangelo's Grave near the Crucifixion and Dante's Cenotaph.

In tow is a large group of AMERICAN TOURISTS led by an Italian TOUR GUIDE with slicked back hair.

TOUR GUIDE

Form an orderly line. We will all get a chance to see the Old Masters.

Sam and Joe stroll by. Wearing fashionable suits, they slice through the long serpentine line of tourists.

A COUPLE at the end gawks.

WIFE

Was that Mark Twain?

Husband stares at the back of the white, bushy-haired man as he heads toward the restroom.

HUSBAND

Nah. What would he be doing here?

INT. SANTA CROCE CHURCH - RESTROOM - SAME

Stands SAM CLEMENS, now 67, America's foremost author and humorist. Under his pen name of MARK TWAIN, he's one of the world's most prominent celebrities.

Though, time has made him bitter.

Before him now is a long porcelain trove.

He PISSES.

SAM

Ahhhhh!

Yellow urine hits the white porcelain trove.

Sam's eyes shift from the trove to the CAMERA. A sly, little smile crawls across his hairy lips.

SAM (CONT'D)

Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, the only earthly certainty is oblivion.

Sam finishes up and gives the CAMERA a wink.

REVEREND JOSEPH TWICHELL, Joe is now 65, Sam's lifelong friend stands at another trove. He has yet to start.

Sam looks over at him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Anything more than two shakes, Joe, means your just playing with it?

JOE

Huh. Sam, my bladder has its own mind.

SAM

Joys of advanced age.

Sam moves to the sink to wash his hands.

SAM (CONT'D)

I find singing helps.

Sam starts to sing, Battle Hymn Of The Republic.

SAM (CONT'D)

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.*

SAM/JOE  
*He's trampling out the vintage  
 where the grapes of wrath are  
 stored.*

Joe PISSES.

JOE  
*Ahhhh. Hallelujah!*

SAM/JOE  
*Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory!  
 Glory! Hallelujah!*

Joe joins Sam by the sink and mirror.

SAM  
*His truth is marching on.*

JOE  
 Whew. Thanks.

Sam messes with his mustache. He leans closer to the mirror's reflection of his famous face.

SAM  
 I've become decrepit.

JOE  
 Me too. But it beats the  
 alternative.

Joe washes his hands.

SAM  
 Ah! Life would be infinitely  
 happier if we could only be born  
 old and gradually approach youth.

JOE  
 Youth. Your favorite subject.

SAM  
 Why shouldn't it be?

Joe dries his hands and smiles.

SAM (CONT'D)  
 I wrote Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn  
 for adults exclusively. The mind  
 that becomes soiled in youth can  
 never again be washed clean.



JOE  
Grit. Dirt. Subjects you know  
about.

Joe laughs as he looks at Sam in the mirror.

SAM  
Who in their right mind handed you  
a church.

Joe points towards the ceiling with his forefinger.

JOE  
Complain to my boss.

Sam shakes his head.

SAM  
I doubt that will do a lick of  
good.

JOE  
More sight seeing?

SAM  
If we must.

They leave the restroom and emerge in...

THE NAVE

Together they start walking through it.

A long line of tourists passes Michelangelo's tomb.

Sam motions.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Religious relics to our left.  
Religious relics to our right.

JOE  
It is a six-hundred year old  
Church. What did you expect?

SAM  
These Italians worship the dead.

JOE  
No. They worship life.

SAM  
You know, I despise optimists, Joe.

Joe smiles.

JOE  
And I disdain those who whine and  
wallow, Sam.

SAM  
Less Old Testament judgement, if  
you please.

JOE  
Our Maker...

SAM  
Our? You know how I detest  
theology.

JOE  
For one that thinks so little of  
God, He appears to be seldom absent  
in your works.

They continue walking through the Church to...

THE CLOISTER

SAM  
I have perfect love for the  
approving spirit of God, our maker.

JOE  
What if He's not so approving?

Sam sighs.

SAM  
I suppose I will find out one way  
or the other, in the end.

JOE  
Have you ever believed?

SAM  
Almost, but it immediately drifts  
away from me again.

JOE  
And the Bible?

SAM  
I don't believe a word of it was  
inspired by God any more than any  
other book.

JOE

Really?

SAM

Really. It's entirely the work of man from beginning to end, atonement and all.

Joe laughs awkwardly.

They continue walking through...

THE SQUARE

As hundreds of pigeons take flight into the sky.

SAM (CONT'D)

Life is a tragedy. Count the graves of those no longer here. Gone like Langdon and Susy. Where?

JOE

What of hope? What of Heaven?

SAM

The after-life? I have seen no proof.

JOE

That's why it's called Faith, Sam. The Lord grants us free will. To follow Him, or turn our backs.

Sam and Joe exits the Square and walks down towards...

THE RIVER ARNO

Al Duomo looms in the background.

SAM

I'm leaning toward the latter. I was robbed of my greatest treasure, my lovely Susy in the midst of her blooming talents and personal graces. You want me to believe it is a judicious, a charitable God that runs this world. Why, I could run it better myself.

Sam stops and removes a cigar from his suit's pocket.

JOE  
Heaven is what YOU make of it, Sam.  
Is that it?

SAM  
My heaven...

Sam lights his stogie and inhales. Then, he exhales a big cloud of blue smoke.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Is home, like Hartford. When the  
kids were young.

EXT. RIVER ARNO EMBANKMENT - SAME

Their walk continues toward the Holy Trinity Bridge.

JOE  
How's your writing?

SAM  
Good. God is my new meat.

Joe stops.

JOE  
Fascinating subject.

SAM  
Supposing it is.

JOE  
What do you hold sacred, Sam?

SAM  
My mind.

Joe shakes his head.

JOE  
Trust in the LORD with all thine  
heart and lean not unto thine own  
understanding.

They cross the...

HOLY TRINITY BRIDGE

SAM  
Ah! The simplicity of the unknown.

JOE  
It's called Faith.

SAM  
Faith. Yes, I know the word. God's  
faith grants angels eternal  
happiness unearned, yet requires  
his children to earn it.

JOE  
The joys of free will.

SAM  
There's nothing free about it, Joe.

JOE  
It's in the journey.

SAM  
Religion is only delusion and  
hypocrisy. Created when the first  
con man met the first fool.

JOE  
That's harsh.

They move into Florence's...

ARTIST DISTRICT

JOE (CONT'D)  
Mr. Clemens, you think of yourself  
as an atheist.

SAM  
It's a popular movement. So,  
enlighten me, Reverend Twichell.

JOE  
Actually, you're an agnostic.

SAM  
An agnostic?

JOE  
An atheist believes there's no God.  
An agnostic does not know, or  
believes that one cannot know  
whether God exists. So there's...

They approach the a door in the city's walls at...

FORT BELVEDERE

SAM  
Doubt. Doubt, indeed.

JOE  
You see, I believe what my eyes  
don't. That's where we're  
different.

SAM  
Blind faith. Sounds divine.

Sam enjoys his stogie.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Let's move to another subject.

JOE  
Yeah. Before this turns into a fist  
fight.

Their path takes them down...

AN ALLEY OF TREES

Sam and Joe travels a few steps in silence.

JOE (CONT'D)  
How's your autobiography coming?

SAM  
Not enough auto or biography.

JOE  
You lost for words?

SAM  
Ah! Funny, isn't it?

JOE  
Indeed. You being your favorite  
subject.

SAM  
I thought this next book would be a  
breeze. Yet I wish to play with the  
structure.

JOE  
Why?

SAM  
A typical biography starts you at  
the cradle and drives you straight  
for the grave.

JOE  
Life is linear.

SAM  
Well, a straight arrow shot from A  
to B allows no side excursions.

JOE  
Yours will be different?

SAM  
I wish to start my tale at no  
particular time of my life. Wander  
a bit about the thing that  
interests me for the moment. Then  
drop it at the moment my interest  
starts to pale.

Sam pulls out his timepiece.

SAM (CONT'D)  
It's already three.

JOE  
So, we done frolicking around  
Florence?

SAM  
Seems that way.

Joe looks out over the city's landscape.

JOE  
I see why you came here. It's  
lovely.

SAM  
We came here for Livy. The doctors  
claimed this climate would be  
beneficial to her health.

JOE  
And?

Sam peers out into the distance.

SAM  
She has her good days and bad.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

Establishing: a beautiful 15th Century Villa with lush Tuscan gardens, low-cut bushes, and sprawling green grounds lies at the bottom of Monte Morello.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO - GROUNDS - DAY

This surrounds a yellow box-shaped building with green window shutters: dense groves, red roses, mossy walls, and gravel walks shut in by tall laurel hedges.

SUPER: "Villa Di Quarto, 3 miles outside Florence."

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

Sam and Joe's car carries them along the gravel drive leading to the 15th century palatial villa.

SAM

So Joe, what do you think of it?

JOE

It's rather comfortable as European comfort goes.

SAM

Though god himself could get lost in it.

JOE

Sam.

Sam laughs as the car stops.

The two enter the villa.

SAM

Okay, I made my point.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - FOYER - DAY

Sam and Joe cross the tiled foyer and head into...

THE PARLOR

There, LIVY CLEMENS, now 58, rests in her wheelchair. Livy's frame is petite and her face is flawless, near angel-like in appearance. She wears a silk dress and her hair is plain, combed down and done in a coil. She appears frail.



Sam eyes his wife. Concern covers his face.

SAM  
How are you dear?

LIVY  
Drained as usual.

Livy's breath is laborious.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
So, what did you think of Florence,  
Joe?

JOE  
As I remember it, grand and old.

LIVY  
Sounds a lot like us.

She states to cough as she laughs.

SAM  
You mustn't get all wound up, my  
love.

Livy looks up at Sam.

LIVY  
Take me out to the gardens.

SAM  
Now? It's rather warm.

LIVY  
I wish to see more of the world  
than this odd monstrosity of a  
house.

Joe moves to her and gives her a peck on the cheek.

JOE  
I will let you two be alone. I need  
to catch up on my correspondence.

Livy grabs Joe's hand.

LIVY  
You're a good man, Joe.

Joe smiles down.

JOE  
Enjoy the gardens.

LIVY  
They beckon me.

Joe heads out of the parlor. As he does.

JOE  
There's a sense of age and  
innocence about this place.

LIVY  
(to husband)  
How was it?

SAM  
Fine.

LIVY  
And Joe?

SAM  
There's no man on this green earth  
I prefer to be with.

LIVY  
I'm glad he came.

SAM  
Me too. He cares. Yet there's such  
hypocrisy surrounding his desired  
subject.

LIVY  
But there's no inconsistency in  
him.

SAM  
No. He walks and talks what he  
believes is the truth.

LIVY  
I've always liked him.

Sam pushes Livy in her wheelchair through the French doors  
leading to...

THE TERRACE

SAM  
May I interest you in a stroll,  
Mrs. Clemens?

Livy smiles up at her husband of thirty-four years.

LIVY  
Sam, you always know the wrong  
thing to say.

Sam HUMS an old Southern tune as he and Livy head down a  
gravel path deeper into the gardens.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO - GARDENS - DAY

Sam parks Livy's wheelchair by the fountains.

LIVY  
These are magnificent.

SAM  
Heavenly.

LIVY  
Have you seen the girls today?

SAM  
Not yet. I think Isabel has taken  
them to the city to shop.

LIVY  
That's good.

Appears KATY LEARY, now 50, stout and Irish. She's the  
Clemens long-time servant. She carries a wool shawl.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Uh, oh. Here comes Mother.

KATY  
Mrs. Clemens, there's a nip in the  
evening air.

SAM  
It's nearly eighty degrees out.

Katy wraps Livy with the shawl.

KATY  
There. This will make me feel  
better.

SAM  
Ms. Leary, where would we be  
without you?

KATY  
More importantly Mr. Clemens, where  
would you be without this  
wonderful, wonderful woman?

LIVY  
Katy, you baby me so.

Katy eyes Sam.

KATY  
Someone has to.

Katy returns to the home.

KATY (CONT'D)  
I've cleaning to do.

SAM  
(sarcastically)  
She's a godsend.

LIVY  
She knows us too well.

SAM  
Hmph. You may be right.

Livy rests in a wheelchair. Sam sits in a chair beside her.

In the pink rays of twilight, Livy's face looks white and her  
lips look blue.

Livy speaks with her eyes shut.

LIVY  
When I'm gone. I want you to..

SAM  
Livy... I can't imagine it. You're my  
gravity.

LIVY  
Even so. That day is coming.  
(coughs)  
Soon.

SAM  
But.

LIVY  
I don't have the energy for this  
Sam.

SAM

Hmm. You and Joe are the only ones left that call me, Sam.

LIVY

It's your name idiot. Samuel.

SAM

Says so on our marriage certificate.

LIVY

It sure does.

SAM

Smartest decision of my life.

LIVY

Mine too.

SAM

How has it all gone by so quickly?

Sam SNAPS his fingers.

SAM (CONT'D)

What happened to our quiet days in Hartford?

LIVY

The big front porch. Watching our children grow.

SAM

Time. I have wasted so much of it. Away from you and the girls.

LIVY

Wasted? You created different worlds, Sam. Hmm, through your stories you lived countless lives.

SAM

So have you.

LIVY

I gave your career a push when I had to.

SAM

You know, this was a partnership.

LIVY

Was it?

Livy starts to WHEEZE. Then she turns away.

SAM

Why did you pick me? You had so many better suitors.

LIVY

The truth?

SAM

We're too old for lies.

LIVY

In you... I saw a man who desperately needed to be loved.

SAM

And that's what you have done. You made me better.

LIVY

We made each other better.

SAM

Thank you.

LIVY

For what?

SAM

This. Our lives. Our family. Helping me write my stories.

LIVY

Don't be silly.

SAM

I'm such a blundering, outspoken fool.

LIVY

Sometimes. After too much drink. But I love all of you.

SAM

I...

LIVY

Hush. I'm tired Sam. Wheel me back to my bed.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Enters Sam and Livy's surviving children, JEAN, now 24, homely, awkward girl, uncomfortable in her own skin, and CLARA, now 29, the opposite of her sister. Clara is dazzling and overconfident to the point of rudeness. Together, they come in with several shopping bags in their hands.

Their arrival startles Sam as he rests in a comfy chair beside his wife's four-post bed.

Sam looks at his children disapprovingly. Then he notices...

ISABEL LYONS, age 41, his secretary, stands in the doorway. She looks tan and pretty in her white summer dress and her dark hair rolled up in a bun.

SAM  
Good evening, Ms. Lyons.

ISABEL  
Mister Clemens.

Clara drops her bags at her mother's feet. Her dark and flawless features and movements radiate sophistication.

Livy wakes.

CLARA  
Mother, you would not believe how beautiful the stores are. I found a great scarf for my performance. And this...

Clara, with flair, removes a second scarf from her bag.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Will give you some much needed color.

Clara holds up the scarf. Then she wraps it around her mother's neck lovingly.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
There. Perfect.

SAM  
How much did this shopping excursion cost?

LIVY  
Sam, hush. Thank you, dear.

Jean sheepishly stands in the background. She is beautiful too. Yet, lacks the confidence her older sister possesses.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Jean, what did you find?

JEAN  
Nothing. These bags are Clara's. I have everything I need.

LIVY  
Contentment is natural wealth...

Sam pulls out a stogie and smells it.

SAM  
Ahh!

JEAN  
Not in here Dad.

SAM  
Of course not.

Sam bends down and gives his wife a peck on the cheek.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Excuse me, dear.

LIVY  
You smoke that thing outside.

SAM  
Girls, watch over Mother. As I exercise my lungs.

Sam heads back out to the gardens to enjoy his cigar.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - SAME

Clara is gone. Jean and her mother remain.

Livy is propped up in her bed.

Jean stands with her back to her mother by the windows.

JEAN  
I am not well, Mother.

LIVY  
Neither am I dear.

Jean turns.



JEAN  
Not in body, but in mind.

LIVY  
You must not overexert yourself  
with worry.

JEAN  
Are you dying Momma?

LIVY  
We're all dying dear. Just some  
faster than others.

Jean crawls up into bed with her mother.

JEAN  
I miss Susy, Momma.

LIVY  
I do too.

Tears form down Livy's cheeks.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
I think I'm going to get a chance  
to see her soon.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO - GARDENS - NIGHT

Sam strolls the gardens as a rich cloud of smoke follows him.  
This is when he sees Joe sitting on a stone bench.

Joe smokes his pipe.

Sam deeply inhales.

SAM  
Ahhhhh, tobacco. The greatest smell  
on earth.

JOE  
How's Livy?

SAM  
As good as expected.

JOE  
I hate the fact that I must leave  
tomorrow.

SAM  
You all packed up?

JOE  
Harmony is the packer. Though, I do  
take pride in the fact that I  
didn't forget my toothbrush.

Joe smiles up at Sam. It's contagious.

SAM  
Give Harmony my love.

JOE  
I shall.

SAM  
What time is your train?

JOE  
Three.

SAM  
Good. There's one more place I  
would like you to visit.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - DAY

Joe gently knocks on her door.

Livy awakens.

LIVY  
Come in.

JOE  
I wanted to say good-bye.

LIVY  
This maybe the last one, Joe.

Joe sits on a corner of her bed.

JOE  
May I say a prayer for you?

LIVY  
If that makes you more comfortable  
with leaving, yes.

Joe grasps her hand and closes his eyes.

JOE  
Livy, what are you clinging to?

LIVY

My family.

JOE

God shall watch over them.

LIVY

I'm not a believer anymore, Joe.  
Not after Langdon and Susy.

JOE

Yet, there's such goodness and  
wonder in you.

LIVY

Hmm.

JOE

Oh, Marvelous One. When shall the  
dust return to the earth as it was,  
and the spirit shall return unto  
God who gave it. Vanity of  
vanities, saith the preacher, all  
is vanity. And moreover, because  
the preacher was wise, he still  
taught the people knowledge, yea,  
he gave good heed, and sought out,  
and set in order many proverbs. The  
preacher sought to find out  
acceptable words, and that which  
was written was upright, even words  
of truth. He did try, as I. Amen.

Joe opens his eyes and kisses her hand.

LIVY

Do you feel better?

JOE

I do.

LIVY

Good.

JOE

I shall miss you, Olivia.

LIVY

Yeah, Joe. Your thoughts and  
prayers should be for Sam.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - DAY

Clara speaks with her mother.

CLARA  
Mother. I am so sorry.

LIVY  
Hush, child. Your father is a  
difficult, depressive man.

CLARA  
But.

LIVY  
We all have regrets. I've had  
printer's ink on my fingers ever  
since I met that man. Yet, my name  
won't be remembered.

CLARA  
He's utterly self-absorbed.

LIVY  
He's a lot like you.

CLARA  
Mother!

LIVY  
I'm sorry. I'm tired.

Clara gets up and wanders to the door.

CLARA  
I know. I wish I was more like you.

LIVY  
You're perfect the way you are.

As the door closes, Livy whispers to herself.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
(laborious)  
The burden of watching over our  
household shall soon be yours.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - LATER

Sam wanders in.

Livy is in her bed.

SAM

What do you think of my magazine article?

Livy coughs.

LIVY

Quaint. Who's going to edit your work when I'm gone?

SAM

Darling, don't say such things.

Livy looks out the window.

LIVY

Exhaustion and shortness of breath seem to be my life these days.

SAM

This afternoon, I must go with Joe.

LIVY

I know. Have fun. Make the most of each and every day.

INT. CAR - DAY

Joe eyes the villa one last time as he leaves with Sam.

JOE

I hate that I must go.

SAM

It was kind you came.

JOE

Still.

Sam gazes out of the car.

SAM

I'm scared too.

EXT. WOODS - APENNINE COLOSSUS' OLD MAN - DAY

Joe and Sam gaze upon a statue of greatness.

JOE

It's gorgeous. Imagine, three-hundred years old.

SAM  
I feel as old.

JOE  
It's breath-taking.

SAM  
Giambologna regretted making it here. One of the greatest masterpieces sculpture has ever offered the world... though few stumble upon it in these woods.

JOE  
It's one with nature.

SAM  
Hmm. Still an artist requires an audience to survive.

Sam frolics around, dances about. He hums the Battle Hymn Of The Republic.

SAM (CONT'D)  
*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.* Where is my audience? Hmm.

Sam halts before the towering statue.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I wish to write one true line again before I die.

JOE  
You have written thousands. You're the Lincoln of our Literature.

SAM  
Hmm. I don't feel it. My readers want boys with straw hats, corn-cob pipes, fishing.

JOE  
Playing hooky.

SAM  
Watching steamboats ply the Mississippi River.

JOE  
It's your gift.

Sam stares up at the statue's face.

SAM  
That's my youth, Joe. I'm much  
older now. I have tasted death.  
Hmm. I think my next book will be  
much darker.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joe and Sam walk side by side through the woods on a narrow  
path as they return from their visit to the statue.

JOE  
Why Joan of Arc?

SAM  
Why not?

JOE  
You're an Anti-Catholic. You hate  
the French. Yet.

SAM  
I write a book about a French-  
Catholic martyr?

JOE  
Yes.

SAM  
Susy asked me the same question in  
Hartford.

JOE  
And?

SAM  
Joan's different. By far, the most  
extraordinary person the human race  
has ever produced.

Joe turns to face Sam.

JOE  
Dark stuff.

SAM  
My new stuff is even darker.

JOE  
Do you have a title for it?

SAM

A Mysterious Stranger. Livy is editing the beginning of it.

JOE

What's it about?

SAM

I've grievances towards your boss.

JOE

Oh. That again.

SAM

He had no right taking my Langdon or Susy. No right!

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - LIVY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Livy looks over Sam's papers. She has a pencil in hand.

LIVY

How many times must I scold you about your indulgences, Sam?

SAM

Details.

LIVY

Sam?

SAM

You're the machine that spins my stories. My observations enhanced by your direction. Your focus. Your precision.

Livy starts to cough and wheeze. Tiny blood drops land on Sam's manuscript. She takes her palm and smears them off.

SAM (CONT'D)

I shouldn't go.

LIVY

The new villa sounds perfect. Plus, our agent is expecting you tomorrow.

SAM

Yet.



LIVY  
Take the girls. Make it an  
excursion. Enjoy the day.

SAM  
Okay. We'll be back by supper.

Livy closes her eyes.

LIVY  
Good. See you then.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - KITCHEN - DAY

As Clara and Jean have breakfast, Sam strolls in.

SAM  
Who's up for a picnic?

His children look up and smile.

JEAN/CLARA  
Yes!

EXT. ITALIAN COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Sam, Clara, and Jean sit within an open carriage as it  
travels through gorgeous green countryside.

The DRIVER gives the team of four white horses a loud CRACK  
from his whip. Road dust is everywhere.

DRIVER  
(in Italian)  
Faster now.

Besides the driver sits ALFONSO, Sam's real estate agent, a  
bookish forty-something with glasses. The man clenches onto  
his briefcase with dear life as the coach accelerates.

Sheepishly, the agent looks back into the coach.

SAM  
Steady, Alfonso.

Sam laughs. His forearm rests on a wicker picnic basket.

SAM (CONT'D)  
There's commissions to be had.

The coach jostles.

SAM (CONT'D)  
This is the land of Raphael,  
Titian, Michelangelo, and Da Vinci.

The coach hits a big bump.

CLARA  
Oh!

Everyone jumps up a bit.

SAM  
Why no paved roads?

CLARA  
Those were all artists, Father. You  
know how they despise real work.

Sam laughs as he eyes Clara.

SAM  
I suppose you're right, child. Hmm.

JEAN  
Why don't we celebrate Susy's  
birthday anymore?

SAM  
Hmm, that's right. It would've been  
two months ago.

CLARA  
Closer to three. But we really  
mustn't speak of such things. Susy  
is gone.

JEAN  
Where?

SAM  
She's with Langdon and your grandad  
I suppose. Hmm. Though, it is utter  
blasphemy not to celebrate her  
memory and sheer innocence. Jean,  
what do you remember of your  
sister?

JEAN  
Her beauty.

Jean eyes Clara.

JEAN (CONT'D)  
Her unselfish ways.

SAM

And Clara, what do you recall of your sister?

CLARA

She was your favorite.

SAM

I love you all... equally.

CLARA

Father? Susy is watching down.

SAM

Well if she is, let's recall and share a pleasant memory of her.

JEAN

Oh, I know. The dress-up and acting in one of her plays.

SAM

Yes!

JEAN

Or us playing hide and seek in the old house. In the jungle room.

Sam looks out into the passing fields of gold lit splendor.

SAM

Yes, Jean. I see her now. Look!

JEAN

I see her too, Pa. Running. Catching fireflies! In a new white summer's dress.

SAM

Splendid, Jean. Splendid. How about you Clara?

CLARA

What?

SAM

Do you see anything?

CLARA

I see a field. Barren of people.

SAM

Look harder, child. Remember her. Re-create her in your mind's eye.

Clara looks out and smiles.

CLARA  
I see her.

SAM  
You do?!? What's she up too?

CLARA  
Playing. We're all young again.  
Chasing soap bubbles in a field.

JEAN  
No doubt produced from your old  
pipe, Pa.

SAM  
Clara, tell us more about these  
magnificent soap bubbles.

CLARA  
We're at the Farm.

SAM  
Yes?

CLARA  
Chasing after soap bubbles of every  
imaginable size. High up in the  
sky, they linger and float.

JEAN  
What's Susy doin'?

Clara looks to her Sister.

CLARA  
Susy is... So fast. So pretty. So  
perfect.

JEAN  
That's our Susy.

Clara starts to tear up.

CLARA  
Susy is about to catch her first  
bubble... pop!

Clara leans back.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Hmm, she's gone now.

SAM  
Yes. She is. But the memory of her  
will remain.

Sam points to daughters' heads and hearts.

SAM (CONT'D)  
As long we live, dear ones, Susy  
shall be with us.

JEAN  
Sure. But it's not the same, Pa.

SAM  
No. I would much rather have her  
here, in the flesh. Her face,  
sandwiched between...

The carriage hits another big bump.

Sam's body lifts high off his seat.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Mother!

JEAN  
Pa!

CLARA  
Tsk. Tsk.

SAM  
Hmm. Susy sure missed out on  
getting all her inners jostled  
about on this god awful road.

Sam looks to the driver.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Can this journey get any worse!?!

AGENT  
We're almost there, Mister Twain.  
See. Villa de No Ombra. There it  
stands!

The agent points up to the hill's crest. With his other hand,  
he makes a kissing gesture, SMACK!

AGENT (CONT'D)  
The estate holds a breathtaking  
view of the city.

CLARA  
Ah, Florence.

Sam looks down to Florence.

SAM  
Breathtaking indeed.

EXT. VILLA DE NO OMBRA - DAY

Sam, Clara, and Jean walk the groomed grounds. Their picnic blanket and basket are seen in the background.

Jean sprints ahead. She has a camera in her hands and its case drapes her neck.

JEAN  
It has a swimming pool.

SAM  
Great.

CLARA  
And your own chapel.

SAM  
Amusing.

Sam's eyes span the grounds. Then his attention rests upon his eldest daughter's face.

Clara nods her approval for the property.

CLARA  
I think Momma will love it.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - FOYER - NIGHT

Enters Sam, Jean, and Clara.

SAM  
Livvy, I think we found it!

Sam HUMS as he crosses the floor.

Jean and Clara follow him. There's no staff in sight.

They approach...

THE STAIRWELL

Sam climbs the stairs with Clara and Jean in tow.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Where is everyone?

EXT./INT. LIVY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Katy holds an oxygen mask against Livy's face.

Isabel is at her side.

ISABEL  
It's not working!

KATY  
Mrs. Clemens, breathe! Please.

Livy grasps.

The two prop her up more.

Livy appears lifeless and paler than ever. Her frail body leans forward in the bed. Her lips are blue.

Sam rushes to her.

SAM  
No!!!

Katy and Isabel step back.

Sam reaches his wife and holds her dearly. He caresses her hair and stares into her lifeless eyes. Then, he weeps.

SAM (CONT'D)  
I ruin everything I touch.

From behind, Jean pulls out her camera and SNAPS off a picture of her dead mother.

CLARA  
No. No. No. No.

Clara wanders about.

JEAN  
Momma's gone.

EXT. MANHATTAN, NEW YORK - LATER NIGHT

Establishing shot of the city's skyline.

SUPER: "New York City. 1905."

EXT. CHELSEA HOTEL - NIGHT

Panning down from the top floor, we pass rows of rectangles of golden light until we reach the lobby's wide windows.

INT. CHELSEA HOTEL - LOBBY - SAME

Near the window, Jean stares down at a crumbled photograph of her frail mother in her deathbed. She sits beside her father who is smoking a cigar.

JEAN  
I am not well, Pa.

Sam exhales.

SAM  
I know. Yet, must you always look at that?

JEAN  
Seeing her, comforts me.

Sam fatherly takes the photograph from Jean.

SAM  
Dear child, every photograph of Mother is better than this one.

JEAN  
Why can't I be like everyone else?

SAM  
Common?

Sam straightens his daughter's wild hair.

SAM (CONT'D)  
No, dear. You're extraordinary.

JEAN  
You mean weird. Epileptic.

SAM  
Hush, now.

Jean turns toward the dark windows. The street view captures the city at night.

JEAN  
Why does God take away those we love the most?



Sam's eyes shift from Jean to the CAMERA.

SAM  
Because he's cruel.

Jean starts to slowly rock back and forth in her chair.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Jean.

Jean continues to rock.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Jean!

Jean snaps out of her daze and stops.

JEAN  
What?

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - DAY

With her head down, Jean rushes through the crowded New York streets until she steps upon the Clemens' current residence. She pauses at the front gate.

Then, Jean turns and eyes the countless STRANGERS of all cultures and classes. To her, they appear to LAUGH and MOCK her mere presence. She races up the steps.

SUPER: "November 26, 1905. JEAN."

Jean reaches for the front door's large metal handle. Her hand trembles wildly as she reaches for it. She stops and stares down at her trembling hand.

JEAN  
Stop that!

Then, she stops the tremors with her other hand.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - JEAN'S BEDROOM - SAME

Jean CRIES in her bed. The lights are off. The room is dark.

An EEEEEKKK comes from the direction of her closet.

JEAN  
Who's there?

In the nearby darkness, a person BUMPS into a table.

SUSY (O.S.)  
Now, who put that there?

JEAN  
Susy!?!

Susy STRIKES a match and lights a candle.

SUSY  
Who else would it be?

Susy sets the candle on the table.

Jean pops up and embraces her sister. Then, she steps back.

JEAN  
You haven't gotten any older.

Susy prances about the room. Then, she turns toward Jean.

SUSY  
No, I haven't. Quite ideal,  
actually. So, how have you been?

JEAN  
Momma's gone.

SUSY  
I heard.

JEAN  
Haven't you seen her?

SUSY  
It's a big place.

JEAN  
Hmm. So, how are ya?

SUSY  
No complaints. In the other world,  
there is no more pain. Just joy.

JEAN  
Really?!? Can you take me?

SUSY  
Silly girl. Enjoy this side first.  
Anyways, you'll be seeing me on the  
other side soon.

JEAN  
Really? How?

SUSY  
Someone in this house is trying to  
kill you.

Jean reacts. She slowly turns to the door.

JEAN  
Pa!?!

SUSY  
Don't be silly.

JEAN  
Then who?

SUSY  
The Help.

JEAN  
The Help?!?

SUSY  
Yep. Jealous lot the Help. You  
better keep you eyes on them.

JEAN  
I will.

SUSY  
Well, I better be going.

JEAN  
Bye, Sis.

SUSY  
Watch out for that Isabel. I'm not  
liking the way she's eyeing Papa.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - JEAN'S BEDROOM - LATER DAY

Sam reads Jean pagers from his autobiography.

Jean sits in a chair facing the windows.

Sam paces as he reads to her.

SAM  
What a wee little part of a  
person's life are his acts and his  
words! His real life is lead in his  
head, and is known to none but  
himself.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

All day long, and every day, the mill of his brain is grinding, and his thoughts, which are but the mute articulation of his feelings, not those other things are his history. His acts and his words are merely the visible thin crust of his world, with its scattered snow summits and its vacant wastes of water-and they are so trifling a part of his bulk! A mere skin enveloping it. The mass of him is hidden-it and its volcanic fires that toss and boil, and never rest, night nor day. These are his life, and they are not written, and cannot be written.

In a daze, Jean stares out the windows.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jean, what do you think?

JEAN

I see Susy sometimes.

Sam stares up from his manuscript.

SAM

In your mind?

Jean turns away from the window. She eyes her father.

JEAN

No. Here in this house.

Sam clears his throat.

SAM

You do? What does she say?

JEAN

She talks about the other side.

SAM

Does she like it there?

JEAN

Not really. Says she's too young for it.

SAM

True. Say, the next time she's here... can you invite me over?

Jean nods.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Good. I would love to see her.

JEAN  
She wants to see you too.

SAM  
Dandy. Any mention of your mother?

JEAN  
Suzy's checked all over. But she  
can't find her there.

SAM  
Ohh. Anything else she shares?

Jean moves to her father. She looks up and grasps his arms.

JEAN  
She doesn't like Isabel, at all.

SAM  
Isabel... Why?

JEAN  
She says you're getting to smitten  
on her.

SAM  
Me?!? Smitten?

JEAN  
Yep.

SAM  
Nonsense.

JEAN  
Don't you still love Momma, Pa?

SAM  
Of course, I do, child. She was the  
love of my life. My anchor. But now  
she's gone.

JEAN  
Where? Susy can't find her.

SAM  
I don't know. I wish I did.

JEAN

Susy says....

Sam interrupts Jean.

SAM

Shh, girl. Susy is gone too. What you see in your mind's eye is an apparition, a phantasm.

JEAN

Ghosts?!? No, Pa. Susy is real.

Sam takes his hand and combs through his daughter's hair.

SAM

Shh. It's okay, girl. But let Susy rest in peace. Okay?

Jean says nothing. She just smiles up.

SAM (CONT'D)

Good.

Sam leaves the room.

Jean looks around the room at various objects of interest: her books, her brushes, her four-post bed. Then, her full attention moves to her closed closet door.

Jean walks toward the closet. She stops. Then, she gently KNOCKS twice on the wooden door.

The door replies back with a single KNOCK.

Opens ERRRR the closet door.

Susy stands within the darkness.

SUSY

I told you.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - BEDROOM - LATER DAY

Jean lays asleep in her bed. She wears a white night gown. She stirs. Awakens, her eyes inspect her room. Various objects of interest, she inspects. She pops out of bed.

She picks up a brush off of her vanity and combs her hair.

She comes to a full stop before her window that faces the street. The window is steamed over.

Jean brushes her hair when an image of her mother Livy appears in the glass.

LIVY  
Good morning, Jean.

Jean draws closer to the pane of glass.

JEAN  
Momma?

LIVY  
Who else would I be?

Jean looks over her shoulder. Then, she whispers.

JEAN  
I don't like it here.

LIVY  
I know child. That's why I am here.

JEAN  
Really?

LIVY  
Why would I lie?

JEAN  
Hmm. Where have you been?

LIVY  
Around.

JEAN  
Where? Susy can't find ya.

Livy shrugs her shoulders.

LIVY  
I found her.

JEAN  
Wow. Is she with you?

LIVY  
Sure is. Come. Take a leap of faith, straight out this window.

JEAN  
That doesn't seem so safe.

LIVY  
I will catch you.

JEAN  
Promise?

LIVY  
Sure. But dying is nothing, dear.  
Now, living. That's hard.

Jean ponders this.

JEAN  
Okay.

Livy disappears.

Jean opens up the window. Wind wildly blows her hair and the long sheer curtains about.

JEAN (CONT'D)  
I'm coming Mother!

Jean leans her body out the window. Ominously, two floors below stands a tall wrought iron spiked fence.

LIVY (O.S.)  
Then come.

Jean wiggles over the radiator at the window base. Her hand slips off the smooth marble. BAM! Her long forearm presses hard against the hot radiator coil.

JEAN  
Ouch.

Jean falls to the floor. From there, she stares up at the swaying white sheers and the open window.

SOUND: LIVY'S LAUGHTER.

LIVY (O.S.)  
Dear child, you can't even manage  
you our demise. Pathetic.

JEAN  
Momma, don't go.

LIVY (O.S.)  
I've better things to do today to  
pass my time.

The wind SLAMS the window closed.

Jean stares at her burned forearm. Then, she WEEPS when she looks up to the closed window.



JEAN  
I hate it here.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - FOYER - DAY

Isabel and Sam stand near the door in the marble foyer.  
Sam wears a formal dress attire.

SAM  
How do I look?

Isabel steps closer and adjusts his bow-tie.

ISABEL  
Better.

SAM  
Good. Old River Rats must look  
their best.

ISABEL  
You're not that old.

SAM  
Age is an issue of mind over  
matter. If you don't mind, it  
doesn't matter.

Isabel lingers in for a kiss.

ISABEL  
Age doesn't matter. I'm attracted  
to your cleverness.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - STEPS - SAME

Between the white wooden bannisters, Jean watches her father  
and Isabel flirt below in the foyer.

SAM  
Hmm.

ISABEL  
You look good and fit to me.

SAM  
Do you wish to come?

ISABEL  
Where?

SAM  
Some boring Society dinner.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - FOYER - SAME

Sam and Isabel lean closer to one another.

Jean's heavy feet CLIMBS stairs. Then, she quickly SLAMS her bedroom door.

SAM  
I fear this home has become her  
prison.

ISABEL  
I will speak to her in the morning.

ISABEL (CONT'D)  
Tonight...

Isabel looks around the room.

ISABEL (CONT'D)  
I plan on staying up late.

Sam grabs his hat from a nearby table. He plops it on his head and tips it brim.

SAM  
Good.

Sam looks into the nearby mirror and likes what he sees.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - JEAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jean sits before her vanity's mirror as Isabel combs her long dark hair with a big brush.

Jean eyes Isabel via the mirror.

JEAN  
Are you trying to get your hooks  
into my Pa.

Isabel continues to comb.

ISABEL  
What? Why would you say such a  
thing?

JEAN  
You like his fame. His fortune.

ISABEL

Jean! My intentions are honorable.  
Don't you miss having a mother?

Jean grabs Isabel's brush.

JEAN

Papa's love, his only love... is  
his own words. His creativity.

ISABEL

Your father is a brilliant man.

JEAN

Maybe. But you shall never be my  
mother.

Katy KNOCKS on Jean's door before she enters.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Susy?

KATY

No, Jean. It's Katy.

JEAN

Ah! Susy's has been visiting me.

Katy eyes Isabel.

KATY

Really?

Isabel starts to brush Jean's hair again as Katy grabs some  
dirty clothes off of the ground.

JEAN

Yep.

KATY

Susy's gone, Jean. Remember?

JEAN

Nope. I saw her alive as day, in  
this very room.

Katy backs away from Jean and Isabel.

ISABEL

Jean, we all attended your  
sister's...

JEAN

She's not dead!

KATY  
Susy's in heaven now.

JEAN  
Liar!!!

Jean pops up and attacks Katy. Then, with all her might SLAPS Katy hard with the back of her hand.

Katy drops to the floor. She lands on her bottom.

Isabel goes to Katy's aid.

ISABEL  
Jean!

Isabel attempts to help Katy up.

Jean looms of them both.

KATY  
Why Jean?!?

JEAN  
Who am I?

KATY  
The sweet little girl in bows that  
I helped raise.

JEAN  
Who are you?

KATY  
Katy Leary. The person that changed  
your diapers.

JEAN  
Nah, the both of you are just the  
Help. Nothing more.

Isabel attempts to guide Jean to her bed.

ISABEL  
Jean, you should rest.

JEAN  
Bed? I'm not my father.

Katy and Isabel exchange looks.

ISABEL  
I'm going to call the doctor.

Katy rubs her hurt sore jaw.

KATY  
For who?

Jean moves to the windows and sings.

JEAN  
But I'm a fly. A happy fly. No  
matter. If I live. Or if I die.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - JEAN'S BEDROOM - LATER DAY

From the same window, Sam looks peers at a cab.

Isabel escorts Jean down the steps into it.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - CURB - SAME

Jean sees her father in her window and waves bye.

Then, she sees him draw the curtain.

ISABEL  
Jean, this is for the best.

JEAN  
Who's best?

ISABEL  
Your father...

JEAN  
My father is a self-absorbed man.  
An artist. His own deity. You and  
me are mere morals. Made purely for  
his entertainment, nothing more.

INT. FIFTH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - JEAN'S ROOM - SAME

Sam turns away from the curtained window.

Clara sits on the edge of Jean's bed.

CLARA  
Jean should've been  
institutionalized ages ago.

SAM  
She's your sister!

CLARA  
So? The best doctors in New England  
will watch over her.

SAM  
That's what I'm worried about.

CLARA  
Our family grows smaller.

SAM  
We could not overcome her  
afflictions.

CLARA  
We?

SAM  
What?

CLARA  
Well, it looks like its just me and  
you now. I doubt that I was your  
first choice. Hell, not even your  
second.

SAM  
I love you all equally.

CLARA  
Love?!? What do you know of love?  
You love your wit. Your words.  
Nothing else.

Clara pops up off the bed and storms out.

SAM  
Clara! Where are you going?

CLARA (O.S.)  
As far away from you as possible!

Sam stumbles back until he hits the bed.

SAM  
On the very verge of being an  
angel. Hmm... more devil, I suppose  
than angel or father.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - TUNNEL - LATER DAY

Sam and Joe stroll through a tunnel.

SAM

God is vindictive. He gives you a wife and children whom you adore, only that through the miseries which He will inflict upon them He may tear the palpitating heart out of your breast and slap you in the face with it.

JOE

Vindictive? No, it was just their time, Sam.

SAM

To make matters worse, I found that all their lives my children have been afraid of me! Have stood all their days in uneasy dread of my sharp tongue and uncertain temper. All the concentrated griefs of fifty years seems colorless by the side of that pathetic revelation. Vindictive is He.

JOE

And who in this tale is He?

SAM

What?

JOE

Who plays this vindictive god in your story, Sam? You are it's creator.

SAM

What are you talking about?

JOE

When was the last time you visited Jean?

Sam stops at the tunnels midpoint.

SAM

Joe, I can't go there.

JOE

Why? She's your daughter.

SAM

I can't see my sweet Jean surrounded by a punch of lunatics.

JOE  
That's your pride talking again.  
She's your flesh and blood and she  
needs you.

Sam walks on.

SAM  
I know. Soon. A week or two. I'm so  
close to finishing this new story.

JOE  
Sam! Your story is your life!

As Sam approaches the other end of the tunnel, sunlight  
engulfs him.

EXT. CRAIG COLONY - KATONAH, NEW YORK - LATER DAY

Jean walks the grounds in a pretty dress.

SUPER: "Craig's Colony, New York State's Custodial  
Institution for Epileptics."

As she walks near the gardens, she hears her father's voice.

SAM  
You look well.

JEAN  
Father! I feel well. Most my days  
are spent outdoors, hiking.

SAM  
Good. This place is different than  
I imagined.

JEAN  
How so?

SAM  
More hotel than...

JEAN  
Mental Asylum?

SAM  
Yes. I suppose.

JEAN  
Here, we focus on healthy life  
habits and exercise.



SAM  
You good enough to come back home?

JEAN  
You need me there?

SAM  
Never more. Plus, Clara wants you  
at her wedding.

JEAN  
Wedding?

EXT. STORMFIELD - DAY

The mansion's name derives from a short story of his Captain Stormfield's, Visit to Heaven.

SUPER: "October, 1909. Clara's Wedding at Stormfield."

SERIES OF CUTS: HOME TOUR

- A. Stormfield Mansion.
- B. The interior ground floor.
- C. Billiards room decorated with caricatures of Sam.
- D. Sam's study.
- E. French doors open to garden terraces and fountain.
- F. On the lawn, white circular tables dot the green grounds.
- G. Posing for a picture, Mark Twain, in Scarlet Cap and Gown, Clara as a Bride, Jean as her Bridesmaid, and Clara's GROOM.

EXT. STORMFIELD - CHRISTMAS TIME - DAY

Jean and Sam walk along the same grounds now white with snow.

SUPER: "December 23, 1909."

SAM  
I am sorry Jean.

JEAN  
About what?

SAM  
The past.

JEAN  
Oh, that. It is forgotten.

SAM  
Dear child, how can it be?

JEAN  
History, Papa. Isabel is gone.

SAM  
History? Okay. Let's discuss the  
near future then. When, I'm gone.

JEAN  
You shall never leave me.

SAM  
I wish that was true. But my end  
will come. Just like Mother's.

They both grow quiet.

JEAN  
I miss her.

SAM  
So do I child. So, do I.

JEAN  
I never realized how much I relied  
on her. Until she was gone.

SAM  
Yeah. I wasted so many of my days,  
recreating the past. Not enjoying  
the present.

JEAN  
The present. It's such a tiny  
thing.

Sam stops walking and looks at Jean.

SAM  
Sandwiched between regret and fear.

JEAN  
Be here now. With me.

SAM  
I am.

JEAN

Good. Then close your eyes, Papa.  
Breathe.

Sam does so. Then he raises his hands over his head, and twirls a bit.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Breathe!

Sam laughs.

SAM

I'm trying.

INT. STORMFIELD - CHRISTMAS TIME - DAY

Christmas MUSIC plays.

Jean walks through the home and HUMS along.

SERIES OF CUTS: HOME FOR HOLIDAYS

A. Folded over newspaper reads, "December 23, 1909."

B. Nice fire in fireplace.

C. Pan over STORMFIELD decorated for the holidays.

D. Sam and Jean trim a Christmas tree.

E. Sam asleep in chair near fire.

F. Jean covers Sam with a blanket.

INT. STORMFIELD - SAME NIGHT

Sam wakes as Jean attempts to cover him.

SAM

You're wearing yourself out dear.

JEAN

This Christmas must be perfect.

SAM

Why?

JEAN

It just must.

SAM  
Are you afraid it may be my last?

JEAN  
Remember.

SAM  
What?

JEAN  
The present.

SAM  
You're my present.

JEAN  
See you in the morning, Pa.

SAM  
Merry Christmas, my little angel.  
Sleep tight.

EXT. STORMFIELD - FROM THE ROAD - NIGHT

Snowflakes flutter about the grounds. A freshly-made snowman stands sentry. Everything appears perfect.

EXT. STORMFIELD - CHRISTMAS EVE MORNING

SUPER: "Stormfield, 6:30 a.m."

SERIES OF SHOTS: HOME TOUR

- A. Home heavily decorated for the holidays.
- B. Big red bows on greens.
- C. Poinsettias litter our journey.
- D. Christmas trees are everywhere.
- E. We travel through the formal living room.
- F. To the foyer.
- G. The stairs.
- H. Then we climb the steps.

The bathtub faucet RUNS. The sound of the water draws us in. When we reach the second floor, it stops. We continue down the long hall.

Katy RAPS on Jean's door.

KATY  
You ready to dress?

JEAN  
No, Katy, you can wait an hour, for  
I am going to lie in bed and read.

Katy goes away. Walks down the long hallway, and stops. She ponders a bit. Then she moves on with her day.

INT. JEAN'S BATHROOM - SAME

Jean bathes in the tub. Steam is everywhere. She smiles at us through it. She is welcoming.

Hold on her smiling face.

Then suddenly and violently she is seized by an epileptic seizure attack. We witness this. This is nothing for us to do but painfully watch, wait, and hope.

Jean's body slams into the sides of the tub, again and again. Bath water splashes out and about. She looks at us in agony. Her eyes scream, help me! Help me!

We can do nothing but watch. We see her body freeze up. Then the top half of her body slips underneath the water.

Her alarmed face inches below the water with big bubbles. She struggles but she can't move. Smaller bubbles escape from her mouth as Jean drowns.

Her face now appears angelic and at peace.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY - LATER

SUPER: "Stormfield, 7:30 a.m."

Katy returns to the bedroom. It is empty. Miss Clemens was not there.

Katy sees the bathroom door ajar. Slowly, she pushes it wide open.

KATY  
Jean?

She sees Jean's lifeless body beneath the water and screams.

KATY (CONT'D)

No!!!

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Sam appears in his pajamas. He sees Jean submerged.

SAM

Dear god, no.

He yanks her out of the water.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jean. Sweet Jean.

Jean's unresponsive face rests on his shoulder. Water trickles out and down her lips and cheek.

Sam turns her over. Nothing.

Sam checks her vital signs.

SAM (CONT'D)

She's happy now, Katy. She's with her mother and sister, and if I thought I could bring her back by just saying one word, I wouldn't say it.

Katy, still in the doorway, WEEPS.

Sam turns to her.

SAM (CONT'D)

Help me get her to her bed.

Katy does.

INT. BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Jean looks at peace in her bed, covered with blankets. Her hair still wet. She looks asleep.

Sam looks to Katy.

SAM

Please call Joe. Tell him what happened.

Katy leaves to do so.

Sam sits on the side of the bed. He bends down and rubs his fingertips through her wet hair.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Regret.

He clears throat.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Fear.

Sam closes Jean's eye lids.

SAM (CONT'D)  
She's happy now.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - LATER DAY

Joe stands outside the very same bathroom by the door. It is ajar. In sight, he sees a bright white porcelain bathtub empty of water. It is an eerie reminder.

Sam approaches. He is dressed in black.

SAM  
Jean's gone too.

JOE  
I'm sorry, Sam.

SAM  
Don't be. She finally found peace.

Sam places his arm around Joe.

The two walk together down the corridor.

SAM (CONT'D)  
You must read my latest, Letters  
from the Earth.

JOE  
What's it about?

SAM  
Many things, Joe. Though mainly,  
how your god is a killer.

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. ALDINE CLUB - FOYER - NIGHT

MUSIC: a song like Eddie Vedder's version of The Beatles,  
You've Got to Hide Your Love Away.

CHATTER and LAUGHTER pours out from...

THE CLUB'S DINING ROOM

A long banner on wall reads, "THE SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS  
CELEBRATES MARK TWAIN."

INT. ALDINE CLUB - ENTRANCE FRONT - NIGHT

Vast dark paneled banquet room. Here we drift down through  
the reams of chalky white smoke of the dark paneled room.  
Below the smoke we see lines of tuxedoed MEN. They sit at  
white draped tables. Their food untouched before them.

SOUND: LAUGHTER

MUSIC: a song like Eddie Vedder's version of The Beatles,  
You've Got to Hide Your Love Away.

Clad in formal wear of long-tailed black coat and white vest,  
is Sam. He sits at the head table.

Beside him is ANDREW CARNEGIE. He stands, raises his hands  
high over his head to silence the audience.

CARNEGIE

It has been a quarter of a century  
since his classic The Adventures of  
Huckleberry Finn, but the man next  
to me remains the country's most  
famous and beloved writer.

Much applause.

CARNEGIE (CONT'D)

The slouching, white-suited.

Andrew looks down and smiles broadly at his dear old friend.

CARNEGIE (CONT'D)

Frizzy-haired storyteller. He is  
why we're here. To celebrate his  
life, and his works.

SAM

Frizzy-haired. At least I have  
hair, you old robber...



Suddenly, the back doors of the room loudly burst open.

SOUND: BANG!

The room turns at once.

They see the costumed spectacle of a young woman dressed as the Miracle of Orleans, JOAN OF ARC. She looks exactly like Susy, use the same actor.

Joan wears underneath a ceremonial white robe, the armor of a 15th-century French soldier. Her hair dark and cut short. Her figures pure and angelic.

SUPER: "SUZY."

SUPER: "Maybe."

Joan's eyes are fixed on the author, as she glides up the aisle between the tables.

As she passes, the stunned on-lookers watch.

Sam has every appearance of a man who had seen a ghost.

SAM (CONT'D)

Susy?

Joan nods yes then no. She addresses the room.

JOAN

I don't know anything about this man. At least I know only two things. One is, he hasn't been in the penitentiary, and the other is... I don't know why.

The room bursts out in LAUGHTER.

Sam's voice is broken, and his words come slowly.

SAM

Who are you?

JOAN

You know who I am?

SAM

Livy?

Joan nods yes then no.

Sam looks toward her, then the crowd. There's absolute silence - puzzling silence.

The surrounding audience doesn't know whether it is time to laugh, to keep silent, or to summon the hotel security.

Sam realizes the situation. This is a joke. He opens his mouth to let them off the hook as he studies Joan's attire.

SAM (CONT'D)

There's an illustration, gentlemen -  
a real illustration.

JOAN

They can't hear you.

SAM

What?

JOAN

We're no longer of this world.

SAM

I'm dead? Now that's reassuring.

JOAN

Is it?

SAM

I was done with it. To succeed in  
this life, you need two things.  
Ignorance and confidence. The I-  
word I lack.

JOAN

Then come. Be done with them.  
They're such self-absorbed fools.

Sam stares at the frozen faces.

SAM

But.

Joan SNAPS her fingers and the room of tuxedoed guests and  
the boy disappears.

JOAN

Ah. Better. Now come.

SAM

How?

JOAN

Time and space are irrelevant. Mere  
labels to justify the unknown.  
Let's go play.

SAM  
Where to?

JOAN  
To a time when you weren't so  
cynical.

SAM  
Good l-u-c-k there.

JOAN  
Luck has nothing to do with it,  
Sam.

SAM  
Where are we going?

JOAN  
Only to the places you have been.

SAM  
Okay. I prefer the past.

Joan smiles.

JOAN  
Come. There's nothing left for you  
here.

SAM  
Am I dreaming?

JOAN  
Awake. Asleep. Alive or dead. You  
shall soon witness... The difference  
is razor thin.

Sam's formal wear is gone. Now he wears his customary white  
three piece cashmere suit.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
I prefer you dressed in white.

SAM  
So am I your pawn?

JOAN  
We're all pawns in a game we never  
asked to play.

TRANSITION: the room morphs into nature. The drawing room  
turns into woods. The red carpet changes into a dirt path.

DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - DAY

Before them is a crooked bend of the mighty Mississippi.

SAM

Ah. I know these waters.

JOAN

You should. You described them so wonderfully in your books.

Time moves by. It is only seconds for them but the scenery and the day changes to night like time lapse photography.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

The time lapse photography ceases with the sound of a WHISTLE HORN. Around the bend a steamboat lit up like a tall birthday cake floating on the water.

Sam and Joan watch the boat's paddle wheel SMACKS! the water.

SAM

When I was a boy, there was but one permanent ambition among my comrades. That was, to be a steamboat pilot.

JOAN

I know.

SAM

Am I dead?

JOAN

Not yet.

SAM

Then what is this?

JOAN

Your race never knows good fortune from ill. They're always mistaking the one for the other.

SAM

Are you not human?

JOAN

Human? Don't be vulgar.

SAM

No.

JOAN

I witnessed your lot born from the clay. I am not limited like you.

SAM

You seem so real. So, human.

JOAN

I told you... I am not. I am more.

SAM

So, what's the difference in you and me?

Joan doesn't seem to understand how he could ask such a strange question.

JOAN

The difference between man and me? Man, is a museum of diseases, a home of impurities. He begins as dirt and departs as stench.

SAM

I don't understand.

JOAN

One can't compare things which by their nature and by the interval between them are not comparable.

Sam remains still and quiet.

JOAN (CONT'D)

You seem puzzled Sam. So I will expand it. Man, is made of dirt. I saw him made. I am not made of dirt. He comes today and is gone tomorrow. I am of the aristocracy of the Imperishable. I last.

SAM

Who are you really?

JOAN

I told you.

SAM

You are not Joan.

JOAN

True. I can take any shape I please. Do you have a preference?

SAM  
No. But why did you choose to be  
her?

JOAN  
She was your favorite.

SAM  
I loved my children... equally.

JOAN  
Sure you do.

SAM  
How do you travel back?

JOAN  
My mind creates! Do you get the  
force of that?!?

Joan SNAPS her fingers.

EXT. PARIS - NIGHT

Within a carriage, Joan and Sam sit.

JOAN  
Whatever it desires!

SERIES OF CUTS: PARIS NIGHTLIFE

A. Joan and Sam ride in fast carriage.

B. They pass sign that reads, "Rue de Rivoli."

C. They pass by the Column of July.

SAM  
How?!?

JOAN  
The Column of July!

SAM  
On this site once stood the grim  
Bastille.

JOAN  
That grave of human hopes and  
happiness. A political prison.

SAM

A dismal place within whose  
dungeons so many young faces put on  
the wrinkles of age.

JOAN

So many proud patriots grew humble.

SAM

So many brave hearts broke. Hmm.

JOAN

Human life!

The carriage stops at the steps of The Trocadéro Palace.

EXT. THE TROCADÉRO PALACE - SAME

The palace's form is that of a large concert hall with two wings and two towers. Its style is a mixture of exotic and historical references, generally called "Moorish" but with some Byzantine elements. The space between the Palais and the Seine is set with gardens, and an array of fountains.

JOAN

The old Trocadéro Palace was built  
during the Exposition Universelle.

Sam steps out of carriage. Sees the opposite bank of Paris.  
The city is aglow. Illuminates the night.

SAM

Beautiful.

JOAN

Paris is more than a destination.

SAM

It's a state of mind.

JOAN

Music, maestro?

INT. TROCADÉRO - CONCERT HALL - NIGHT

Sam and Joan walks side up side toward the stage. The candle lit hall contains a monstrous pipe organ. Its dull metal piping lines the wall.

JOAN

Man thinks he is the Creator's pet.  
Believes the Creator loves him and  
listens.

SAM

It's a quaint notion.

Joan sits before it. She stretches her fingertips like some  
concert pianist, then she plays Chopin's, Funeral March.

JOAN

What too dreary? Perhaps you prefer  
Toccata and Fugue in D Minor.

SAM

Who died?

Joan looks up at Sam.

JOAN

You, old boy. You.

She continues to play.

Sam wanders out of shot.

SAM

I was dead before I was born and it  
never inconvenienced me a bit.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DESK - SAME

Sam's writing desk is, as if, he just left it.

MUSIC PLAYS: Like Verve's Bittersweet Symphony.

POV is inside empty room with various objects of interest.

Long lines of editions of Sam's leather-bound books fill the  
bookshelves. The last book, standing on its spine, next to  
Joan of Arc, is Carlyle's French Revolution.

Clara passes by the door's opening. She HUMS with the MUSIC.

SUPER: "CLARA."



INT. HALLWAY - SAME

We see Clara, now 35. Her belly shows that she is with child.

She is Sam's only surviving daughter. She walks down the corridor. She turns into...

SAM'S BEDROOM

Inside, Sam's DOCTOR, late 50s, hovers over his bed. He removes a Stethoscope from his leather bag.

Sam, now 75, rests. His white-unruly hair still defiant, yet he lies frail in his bed.

The doctor examines Sam's lungs and heart with his stethoscope. He steps back and frowns.

DOCTOR

His lungs are ruined and his heart  
beats slow.

CLARA

Tobacco.

DOCTOR

He doesn't have much longer.

The doctor looks at NURSE BAKER.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Nurse. Call me when you see the  
signs.

Nurse Baker nods.

CLARA

So, there's nothing left for us to  
do?

The doctor puts his stethoscope back in his case.

DOCTOR

Make him comfortable. That's all.

CLARA

Thank you, Doctor. May I have a  
moment alone with my father?

DOCTOR

Of course.

Everyone but Clara clears the room.

CLARA  
Hi Papa. I'm here. The last of us.

She draws closer.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
To remember the wonderful childhood  
you had provided us. The  
interesting people that passed in  
and out of our home in Hartford.

She gets up.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
But I will not be the last one  
long. You see, a child grows inside  
of me.

KNOCK on door.

ALBERT PAINE, 48, arrives. He is Sam's handpicked biographer.  
Bookish, big-eared who wears his hair parted down the middle.

PAINE  
Are you okay?

CLARA  
Yes.

PAINE  
How's your father?

CLARA  
Not well.

Paine walks up to the bed, peers down at Sam, long and hard.

Sam laboriously takes a breath. His eyes are closed.

PAINE  
I see.

CLARA  
Mr. Paine.

Albert turns.

PAINE  
Yes?

CLARA  
It is very important to me that the  
world remembers Mark Twain. Not Sam  
Clemens.

Albert's attention returns to Sam.

PAINÉ  
Of course.

Sam mumbles to himself.

SAM  
Joan? I want to go home.

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DAY

Joan and Sam stand silently before the Hartford House.

JOAN  
Home.

SAM (V.O.)  
I can't look upon that house yet. I  
keep upon my feet, and that is  
something... restless and unsettled.

SERIES OF SHOTS: HOME TOUR

- A. Empty Foyer.
- B. Empty Parlor Room.
- C. Empty Kitchen.
- D. Empty Study.
- E. Empty Bedrooms.

SAM (V.O.)  
Eighteen years of my daughter's  
life were spent in there.

JOAN  
Are you afraid to enter your very  
own home?

Sam looks at the second story windows. Then he peers at Joan.

SAM  
Susy died under that roof.

JOAN  
So?

SAM

The best of my life was experienced  
within those hallowed halls. It's  
sacred.

JOAN

Sacred?

SAM

To us, our house... had a heart. A  
soul. And eyes to see us with.

JOAN

Impossible.

SAM

Yet true.

JOAN

Go on.

SAM

It was of us, and we were of its  
confidence and lived in its grace  
and in the peace of its  
benediction.

Second story window opens.

Susy pops out of window.

SUSY

Papa!

Sam waves up, whispers.

SAM

She's not real.

JOAN

What is reality? But a common  
belief.

SAM

She died because of me.

JOAN

That's not true, Sam. You were not  
responsible for her demise. Spinal  
meningitis was the culprit.

SAM

The child was taken away when her mother was within three days of her. Livy would have given three decades of her life for the sight of her, one last time. Alive. Hmm. The unassuageable misery.

JOAN

The circumstances of her death were sad. Pathetic. The same with Livy and Jean.

SAM

My brain is worn to rags rehearsing them. The mere deaths would have been cruelty enough. Without overloading it with wanton details. The last time I saw Susy was at the station waving profusely at our departing train. Never to see her again, that sacred face.

JOAN

Well. Here's your chance.

Joan disappears.

Sam enters his old home. He hears Susy's heavy footsteps upstairs. He catches a glimpse of her from below.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DAY

Upstairs, Susy dances room to room.

She stops in her parent's room. Here she pays homage to her mother when she sees her long white nightgown hanging down a cracked closet door.

Susy runs over and kisses it. She removes her current clothes. She puts on the white nightgown over her head. All the while, she continues to dance and HUM.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Sam slowly climbs the steps leading to the second floor.

Susy rushes down the steps and embraces him.

SUSY

Papa! It's so good to see you.

Sam squeezes her tighter.

SAM  
You too, dear.

Susy pulls back and smiles.

SUSY  
I'm restless today. Full of  
wistfulness. Look! I found Momma's  
gown.

Susy dashes up the remaining steps.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Ah! My feet must move to this  
music.

Sam hears no music. He sees the fever has taken her.

SAM  
Dance my dear, dance!

Susy delirious rants as she opens another window.

She peers out.

SUSY  
Where is White Head the Great?  
Where've you gone?

SAM  
White Head is here. Before you.

Susy dances. Beams of sunshine cut through the room's  
darkness. She jumps in and out of the light. The fever has  
completely taken her.

SUSY  
Father!!! Dance with me.

MUSIC PLAYS: Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Do you hear it too? Music. Such  
wonderful music.

Susy peers into a large mirror as they dance together. She  
stops, separates from her father toward the mirror. Closely  
she examines her own face.

SUSY (CONT'D)  
Papa. You destroyed all this. Our  
hopes. Our dreams. You stole them  
through your stupid speculation.

SAM  
I only wanted what was best for us.

SUSY  
Well... you sure failed that mission.

SAM  
My dear child.

Susy stops dancing.

SUSY  
I hate you.

Susy disappears as the empty white nightgown falls to the  
floor in a heap.

SAM  
Don't leave.

Sam examines it, but she is gone. Only fabric remains.

Joan wanders into the shot.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Why be so cruel?

JOAN  
Lord? I shall never fully  
understand your race. He stopped  
caring about this experiment of  
His, eons ago!

SAM  
Joan. You're an abundant tormentor,  
showing me all those I hurt.

JOAN  
Susy died... mindless and happy.

SAM  
And I was half a world away.

JOAN  
You can't have it both ways, Sam.  
It's either family or fame.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Not both. And the world knows Mark  
Twain's choice.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

EXT. STORMFIELD - ENTRANCE - DAY

Joe arrives. As he HUMS a familiar tune, he grabs the door's  
knocker. CLANG! CLANG!

Joe looks around and waits with his hat in his hands. He  
hums, Battle Hymn of the Republic.

JOE  
*Mine eyes have seen the glory of  
the coming of the Lord. Hmm. Saying  
your final good-bye, is hard.*

INT. STORMFIELD - FOYER - SAME

From down the hall, Katy appears. Slowly, she approaches the  
main door.

Mr. Paine is behind her.

PAINE  
No reporters, Katy.

Katy nods and then she opens to door.

KATY  
Reverend Twichell. Welcome.

JOE  
Katy... I wish it was under better  
circumstances.

Katy escorts him in.

PAINE  
Thank you for coming.

JOE  
He's been my best friend for forty  
years. How could I not?

PAINE  
True.

JOE  
Upstairs?



PAINE

Yes.

Joe heads to...

THE STAIRWELL

PAINE (CONT'D)

Reverend Twichell?

Joe turns back to the foyer.

JOE

Yes.

PAINE

May I have a word with you after?

JOE

Of course.

Joe climbs the stairs.

EXT. SAM'S BEDROOM - SAME

As Joe opens, Sam's bedroom door.

JOE

Sam, you lazy old... man.

Joe wanders in.

Sam stirs and opens-up his eyes.

SAM

Susy?

JOE

No, Sam. It's Joe.

SAM

Joe.

Sam brightens.

Joe plops down next to him.

JOE

What do you wish to talk about?

SAM

How I hate the human race.

JOE

Hate?

SAM

Go. I don't want you to see me like  
this, Joe.

JOE

Like what?

SAM

Weak. Full of hate. And...

JOE

Near death?

Sam nods.

SAM

Go.

JOE

Okay. You rest. I'll be back.

Joe heads to the door.

SAM

Joe?

Joe turns.

JOE

Yes, Sam.

SAM

I don't hate the *entire* human race.

JOE

Good.

Sam falls back asleep.

Joe leaves Sam's room. Then, he heads down the stairs to...

THE FIRST FLOOR

Katy approaches him.

KATY

Reverend Twichell. Mr. Paine is  
waiting for you in the study.

JOE  
Thank you, Katy.

Joe takes a few steps toward the study. He turns back to Katy.

JOE (CONT'D)  
The house seems so quiet.

KATY  
I know. I half expect him to come storming down those stairs. All in a great big huff.

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DAY

Joe enters Sam's study.

JOE  
When is A Mysterious Stranger being published?

PAINE  
Never.

JOE  
What? The story is brilliant.

PAINE  
I agree.

JOE  
Then why?

PAINE  
Mrs. Clemens feels his work is slipping. Intellectually.

JOE  
Slipping? Impossible.

PAINE  
She wishes me to focus on his autobiography.

Joe grabs a book from the shelf.

JOE  
Mr. Paine, to the living we owe respect. But to the dead we owe only...

PAINE  
The truth.

JOE  
Correct.

PAINE  
Voltaire?

Joe nods and returns the book to the shelf.

JOE  
When you borrow a line.

PAINE  
Take from the best. Hmm. Wise  
advice.

Joe looks out a window to the spring day and the sprawling  
green grass.

JOE  
Poor Sam. Poor Jean. Poor...

Clara wanders in.

CLARA  
Hi, Joe. I heard you were here.

Joe turns. He sees her belly.

JOE  
I believe congratulations are in  
order.

Joe and Clara hug.

CLARA  
They are.

JOE  
I wish he would be here to see it.

CLARA  
Me too.

Clara looks at Mr. Paine.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Albert. May I have a word alone  
with my spiritual advisor.

PAINE  
Of course.

JOE  
Spiritual advisor? You're as bad as  
him.

CLARA  
I know.

Joe eyes Sam's manuscript on the desk.

JOE  
His latest work?

Clara nods yes.

CLARA  
It's brilliant. And bitter. Full of  
such pain.

JOE  
Well, he started it after your  
mother's death.

CLARA  
Yes. But his readers want Twain.

JOE  
Lazy days spent by the river?

CLARA  
Exactly.

JOE  
He's outgrown the persona he  
created in his youth.

CLARA  
Well, if this story is published,  
it will ruin him.

JOE  
How is that?

CLARA  
It's anti-god?

JOE  
Not surprising. Yet, is it a worthy  
read?

Excitement enters Clara's voice.

CLARA  
It is. So different from his  
previous work.

JOE  
You should let his readers decide  
then.

CLARA  
Joe. He uses the Devil as a  
narrator who betters God.

JOE  
Once again. Sounds like him. Hmm.  
It appears your father no longer  
wishes to be Mark Twain.

CLARA  
The world wants more Mark Twain.  
Not Sam Clemens. His book on Joan  
of Arc proved that. What a colossal  
failure that was.

JOE  
Some stories take time until  
they're appreciated.

CLARA  
Time. He doesn't have much left.

JOE  
No. He doesn't.

Darkness fills Sam's study.

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. DARKENED STAGE - NIGHT

Within the darkness we hear Joan. Her tone is both angelic  
and articulate. She whispers at first. Then her voice grows  
and echoes.

JOAN (O.S.)  
Sam! Sam! Sam!

SAM (O.S.)  
What?

Sam's features slowly appear.

JOAN  
Let's travel some more?

SAM  
Where?

JOAN  
Everywhere.

EXT. OUTDOOR PAVILION - DAY

A mass of humanity dressed in dark-colored clothes separates as Sam in his white suit slices through them. He and Joan at his side are heading towards a large stage.

SAM  
Are all these men and women here  
for me?

JOAN  
You showed them a world bigger than  
themselves. Your words moved people  
Sam. Moved them from hate, to the  
path of a better understanding.

SAM  
Hmm. No one reads my words anymore.

JOAN  
That's not true.

SAM  
Look at all these people. This is  
incomparable. All a praise-hungry  
author could desire.

Sam reaches the stairs, stops, and turns. Everyone is gone.  
The pavilion is deserted except for Joan.

SAM (CONT'D)  
What happened?

JOAN  
Fickle lot. They grew bored and  
moved on.

SAM  
Oh.

JOAN  
Well, you're the only audience I  
care about.

She climbs up the stairs and moves across the stage.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
You wish to see a performance? Then  
you shall see a performance! The  
trick is to hold their attention.

She removes a small piece of fluff resting on her shoulder.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
But, after all, it is ridiculous to  
ask. When one remembers how  
childish their poms, and what  
shadows they are!

Joan's clothes change into a circus clown.

Spheres appear from nowhere. Each holds a familiar face to  
Sam: literary colleagues, lifelong friends, and family  
members.

Joan tosses the balls up one after another.

Then she adds another and another. She sets them up and  
whirls them in a slender bright oval in the air.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
So, come forward Sam Clemens. Let's  
see your life.

More spheres appear. Traps more alarmed faces.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Little by little these little  
darlings steal from you. A spoonful  
at a time.

The oval lengthens. Joan's hands move so swiftly that they  
are just a blur and not distinguishable as hands, and  
hundreds of balls travel through the air.

The spinning oval reaches up twenty feet in the air and  
shines and glistens.

SAM  
Oh, Joan, how can you do these  
things?

JOAN  
Man's mind clumsily and tediously  
and laboriously patches little  
trivialities together and gets a  
result, such as it is.

SAM  
And your mind is different?

JOAN  
My mind creates! Do you get the  
force of that?!? Creates anything  
it desires, and in a moment.

(MORE)



JOAN (CONT'D)  
Creates without material. Creates  
fluids, solids, colors.

SAM  
What can you create?

JOAN  
Anything, everything.

The spheres cease in mid-air. Each sphere possesses a loved one of Sam's whose face is in dread.

Sam looks at Joan as if to beg her to please stop.

SAM  
No.

Joan winks at Sam and at that very instant the spheres drop, CRASH! down hard to the stage's hard wood floor. Each burst into in shards of broken glass. One by one, it erases the tiny faces within them.

SAM (CONT'D)  
No!!!! Susy! Langdon! Livy!!  
Jean!!!

Joan still in costume brushes off imaginary dirt from her hands. Then, from under her sleeve, another sphere appears.

JOAN  
But wait. There's more.

SAM  
Clara!

JOAN  
Last one. Came quite unglued when  
her mother died.

SAM  
She blamed herself.

JOAN  
We both know who's the true  
culprit. Right, Sam.

The sphere slips out of her hands.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Oops.

Clara's sphere falls to the ground, CRASH!

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Gravity.

SAM  
You bitch!

Joan walks ahead.

JOAN  
What is man? Fragility. Look! They  
returned from where is that they  
came. Dirt.

Sam knees down before the broken glass.

SAM  
Why torture me so?

JOAN  
Out of necessity. Each stole too  
much of you. You're a self-absorbed  
artist. Are you not?!? Don't you  
wish to be America's Shakespeare?

From his knees, Sam scoops up the broken glass.

SAM  
When Shakespeare died in Stratford  
it was not an event. It made no  
more stir in England than the death  
of any other forgotten theatre-  
actor would have made.

JOAN  
Forgotten.

SAM  
Nobody came down from London.

JOAN  
Nobody?

SAM  
There were no lamenting poems, no  
eulogies, no national tears, there  
was merely silence, and nothing  
more.

JOAN  
Then, we shall have a loud  
audience!

INT. MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM, AUSTRALIA - NIGHT

Mark Twain lectures in a thousand-seat theater palace of red velvet and polished wood.

Sam watches on. He can't hear a word just LAUGHTER.

Sam takes a seat on the aisle.

To his right, an AUSSIE buckles over.

AUSSIE

Oy. If you get any funnier, I'm  
going mess myself.

The face morphs into Joan's.

Sam reels back in his seat.

JOAN

What? Too blue collar for you?

EXT. HOTEL WALDORF-ASTORIA, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

Underneath the gaslights carriages travel up and down the narrow dirt street.

INT. WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

At a Black Tie Affair, elegant men and fashionable women linger about Sam and Joan.

JOAN

You prefer sophistication?

SAM

I remember this?

JOAN

You raised money for the Keats-  
Shelley Memorial in Rome.

SAM

Yes.

Sam masterfully grabs a flute of Champagne from a passing waiter carrying a tray.

SAM (CONT'D)

Near the Piazza di Spagna at the  
base of the Spanish Steps.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)  
Stands a beautiful museum built to  
pay homage to words.

Sam downs glass.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Ahh! I shall miss alcohol.

He looks around, and waves at a pretty woman.

JOAN  
You're too comfortable here.

EXT. RIVERBEND - DAY

Sam and Joan stands at a bend of the Mississippi River.

SAM  
Majestic. Isn't it?

JOAN  
The River?

SAM  
Of, course.

JOAN  
What does it represent?

SAM  
Freedom.

JOAN  
Freedom?

EXT. MIDDLE OF MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

Joan and Sam stand on raft.

Ghostly human faces look up at them from the depths of the  
murky waters. Like Frodo and Sam as they pass through The  
Dead Marshes.

JOAN  
(oar in hand)  
Freedom?

She bends down.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
There's much more blood attached to  
this river.

The images in water appear. The passing faces of Native Indians, Negro Slaves, Spanish Conquistadors, French Traders, and American Settlers.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Than freedom.

SAM  
True. Though Huck wouldn't have had much of an adventure without it.

JOAN  
Why did you put Huck and Jim on a raft to escape?

SAM  
To me, the river always represented freedom.

JOAN  
The freedom of reaching the Free States?

Sam nods.

SAM  
The river carries us away from society. From what is known, to what...

JOAN  
Isn't.

SAM  
Mark Twain become a slave to his own vanity. White cashmere suit. White hair and big bushy mustache. A humorist. That's what the masses want... entertainment.

JOAN  
What do you want?

SAM  
More freedom.

JOAN  
How did you come to think of writing Letters from the Earth?

SAM  
The thought came after I lost Livy.

JOAN  
And what was that?

SAM  
F' god.

JOAN  
F' god. Oh! Feels good doesn't it.  
Though you hope He has a sense of  
humor. Hmm.

Joan stares down at the murky brown waters.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
He doesn't, by the way. Learned  
that one the hard way.

SAM  
I'm sure you did.

JOAN  
Oh, well. Heaven and hell... I have  
friends in both places.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

From a deep sleep Sam awakes in his bed. Still drowsy he slowly gauges where he is. His bedroom night table is crammed with medicine bottles and books.

Nurse Baker rises from a chair beside his bed.

SAM  
F'god.

NURSE BAKER  
Well, look who's awake. How are you  
today, Sam?

SAM  
(wheezes)  
Joe. I need Joe.

NURSE BAKER  
You rest. I'll bring him here.

The nurse leaves.

Sam drifts back off.

INT. STORMFIELD - PARLOR - NIGHT

Clara and Joe sit near the fireplace.

CLARA  
I loved my mother. Everyone did.  
She was perfect. Until she grew  
ill.

JOE  
Her condition was not your fault.

CLARA  
True.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

We traverse the tranquil grounds by air. We pass the lush green lawn, the colorful gardens, then follow a gravel path that leads to two open French doors.

SUPER: "Florence, 1904."

CLARA (V.O.)  
But I aided in her decline.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - PARLOR ROOM - SAME DAY

Clara stares into the mantel's mirror.

CLARA (V.O.)  
I was responsible for her care. But  
one day, I snapped.

Sam enters the room.

SAM  
How's your mother today?

CLARA  
She seems better.

SAM  
Better. Good. I have a mountain of  
pages she can edit.

CLARA  
The pages can wait.

SAM  
What? Nonsense. Mental nourishment,  
is what she needs.

CLARA  
Your words aren't going to fix her  
heart.

SAM  
What!?! Blasphemy.

Livy enters the room, wheeled in by Katy.

LIVY  
What's with all this fuss?

Clara turns.

CLARA  
Mother you need to rest.

Sam turns.

SAM  
Nonsense.

Clara eyes Sam.

CLARA  
She is not your slave!

SAM  
What? Slave?!? How dare you say  
such a thing.

LIVY  
Now. Now. Don't fight.

SAM  
Look what state you placed your  
mother.

CLARA  
Me?!? You! You've used her all up.

Sam rushes at his daughter.

SAM  
You, ungrateful bitch!

LIVY  
Sam, no!

Sam slaps Clara hard against her face.

Clara takes it.



CLARA

Thank you. You finally found the  
courage to do something, yourself.

Clara grabs the end of a table and flips it over.

Sam and Livy react.

CLARA (CONT'D)

It feels good. Doesn't it. Doing  
something all by yourself.

Sam eyes her hard. Then he looks at his wife.

Clara storms out of the room. As she does, she says.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Stop enabling him, Momma! His  
vanity will be YOUR downfall.

LIVY

What just happened?

Livy grabs her chest.

LIVY (CONT'D)

Oooh.

SAM

Livy!?!

CLARA (V.O.)

I gave my mother a heart attack.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DAY

Joe listens to Clara.

JOE

She was already sick, Clara.

CLARA

And I made her worse. She never  
fully recovered after that. I miss  
her so much.

JOE

You father is joining her. Will you  
miss him too? When he's gone?

CLARA

I can't imagine a life without him.

Clara pops up from her chair. She walks toward a framed picture of her family: Sam, Livy, Susy, Jean, Clara with their dog Flash outside the Hartford House.

CLARA (CONT'D)

I've outlived them all.

She stares hard at it. Two in the photo remain, Sam and her.

Enters Nurse Baker.

NURSE BAKER

Reverend Twitchell. He's asking for you again.

Clara looks to Joe.

Joe looks to Clara.

CLARA

You better go.

INT. STORMFIELD - DAY

Sam lies in his death bed and dreams.

SAM

Susy?

Joe walks by his room hears him and goes in.

JOE

Sam... You awake?

SAM

Susy.

JOE

I wish I were.

Joe sits beside the author he adores.

JOE (CONT'D)

I want more time with you, Sam. One more excursion. You can even bad talk the Lord all you want.

Sam stirs in bed.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 I'm reading Letters from Earth now.  
 The story fascinates me. Noble  
 poetry. And a wealth of  
 obscenities.

Sam MUMBLES from his dreams.

SAM  
 Susy. It's okay. You will feel no  
 more pain.

Joe gets up.

JOE  
 Nothing is ever routine with you.  
 Is it, Sam?

Joe stands at the door.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 Even death. Sleep well, my friend.  
 Sleep well.

Joe closes the door.

BEGIN DREAM  
 SEQUENCE:

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

In the Gardens, Livy rests in a wheelchair.

Sam sits in a chair beside her.

In the pink rays of twilight, Livy's face looks white and her  
 lips look blue.

LIVY  
 When I'm gone. I want you to...

SAM  
 Livy... I can't imagine it.

LIVY  
 Even so. That day is coming.  
 (coughs)  
 Soon.

SAM  
 But.

LIVY  
I don't have the energy for this  
Sam.

SAM  
Hmm. I miss our quiet days in  
Hartford.

LIVY  
The big front porch. Watching our  
children grow up.

Sam wheels her through garden. As he does, he cries.

Livy looks up.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Sam, we will be together soon.  
Until then, love our Clara.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY

Clara enters Sam's room.

CLARA  
You need me, Father?

Sam is fast asleep in bed. He mumbles nonsense.

Clara sits near him. She checks his vital signs.

Clara takes his lifeless arm. Then, she rests it on her  
pregnant belly.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Here. Our family grows, Papa.  
Another pretty little girl for you  
to tout on and chase about.

She gently returns Sam's arm to his bed. Then, she rises. She  
leans over the bed.

Sam looks so small, so unalive.

SAM  
Love Clara. I shall.

CLARA  
You have. I know I wasn't your  
favorite, Pa. But you have always  
been good to me.

Clara reaches for the lamp. She switches it off.

Darkness fills the room.

CLARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

Sam and Joan appear in a sitting room with Livy.

Livy sits in a chair reading over some of her husband's words. She stops and laughs.

LIVY  
Oh, Sam. You're too clever for your own good.

SAM  
Ah.

He looks to Joan.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

LIVY  
For what?!?

SAM  
She can hear me?

Joan smiles then she disappears.

LIVY  
Of course, I can hear you. I've not gone deaf yet!

Sam rushes to his wife and covers her with kisses.

SAM  
I miss you so, so much.

LIVY  
Miss me? We had breakfast together you old fool.

Sam pulls back.

SAM  
I am a fool.

LIVY  
You okay?

SAM  
I'm sorry.

LIVY  
For what now?

SAM  
Everything. Anything.

LIVY  
Sam, you up to something?

SAM  
No. No more. I'm sorry about Paige.  
The money. About dragging you on my  
endless lecture tours.

Livy bounces up.

LIVY  
Don't be.

SAM  
But.

LIVY  
When I said for better or worse.

Sam clears throat.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
I was expecting far more... better!  
But...

Livy caresses his chin. With cat-like reflexes, she acts to  
pull his long moustache but doesn't.

Sam reacts.

LIVY (CONT'D)  
Gotcha!

SAM  
You sure did.

LIVY  
We built something together. Didn't  
we?

SAM  
A family.

LIVY

A good one.

She gives him a peck on the cheek.

SAM

I am unworthy of you.

Livy wanders out of the room.

LIVY

Tell me something I don't know.

Joan reappears.

JOAN

She loved you.

SAM

I owe her everything.

JOAN

She knows.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - GARDENS - DAY

Sam and Joan stand in the Gardens.

SAM

Joan.

Joan turns.

JOAN

Yes?

SAM

Why all this?

He waves his arms broad and wide.

SAM (CONT'D)

This ornate journey through my not-so-perfect life.

JOAN

Because. It's almost time to say your goodbyes.

SAM

I don't comprehend.

JOAN  
All will be revealed soon.

SAM  
So, we're getting close to the end?

Joan nods.

JOAN  
Come on, Sam. Let's see some fun.  
Soap bubbles.

SAM  
Soap bubbles?

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DAY

Birds outside the study CHIRP as Joe reads aloud from Sam's leather bound journal.

JOE (V.O.)  
It is a cozy nest, and just room in  
it for a sofa, table, and three or  
four chairs, and when the storm  
sweeps down the remote valley and  
the lightning flashes behind the  
hills beyond, and the rain beats on  
the roof over my head, imagine the  
luxury of it!

Birds CHIRP.

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

EXT. QUARRY FARM - HILLTOP - DAY

Atop a lush wood of green foliage stands Sam Clemens' writing cottage on Quarry Farm, the Clemens' summer residence.

Birds SINGS.

EXT. SAM'S OUTDOOR STUDY - DAY

Clemens' outdoor study built to mimic the pilot house of a riverboat: 12 feet across, with eight sides and a large window in each face.



SUPER: "Quarry Farm. 1885."

Joan and Sam stand within the hilltop writing cottage.

JOAN

Since we have perched away up here  
on top of the hill near heaven I  
have the feeling of being a sort of  
scrub angel and am more moved to  
help shove the clouds around, and  
get the stars on deck promptly, and  
keep all things trim and ship-shape  
in the firmament than to bother  
myself with the humble insect-  
interests and occupations of the  
distant earth.

SAM

My words.

JOAN

Your words.

SAM

Hmm. Fine view.

JOAN

There's more of your words.

SAM

It's as if I just left it.

Sam sees his handwriting on the table. Then he looks down the hill. Where children are playing near the house.

SAM (CON'T) (CONT'D)

Susy!

Sam hurries out the down the hill.

Joan reads from the paper on Sam's desk. It is held down but an ashtray paperweight.

JOAN (V.O.)

Jim and me, we found an empty  
section of log raft. And we went  
off down that river together. We'd  
run nights, and laid up and hid  
daytimes. We just let that raft  
float wherever the current wanted  
it to.

Sam runs down the hill. He sees children and a younger version of himself playing with his pipe. He blows soap bubbles out of it.

The small children, Susy, Clara, and Jean, GIGGLE as they run here to there to pop them.

The scene warms Sam's heart.

SAM

Thank you Lord!!! Thank you. I  
remember this. I remember this.

Sam looks up the heavens.

SAM (CONT'D)

You see here? I did not fail at all  
things.

Sam runs faster.

SAM (CONT'D)

There were times when I was an  
endearing father.

Joan appears.

JOAN

There's a certain pathos clings  
about these blowing of soap  
bubbles.

Joan uses her forefinger to pop a few of these smoke-charged soap-bubbles that escape the children's wrath.

Sam sees Susy.

Susy laughs as she uses her arm to karate chop some bubbles.

SAM

Susy, with her manifold young  
charms and her iridescent mind, is  
as lovely a bubble as any we made  
that day, and as transitory.

JOAN

She passed, as they passed, in her  
youth and beauty, and nothing of  
her is left.

SAM

But a heartbreak and a memory of  
that long-vanished day.

JOAN  
It is human life.

SAM  
We're blown upon the world. We  
float buoyantly upon the summer air  
a little while, complacently  
showing off our grace of form and  
our dainty iridescent colors. Then  
we vanish with a little puff.

SOUND: PUFF!

JOAN  
Leaving nothing behind but a  
memory.

SAM  
And sometimes not even that.

JOAN  
A soap bubble is the most  
beautiful, most exquisite thing in  
nature.

SAM  
I wonder how much it would cost to  
buy a soap bubble, if there was  
only one in the world.

Joan pauses as she sees a circling bubble.

Sam watches his girls play.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Beautiful. They were so beautiful.  
Hmm... I can go now, Joan. Take me  
where you may.

JOAN  
Sam. I am a soap bubble too. See.  
As a proof of it I will show you  
something fine to see. Usually when  
I go I merely vanish. But now I  
will dissolve myself and let you  
see me do it.

Joan stands straight up, and thins away and thins away.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Good-Bye.

Joan thins more until she is a soap-bubble, except that she  
keeps her shape.

We can see through her as clearly as through a soap-bubble, and all over her plays and flashes the delicate iridescent colors of the bubble.

The bubble floats up. Then it slowly lingers down, strikes the green grass two or three times before it bursts.

Puff! In her place is vacancy.

JOAN (V.O.)  
We're running out of time Sam.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S BED - DAY

Blackness. Birds CHIRP back and forth.

Sam's eyelids open. As he hears the birds he sees familiar faces hovers over him. He looks at them one by one and smiles.

The last one is Clara's.

Clara is on the edge of his bed.

CLARA  
Father?

SAM  
I tried.

He takes her hand. Weakly adds.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Honest, I...

He sinks back into a deep sleep.

CLARA  
Papa!?!

She draws closer to him.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
Papa!!!

BEGIN DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

EXT. RIVERBED - TWILIGHT

Sam and Joan stand side by side, holding hands.

SAM  
What is next Joan?

JOAN  
The truth.

SAM  
I thought we were beyond that.

JOAN  
Oh, Sam. I wish I held such powers  
to stay with you. But I don't.

SAM  
You're leaving me again?

JOAN  
I must.

SAM  
Don't go.

JOAN  
I must. And we shall not see each  
other again.

SAM  
In this life, right Joan? We shall  
meet in another, surely?

JOAN  
There's no other, Sam.

Joan drops hand and turns.

SAM  
What?

JOAN  
Life itself is only a vision, a  
dream.

Sam looks dumbfounded.

JOAN (CONT'D)  
Sam, you know in your heart I speak  
the truth.

SAM  
But, but, the paper I chased as a  
boy?

JOAN  
Blank.

SAM  
Blank? Impossible...

He ponders it.

SAM (CONT'D)  
We have seen the past. Seen it in  
its actuality. It's realness.

JOAN  
It was a vision, it had no  
existence.

SAM  
A vision? A vi...

Joan repeats herself.

JOAN  
Life itself is only a vision, a  
dream.

Sam awakens with electric energy.

SAM  
By God! I had had that very thought  
a thousand times in my musings!

JOAN  
Nothing exists. All is a dream.  
God, man, the world, the sun, the  
moon, the wilderness of stars, a  
dream, all a dream. They have no  
existence.

SAM  
A dream?

JOAN  
Nothing exists save empty space,  
and you!

SAM  
Me?

JOAN

And you're not you, you have no body, no blood, no bones, you're but a thought. I, myself have no existence. I am but a dream, your dream, creature of your imagination. In a moment you will have realized this, then you will banish me from your visions and I shall dissolve into the nothingness out of which you made me....

Sam ponders all this more.

JOAN (CONT'D)

As you ponder this, I am perishing already, I am failing, I am passing away. In a little while you will be alone in shoreless space, to wander its limitless solitudes without friend or comrade forever.

SAM

Forever.

JOAN

For you will remain a thought, the only existent thought.

Sam's reaction.

JOAN (CONT'D)

And by your nature  
inextinguishable, indestructible.

Joan's voice begins to fade as she slowly becomes thin and transparent.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Strange, that you should not have suspected that your universe and its contents were only dreams, visions, fiction!

SAM

Strange, indeed, because they're so frankly and hysterically insane, like all dreams.

A nearly transparent Joan smiles at us one last time.

JOAN

Sanity and happiness are an impossible combination.

Joan is now gone.

SAM  
My words. Funny.

JOAN (V.O.)  
Thank you for making me, Sam.

SAM  
How can this be?

Sam looks as his hand as it slowly becomes transparent.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Nothing exists but thought,  
vagrant, useless thought.

Sam disappears near the river's moving, rippling waters.

JOAN (V.O.)  
Dream well, Sam.

SAM (V.O.)  
I shall miss you.

JOAN (V.O.)  
Hmm. I shall miss you too, Sam.

SAM (V.O.)  
Fame is a vapor, popularity an  
accident, the only earthly  
certainty is oblivion.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. STORMFIELD STAIRWELL - NEXT DAY

The House is in mourning. All wear black.

SERIES OF CUTS: MOURNING

- A. A black veil Clara mourns.
- B. As the household staff withdraw, she walks to Sam.
- C. In the background Sam rests comfortably within a coffin.
- D. Clara enters the room.
- E. Sam's open coffin.



INT. STORMFIELD LIVING ROOM - DAY

SERIES OF CUTS: GOOD-BYES

A. Clara sits in a chair beside Sam's open coffin.

B. Sam wears his customary white cashmere suit..

C. Morning sun pours in and lands on the dead authors face.

Clara bends down and kisses her dead father's cheek. Each time, she says a name.

CLARA

I love you, Papa. I love you,  
Mamma. I love you, Susy. I love  
you, Jean. Good-bye. For now.

She closes the casket's lid.

INT. WHITE BLANK SPACE - DAY

Bright light surrounds Joan and Sam. Silently, they stand in a white space. Each turns and embraces one another.

JOAN

I must go.

SAM

I shall dream better dreams. Ones  
with you still in them dear.

JOAN

It doesn't work that way, Sam. I  
wished it did.

She embraces him.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Good-bye. It was a unique journey.

SAM

Yes, it was. For Life is short.

JOAN

So, break the rules.

END DREAM  
SEQUENCE:

INT. STORMFIELD - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The door opens.

Clara comes out. She adjusts her veil as she nods to the awaiting men to prepare her father's coffin.

Joe is in the background.

INT./EXT. STORMFIELD - THE PROCESSION - DAY

A song plays like, Pearl Jam's, Just Breathe as the door opens, PALLBEARERS appear.

EXT. STORMFIELD - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Makeshift pallbearers carry Sam's coffin out of his home in silence. House staff stands in the background with fresh tears in their eyes.

Joe wanders out.

Slowly, the coffin is placed in the back of village's hearse. Drawn by white horses. Halo effect on hearse pings. Bright beams of sunshine bounce off its shiny black polished exterior. A horse NEIGHS. We see the snouts of the team of white horses.

EXT. STORMFIELD - FRONT GROUNDS - SAME

Starts the little procession of three carriages.

We see them pass us. One by one, down the long driveway. They're leaving us. The horse drawn carriages move further and further away. As if, the story is over.

The closing song continues to play as Eddie-like lyrics sing the line, I'm a Fool you see.

EXT. STORMFIELD - FRONT YARD - SAME

From the far right corner, a lively Sam Clemens re-appears in shot and waves at the departing hearse.

We see the back of his white unruly hair and matching white suit. He looks magnificent almost angelic in white again. Full of life. Reborn!

Sam turns and smiles at the CAMERA. He walks closer and closer, until he brushes by it. As he passes it, he raises his long forefinger to his lips.

SAM

Shh!

EXT. FRONT YARD - SAME

Departs the carriages in a straight single line.

Sam smiles and gives the CAMERA a wink as he passes by. He goes to reenter his home.

The CAMERA faces the departing carriages as Stormfield's big black door closes and BANGS! behind us. The CAMERA turns and frames the door.

EXT. STORMFIELD - SAME

Hold on big black door that centers the front porch. Then sheepishly it reopens. Sam's big head sticks slowly out. The rest of him soon follows. He walks onto...

THE FRONT PORCH

Sam's eyes shift from his feet to the CAMERA. A sly, little smile crawls across his hairy lips. His hands rest on his lapels. He examines us, hard.

SAM

What? Oh, I forgot. Tada!

He gives us a deep low theatrical bow, then bounces up.

SAM (CONT'D)

I pray you enjoyed yourselves.

Sam smiles and removes a long, brown cigar from inside his suit pocket. He plops it in his big mouth. Then, he gives the CAMERA a quick wink.

In the shadow of the doorway is his entire family.

SAM (CONT'D)

Now get!

Sam nods a good-bye. This time, he closes the door for good.

A long bout of silence follows, no less than twenty seconds. Hold on the door until it becomes awkward for the audience.

Then we hear a CREAK, CREAK, CREAK of one of the patio's rocking chair. Pan slow right.

Here sits Joe. He smiles at the CAMERA as he HUMS, Battle Hymn Of The Republic.

JOE

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of  
the coming of the Lord.*

Then, he looks around the palatial grounds of Twain's Stormfield estate. SNAP! The scenery transforms instantly to Sam's Hartford Home.

JOE (CONT'D)

Heaven is what you make of it.

Joe's face morphs into Joan's.

JOAN

Sam's mind chose... Home. Hartford.

Joan smiles at us one last time. Then, she disappears.

The abandoned rocking chair on the Hartford porch slows.

SOUND: CREAK. CREAK. CREAK.

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**