

"SAM I AM"

by

David Shone
and Samuel Clemens

3234 Sunny Crest Lane Kettering, OH 45419
(937)-776-6729 David.Shone@cmg.com

FADE IN:

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Rests a thinking man's three-story, eleven thousand-five-hundred square feet 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, a self-made man and a scribbler.

SUPER: "Hartford House. 1885."

At his feet sits his family, the Clemens: 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 with a white bow on top, age 5.

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

Sam starts to pace.

LIVY
Tsk. Tsk. Tsk.

Livy pencils out a line.

SUSY
Whoops!

SAM
What?

LIVY
Sam, how many times must I remind
you of the importance of structure?
Girls, what does Momma always say?
When in doubt...

GIRLS
Strike it out!

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

SAM
Dear woman, I bring no ill will.
Yet, each stroke of that pencil is
like a heavy whip cross my bare
back.

Livy grins and next Xes out an entire paragraph.

LIVY
Smack! How does that feel?

CLARA
Yikes.

Jean looks up at Sam all sad.

JEAN
Uh-oh.

SAM
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.

LIVY
I thought you knew that about me?

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

SUSY
America's foremost author!

CLARA
A celebrity.

JEAN
My Papa!

Sam scoops up Jean.

SAM
True, I am all of the above.

Sam tickles her.

JEAN
Stop that Papa.

Sam does.

SAM
If I must...

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

Jean melts into her Daddy and whispers into his ear.

JEAN
I think Mama likes it.

Sam whispers back.

SAM
Let's hope.

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

LIVY
(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.

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. 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, and I cannot
endure that.

LIVY
You can't?

Sam nods no.

SAM
I've been there before. 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.
(waves his hand as if
swatting down a fly)
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.

Sam gazes down at the woman he loves.

SAM

Some more than others.

The front door opens as KATY their loyal servant appears.

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.

SUSY
Why Momma?

LIVY
Their vanity shall be their
downfall.

Sam tugs up his wife.

SAM
True, impertinence. He hugs Livy
hard.
(as whispers in her ear)
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.

LIVY
I'm going to get you.

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 disturb me.

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
fast schemes.
(motions with her hands)
Come here.

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

SAM
Remember, my huckleberry. The house
if 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 use 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 and startles her father.

SAM

Great Jupiter's ghost!

CLARA

Hi, Papa.

SAM

Oh, hi dear.

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. 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.

CLARA
I can do that.

SAM
Of course you can.

Clara bursts up.

CLARA
No better time to start.

SAM
Okay then, get writing. Good talk.

Clara hurries down the stairs.

SAM (CONT'D)
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 hide.

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 pole 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
Papa.

SAM
You been snooping around girl?
Checking out my papers?

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 have trouble writing
women.

Sam chuckles.

SAM
Well, I based her traits on 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 an old
friend REV. JOSEPH H. TWICHELL as he travels down his 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
Where do you think you're going?

Sam flies straight by her.

SAM
He's trampling out the vintage
where...
(turns back to Livy)
The grapes of wrath are stored.

LIVY
Sam. You're impossible.

SAM
I need to see the man who wed us!

LIVY
Poor Joe.

Sam heads out as George approaches him.

SAM
No, no, no, George. Bah! Mrs.
Clemens, knows the answer to your
question. She's hiding somewhere in
there.

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - PORCH - SAME TIME

Sam emerges from his home.

Rev. Joseph H. Twichell is across the street.

SAM
Joe!

Joe keeps walking.

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

SAM (CONT'D)
Joe! Joe!

Joe keeps walking.

Sam cuts him off.

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

Joe stops and looks up at Sam.

JOE
Ahh, yes. Sam Clemens, a cherished
member of my flock.

SAM
You deaf?

JOE
Just selected at hearing is all.

SAM
Joe, sometimes I think you're worse
than me.

JOE
I highly doubt that. So, what's the
fuss?

SAM
Susy's play is today.

JOE
Is it?

Joe pulls out his pocket watch.

JOE (CONT'D)
What time?

SAM
Seven bells.

JOE
I will be there.

SAM
I'll save you and Harmony 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
Twitchell.

Joe turns.

SAM (CONT'D)
There's more than a wee bit 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. 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!

Sam heads to his home when he sees Jean, now 9, through The
Conservatory's glass. She's dressed as Cupid.

SAM
Jean, the play isn't for hours yet.

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - CONSERVATORY - SAME TIME

Sam enters a room of framed Glass, lush ferns and a small
running fountain.

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

SAM
Jean, what you doing in the Jungle?
Tiger hunt?

JEAN
Practicing Cupid's 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.

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, love you. Even Susy.

JEAN

Really?

SAM

Really.

JEAN

Papa?

SAM

Yes, girl.

JEAN

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

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

Now, what about that Tiger Hunt?

Sam gets on all fours.

Jean hops on his back.

JEAN

Ride!

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

SAM

Shh, there's man-eating tigers all
around us, dear.

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 curtains are
drawn and are the background.

Sam sits next to Livy. He holds her hand.

At the end of the play, the room of friends and family reacts
with thunderous APPLAUSE.

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

Sam nods back.

SAM

That was rather good.

LIVY

They're growing up way too fast.

Livy leans into Sam.

Sam leans into Livy.

Then, Livy starts a coughing fit.

Sam offers her a drink.

SAM

You alright?

LIVY

Yeah, just a tickle in the throat
is all.

Nearby, the igniting powder from a tri-pod camera goes off.

SOUND: POOF!

The camera captures the cast members of A Love Chase. Their
black and white image frames the screen.

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.

SAM

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

Sam replaced the wooden angel back to the post.

SAM (CONT'D)

On the verge.

Livy enters in her night wear.

LIVY

Well, it's all gone.

SAM

I know.

Livy stands at a distance to her husband.

LIVY

Sam, you promised.

SAM

I did. I never thought...

LIVY

We are ruined. We must sell the
house.

SAM

No, Pond has offered a solution.

LIVY

What?

SAM

A world tour.

LIVY

A world tour?

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?

SAM

Traveling the world is a much better education and financially prudent.

She coughs hard. She starts to wheeze.

SAM (CONT'D)

You alright?

LIVY

Yeah. Just worn down by the bankruptcy. Imagine.

SAM

I have wasted so much.

LIVY

We both have.

SAM

Pond thinks this tour with spark book sales.

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

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

You're right.

Livy points at Sam.

LIVY

And you deserve to feel awful about
your 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 a fallen angel in her eyes now.
Why am I so stupid? So stubborn.

INT. HARFTFORM HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - LATER DAY

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

Joe wanders in.

JOE

We're going to miss you, Sam.

SAM

Ahh.. Joe. My I partake in a small
cash loan from 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 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 right with Livy.

SAM

Thanks for coming over, Joe.

JOE

Have a good trip.

SAM

I will send you some post cards.

JOE

You do that.

Joe goes to leave. Then, he stops and adds.

JOE (CONT'D)

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 will be
back!

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 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...

Livy cuts him off.

LIVY
Enough.

Livy moves to the train.

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.

SUSY
I don't.

SAM
Why? You would get to see the
world.

SUSY
Yes... from a train, steamer or
trolley car.

SAM
It's still the world.

Susy reads from 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. No, thank you.

SAM
I have substantial debts I must pay
off.

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

SUSY
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 Mama.

SAM
Watch over Jean.

SUSY
I will. She's turned into the most
interesting of people.

SAM
She's 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.

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

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

Tears form down Sam's cheeks.

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

SUSY
I told her this was your penitence
not hers. So, I asked her to stay.

SAM
You did?

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

SAM (CONT'D)
She's quite a woman.

SUSY
Win her back.

SAM
I shall try.

Sam 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 (CONT'D)
I love you, girl!

Susy smiles.

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.

Steam pours out of the train engine's chimney.

MATCH CUT: CIGAR
SMOKE

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. 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.

SUPER: "August. 1896."

Livy looks exhausted.

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

LIVY
Good.
(coughs)

LIVY (CONT'D)
I'm ready for home.

SAM
What did the doctor say about that
cough?

LIVY
I just need some rest.

SAM
Me too, luv.

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.

SAM (CONT'D)
She's not well.

LIVY
Not well!?!
Livy coughs some more.

EXT. STEAMER SHIP - DAYS LATER NIGHT

Livy and Clara look out to sea as the ship travels America.

SAM (V.O.)
Livy and Clara sailed the very next day.

EXT. STEAMER SHIP - GANGPLANK - LATER DAY

Livy and Clara walk down the gangplank. At its bottom waits Joe in a dark suit with his hat in hands.

Livy's knees buckle.

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.

LIVY

Susy's dead.

SAM (V.O.)

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 old friends, family, Reverend Joe, who had known her from her cradle and who had come a long journey to be with her. But not me. I was elsewhere.

EXT. FLORENCE, ITALY - FUTURE DAY

Italian theme music plays over opening credit sequence consisting of a series of images from Florence. Each shot covers the 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.

TOUR GUIDE

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

TWO WHITE-HAIRED MEN in fashionable suits slice through the long 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.

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.
 (MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

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.

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.

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.

JOE

What should we do with you?

SAM

Stone me.

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
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 grant 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.

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

JOE
Heaven is what we make of it.

SAM
My heaven...

Sam lights his stogie.

SAM (CONT'D)
(exhales a cloud of blue
smoke)
Is home, like Hartford.

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
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
Perhaps 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.

SAM
What man touches...

JOE
So does sin.

They move into Florence's...

ARTIST DISTRICT

SAM
Joe, is that the best you can
offer?

JOE
Mr. Twain, 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 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.

EXT. BOBOLI GARDENS - SAME

Sam and Joe enters the gardens full of blooming flowers.

SAM
 Look there.
 (points to the boldest)
 In my nostrils still lives the
 breath of flowers that perished
 twenty years ago.

JOE
 They're beautiful.

SAM
 Your Maker has no part in this
 spectacle. The Lord does not
 intervene.

JOE
 The Lord is the Maker of Heaven and
 Earth.

SAM
 Say... Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!

Sam rushes ahead and sings.

SAM (CONT'D)
 Evolution! And Nature's
 regeneration!

Joe hurries after him.

JOE
Nature's?

SAM
Darwin said it, Socrates endorsed
it, Cuvier proved it in his paper
on The Survival of the Fittest.

JOE
These are illustrious names, but
mere men. The Lord is the beginning
of wisdom.

SAM
Joe, your argument is weak.

JOE
Weak?!?

Joe shakes his fist at Sam.

Sam nods as he enjoys his stogie.

SAM
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.

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 calls 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 chair beside his wife's bed.

Sam looks at his children disapprovingly. Then he notices ISABEL LYONS, 41, his secretary, standing in the doorway.

SAM
Good evening, Ms. Lyons.

Isabel nods and smiles. She looks tan and pretty in her white summer dress and her dark hair rolled up in a bun.

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...

With flair, Clara 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.

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. He 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
Livvy, what are you clinging to?

LIVY
(coughs)
Family.

JOE
Yes. Lay down your burdens.

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

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

LIVY
He promises eternal life?

JOE
True.

LIVY
Hmm.

JOE
Lord, be with my friend. Calm her
in her time of need.

Joe opens eyes and kisses her hand.

LIVY
Do you feel better?

JOE
I shall miss you.

LIVY
My worries are 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)
This burden will 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.

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.

ECU: Sam's face and bushy hair.

MATCH CUT:
APENNINE
COLOSSUS' OLD MAN
STATUE'S FACE

EXT. WOODS - APENNINE COLOSSUS' OLD MAN - DAY

Joe and Sam gaze upon 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 in the middle of these woods.

JOE
It's one with nature.

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

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

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
Joe, I think my next book will be darker.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joe and Sam walk side by side through the woods 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.

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 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 structure, Sam?

SAM
Details.

LIVY
Sam?

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

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.

SAM
Okay. I will be back by dinner.

Livy closes her eyes.

LIVY
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.

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 white horses a CRACK from his whip.

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.

Everyone jumps up a bit.

SAM (CONT'D)
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. Hmm.

JEAN

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

SAM

That would've been two months ago dear.

CLARA

Three. But we mustn't speak of such things. Susy is gone.

JEAN

Where?

SAM

She's with Henry and Grandpa 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.

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.

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

SAM

Yes, Jean. I see her now. Look!

JEAN

I see her too, Papa. Running.
Catching fireflies! In a new
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.

Clara looks out and smiles.

SAM (CONT'D)

What is it? You must tell us.

CLARA

We are all young again. Chasing
soap bubbles.

JEAN

No doubt produced from your old
pipe, Papa.

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.

JEAN

Is Susy there?

Clara looks to her Sister.

CLARA

Yes. She is. So pretty. So perfect.

JEAN

She was.

Clara starts to tear up.

CLARA

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

Clara leans back.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Hmm, she's gone now.

SAM

Yes. But the memory of her will
remain.

Sam points to daughters' heads.

SAM (CONT'D)

As long we live, dear ones, Susy
shall be with us.

JEAN

Sure. But it's not the same.

SAM

No. I would much rather have her
here, in the flesh. Sandwiched
between the two of you.

The carriage hits another big bump.

SAM (CONT'D)

Susy missed out on getting her
innings jostled about on this god
awful road.

Sam looks to the driver.

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

AGENT
We're almost there, Mister Twain.
See. Villa de No Ombra.

The agent points up to the hill's crest.

AGENT (CONT'D)
Holds a breathtaking view of
Florence.

Sam looks back to Florence.

SAM
Ah. Breathtaking indeed.

EXT. ITALIAN VILLA - DAY

Sam, Clara, and Jean walk the 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 private chapel.

SAM
Funny.

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

Clara nods her approval for the property.

INT. VILLA DI QUARTO - FOYER - NIGHT

SAM
Livvy, I think we found it!

Sam crosses floor and pokes about.

Jean and Clara follow him. There's no one 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

ISABEL
It's not working!

Katy holds an oxygen mask against Livy's face. The two have her propped up though she appears lifeless and paler than ever.

KATY
Mrs. Clemens, breathe! Please.

Sam rushes to her.

SAM
No!

Katy and Isabel step back.

Sam reaches his dead wife and holds her dearly. He caresses her hair and stares into lifeless eyes. This is when he weeps.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry. I ruined everything.

From behind, Jean pulls out her camera and snaps off a picture.

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, Father.

SAM
I know. But must you 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 hair.

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

JEAN
You mean, epileptic.

SAM
Hush, now.

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

JEAN
Why does God take those we love the
most?

Sam's eyes shift from Jean to the CAMERA.

SAM
Because he's cruel.

BEGIN DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. ALDINE CLUB - FOYER - NIGHT

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.

SUPER: "December 21, 1905."

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 and introduces Mark Twain.

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.

A small boy follows her. A banner bellows over her head.

Joan's eyes are fixed on the author, as she glides up the aisle between the tables. She carries a laurel wreath atop a satin pillow. As she passes, the stunned on-lookers watch.

Sam's smile fades. He is startled. He accepts the wreath of bay quietly, awkwardly. He has every appearance of a man who had seen a ghost.

SAM (CONT'D)

Susy?

Joan nods no.

JOAN

Guess again.

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

SAM

Who are you?

JOAN

You know who I am?

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. He opens his mouth to let them off the hook as he studies Joan's attire.

SAM

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. One of
which I lack.

JOAN
Then come. Be done with them.
They're so self-absorbed.

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.

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.

EXT. HANNIBAL, MISSOURI - MAIN STREET - DAY

The small village of Sam's youth nestled along the west bank
of the Mississippi River.

Sam stands by Joan.

SAM

This is my home.

JOAN

Why, yes it is. Miss it?

SAM

More than I like to share.

JOAN

I know. So look around.

From a storefront on Main Street...

PRINT SHOP

EMERGES a small boy. It is YOUNG SAM. A Tom Sawyer-look alike
makes his way home.

JOAN
Ah. There you are.

SAM
That's me?

JOAN
Of course it is. Minus a life's
worth of grief. So young. So full
of hope.

A piece of paper rises from the dirt. As it does, the wind captures it. Gives the page. It twists and turns in the air.

This spectacle earns young Sam's attention.

The wayward page blows across his path. Sam studies it. Then he feels compelled to snatch the loose paper from the air. He chases after it. Though the wind prevails and travels over a high, white-washed fence.

Sam nods. Unwilling to continue the chase, he turns and heads towards home.

JOAN (CONT'D)
Why did you stop?

SAM
I lost interest.

JOAN
Ever wonder what was on it?

SAM
No. Yes.

JOAN
Perhaps one day I shall tell you.

She snaps her fingers.

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

Misery enjoys company. Come. Let's see Paris again. One last time.

EXT. FRENCH PALACE - DAY

Heavy sheets of rain. Beyond the imposing yet ornate closed wrought iron gate stands a pastel palace.

SUPER: "Paris, 1867."

INT. FRENCH PALACE - DAY

A younger Sam stands at a window as beads of water hit and stream down the pane.

A FRENCH WOMAN, one of Joan of Arc's inspirations, elegant and stylish approaches Sam.

FRENCH WOMAN

You picked the wrong time to see Paris, Monsieur Clem'ONS.

She pauses, then she stares out at the rainy day.

FRENCH WOMAN (CONT'D)

Last year was so much better.

YOUNG SAM

Why is that?

Sam laughs.

YOUNG SAM (CONT'D)

The last sighting of the sun?

FRENCH WOMAN

No, Exposition Universelle. The fair was so magnificent.

YOUNG SAM

Was it?

FRENCH WOMAN

It was.

YOUNG SAM

Well events drew me here now.

FRENCH WOMAN

Like what?

YOUNG SAM

Poor-dom.

FRENCH WOMAN

You Americans think too much of money. And not enough of travel.

YOUNG SAM

The lack of money is the root of all evil.

FRENCH WOMAN

Oui.

She looks hard at her much older husband in mid-conservation across the room.

YOUNG SAM

Your husband?

FRENCH WOMAN

Oui.

YOUNG SAM

He's high up?

FRENCH WOMAN

Oui. In the foreign ministry. He's always traveling here or there, without me.

YOUNG SAM

I see. Hmm. Old Travelers. How we love to hear them prate and drivel and lie.

FRENCH WOMAN

You do know him.

YOUNG SAM

Yes. I imagine I do. Throwing out feelers. Never casting themselves adrift till they're certain.

FRENCH WOMAN

Then they open their throttle valves and brag.

YOUNG SAM

And blaspheme the sacred name of Truth!

FRENCH WOMAN

Their aim is to subjugate you, keep
you down, and make you feel
insignificant.

YOUNG SAM

They laugh. Unfeelingly at your
treasured dreams. They deride and
demolish.

She leans against Sam and cries.

FRENCH WOMAN

I hate him.

Sam uses his forefinger to lift-up her chiseled chin.

YOUNG SAM

No you don't.

FRENCH WOMAN

Why?

YOUNG SAM

We love the Old Travelers. Their
witless platitudes, their
supernatural ability to bore.

FRENCH WOMAN

Their sheer vanity.

YOUNG SAM

And for their luxuriant fertility
of imagination.

She draws closer to Sam.

FRENCH WOMAN

You in Paris long?

YOUNG SAM

At least until I see the Sun.

FRENCH WOMAN

You're witty, Monsieur. Thank you.

YOUNG SAM

For what?

FRENCH WOMAN

I needed a laugh.

She wipes away her tears.

YOUNG SAM

Hmm. Humor and wit can cloak much.

The diplomat's wife gives Sam a peck on cheek.

FRENCH WOMAN

Merci, beaucoup.

She leaves.

Young Sam morphs into old Sam.

Joan appears.

SAM

She opened my heart to the French.
Without her, there would have been
no book on Joan of Arc.

Joan's appearance is older now. Her hair is pure white.

OLD JOAN

I know. Her vulnerability changed
you.

SAM

You've aged.

OLD JOAN

I thought you might like a change.
Joan never had a chance to age.

SAM

Neither did my Susy.

OLD JOAN

Come. Paris awaits.

SERIES OF CUTS: PARIS AT NIGHT

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

On this site once stood the grim
Bastille.

OLD JOAN

That grave of human hopes and
happiness.

SAM

That dismal prison house within
whose dungeons so many young faces
put on the wrinkles of age.

OLD JOAN

So many proud spirits grew humble.

SAM

So many brave hearts broke. Hmm.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN

Paris is more than a destination.

SAM

It's a state of mind.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

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

SAM
 Who died?

Joan looks up at Sam.

OLD 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:

EXT. STORMFIELD - DAY

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

SUPER: "April, 1910. Mark Twain's last residence."

SERIES OF CUTS: HOME TOUR

- A. Stormfield Mansion.
- B. The interior ground floor.
- C. French doors open to garden terraces and fountain.
- D. Drawing room opens to an outdoor seating area.
- E. Billiards room decorated with caricatures of Sam.

F. End with Sam's study.

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DESK - SAME

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

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.

A woman HUMS a melody from the hallway.

We watch her pass by the door's opening.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

We see Clara, now 35. She is Sam's only surviving daughter. She walks down the corridor. She turns into...

THE 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.

Clara's belly shows that she is with child. She stares down at her father.

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.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Nurse Baker. 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.

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.

PAINE
I see.

EXT. STORMFIELD - ENTRANCE - DAY

Joe arrives. As he hums a 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
This is going to be 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
Nothing.

JOE
Nothing?

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

JOE
Like what?

SAM
Weak. Near death.

JOE
I understand.

SAM
Go.

JOE
You rest. I will be back.

Joe heads to the door.

SAM
Joe?

Joe turns.

JOE
Yes.

SAM
You're a good man.

JOE
So are you, Sam.

Sam falls back asleep.

Joe head 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 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.

FLASHBACK: LAST
CHRISTMAS

EXT. STORMFIELD - CHRISTMAS TIME - DAY

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

It is two days before Christmas.

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, then. Let's discuss
the future. When, I am 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.

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, Papa.

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.

SAM

Dear god, no.

He yanks her out of the water.

SAM (CONT'D)

Jean. Dear Jean. Breathe.

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 has joined the others.

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. Rubs his fingertips through her wet hair. His face moves closer to her face.

SAM (CONT'D)
Fear. Regret.

He clears throat.

SAM (CONT'D)
Loss.

Sam runs fingers through hair.

SAM (CONT'D)
Good-bye, sweet child.

END OF
FLASHBACK:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - 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.

Katy approaches.

KATY
That bathroom scares me too.

JOE
Scares you?

KATY
Jean.

JOE
She finally found peace.

KATY
How much pain and suffering can
this family take?

JOE
Job suffered. But his faith was
strong.

KATY
I can't imagine a modern world
without him in it.

JOE
Me either.

Joe continues down the hall.

Katy nods her agreement and then she walks in the opposite direction. A few strides down she begins to hum on his way to Sam's study.

INT. SAM'S STUDY - SAME

Joe wanders in. He sees Paine and Clara.

Clara looks up from the manuscript.

CLARA

Hi, Joe. I heard you were here.

She rises from the desk to greet him.

Joe 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.

INT. SAM'S STUDY - NIGHT

Clara and Joe enjoy some tea.

Joe eyes the manuscript Clara was reading.

JOE
His latest work?

Clara nods yes.

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

JOE
Well, it was completed 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.

OLD JOAN

Sam! Sam! Sam!

SAM

What?

OLD JOAN

Let's travel some more?

SAM

Where?

OLD 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?

OLD JOAN

You showed them a world bigger than
themselves.

SAM

This is incomparable. All a praise-
hungry author could desire.

OLD JOAN

This is just the past, Sam.

SAM

My past.

OLD JOAN

True. So, take your time.

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

SAM

What happened?

OLD JOAN

Fickle lot. They grew bored and
moved on.

SAM

Oh.

OLD JOAN

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

She climbs up the stairs and moves across the stage.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

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

More spheres appear. Traps more alarmed faces.

OLD 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, Spirit, how can you do these
 things?

OLD 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?

OLD JOAN
 My mind creates! Do you get the
 force of that? Creates anything it
 desires, and in a moment. Creates
 without material. Creates fluids,
 solids, colors.

SAM
What can you create?

OLD 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! Henry! Livy!! Jean!!!

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

OLD JOAN
But wait. There's more.

SAM
Clara!

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

SAM
She blamed herself.

OLD JOAN
We both know who's the true culprit.

The sphere slips out of her hands.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Oops.

Clara's sphere falls to the ground, CRASH!

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Gravity.

SAM
You bitch!

Joan walks ahead.

OLD JOAN
They returned from where is that
they came.

SAM
Why?

OLD JOAN
Out of necessity, of course. 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.

OLD JOAN
Forgotten.

SAM
Nobody came down from London.

OLD JOAN
Nobody?

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

OLD JOAN
Then, we shall have an audience!

INT. MELBOURNE ATHENAEUM, AUSTRALIA - NIGHT

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

Sam watches on. He can't hear a word the younger version of
himself is saying. He just hears LAUGHTER.

Sam takes a seat on the aisle. To his right, an AUSSIE MAN
buckles over in laughter.

The Aussie turns towards Sam.

ECU: Aussie's sweaty face.

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

The face morphs into Joan's.

Sam reels back in his seat.

OLD 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

Black Tie Affair: elegant men and women linger about.

OLD JOAN
You prefer sophistication?

SAM
I remember this?

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

SAM
Yes.

He 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. Stands a
beautiful museum built to pay
homage to words.
(downs glass)
Ahh! I shall miss alcohol.

He looks around, and waves at a pretty woman.

OLD 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?

OLD JOAN
The River?

SAM
Of, course.

OLD JOAN
What does it mean?

SAM
Freedom.

OLD JOAN
Freedom?

EXT. MIDDLE OF MISSISSIPPI RIVER - NIGHT

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.

OLD JOAN
(oar in hand)
Freedom?

She bends down.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Than freedom.

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

OLD JOAN
When you decided to put Huck and
Jim in a raft to escape?

SAM

To me, the river represents freedom.

OLD JOAN

Jim aims at reaching the Free States.

SAM

The river carries us away, from society. And their restrictive ways. From what is known, to what isn't.

OLD JOAN

Escapism.

SAM

I prefer. Intellectual freedom. I became a slave to my reputation. White cashmere suit. White hair and mustache. A humorist. That's what the masses want.

OLD JOAN

What do you want?

SAM

More freedom.

OLD JOAN

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

SAM

The thought came after I lost Livy.

OLD JOAN

And what was that?

SAM

F' god.

OLD JOAN

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

She picks up a rock at her feet and pauses for effect.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)

He doesn't, by the way. Learned that one the hard way.

She skips rock across the muddy waters.

SAM
I'm sure you did.

Joan nods her agreement. She wraps her arm around Sam.

OLD 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.

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

SAM
(wheezes)
Joe. I need Joe.

NURSE BAKER
Of course.

The nurse leaves.

Sam drifts back off.

BEGIN DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. WOODEN STAGE - DAY

A YOUNGER SAM on a darkened stage. His face and his body stand within a bright white light coming from above. Beyond the light is utter darkness. Though laughter warms this space.

Sam delivers his stand up.

SAM

When your friends begin to flatter
you on how young you look, it's a
sure sign you're getting old... Man
was made at the end of the week's
work when God was tired.

The laughter stops.

Sam chuckles a bit. As he does, the stage lights up. Reveals
a Grand Theater of plush red seats. All lay empty except for
one, Joan's.

OLD JOAN

See. It feels good to perform
doesn't it?

SAM

Yes. I forgot.

OLD JOAN

Words combined with laughter can be
powerful. Words combined with
ingenious imagination... Well,
they're lethal. Come. I want to
hear some more of your words.

SAM

Why?

OLD JOAN

Because they made people think.

She snaps fingers.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)

White-washed fence.

EXT. GOTHIC MANSION - NIGHT

Thunder strikes behind the tall stone walls of the fortress-
like home. We wander up the drive to the massive entranceway
guarded by a forbidding door.

The doors open. Joan and Sam enter.

INT. MANSION - HUGE FOYER- CONTINUOUS

Joan and Sam stop and stand at the base of a grand winding
stair.

Sam gains his bearings.

SAM
I have been here before.

OLD JOAN
Yes. Not so long ago.

A muffled voice comes from the second floor.

SAM
That's Harry. But he's dead.
He rushes up the steps, pulled by the voice.

SAM (CONT'D)
Come.

Sam climbs steps like a child. He reaches a dim long hallway. Golden light pours out of bedroom door left ajar.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Children in nightgowns huddled around their well-suited Grandfather.

SAM
Harry. My biggest supporter. Hmm.
Reading my words to his grand kids.

OLD JOAN
Your words are your legacy.

Harry, white-haired gentleman, reads from a book. Sam's book. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. The children look enthralled as their Grandfather starts the tale.

HARRY
Saturday morning was come. And all
the summer world was bright and
fresh, and brimming with life.

EXT. HANNIBAL - DAY

SAM (V.O.)
There was a song in every heart. A
delectable land, dreamy, reposeful,
and inviting.

EXT. WHITE PICKET FENCE - DAY

Tom Sawyer's inspiration appears as on the sidewalk with a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush. He surveys the fence and smiles.

SAM (V.O.)
Thirty yards of board fence nine
feet high.

Tom sighs. Dips his brush and passes it along the topmost plank. He repeats the operation. And does it again. Then he stops. He stares down the unwhitewashed fence.

Enters JIM, a Hannibal boy.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The nightgowned children listen excitedly as their Grandfather Harry reads.

HARRY
Life to him seemed hollow, and
existence but a burden.

CHILD
I know. I know.

HARRY
Me too, Julia. But let's enjoy the
tale. With tin pail, and singing
Buffalo Gals.

The kids laugh as Grandfather acts out the story. In the back of the room, Joan and Sam listen.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Jim. That's the way she always
talks. Gimme the bucket - I won't
be gone only a minute.

OLD JOAN
Your words moved people Sam. Moved
them from hate, to the path of a
better understanding.

SAM
Hmm. No one likes to read my words
anymore.

OLD JOAN
That's not true.

SAM
Why did you bring me here?

OLD JOAN
To show you that your life
mattered.

SAM
Did it? To whom?

OLD JOAN
It did to Harry.

SAM
He saved me.

OLD JOAN
How?

SAM
Restored my fortune.

OLD JOAN
And why did he do that? He only
knew you through your words.

SAM
True. But the best of me is hidden
there.

OLD JOAN
That's why we're here. To prepare
you for your journey.

She turns.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
We have intruded long enough.

Sam stands quiet.

SAM
Must we go?

OLD JOAN
Yes.

END DREAM
SEQUENCE:

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 - SAME DAY

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

Sam enters the room in an excited state.

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 a nurse.

LIVY
What's with all this fuss?

Clara turns.

CLARA
Mother.

Sam turns.

SAM
Dear.

CLARA (V.O.)
I don't know why. Hearing my father
say dear. And the look on my
mother's face, as if she was
addressing her child. I became
seized by rage.

Clara eyes Sam.

CLARA
She is not your mother! She is your
wife. Grow up.

SAM
What? How dare you tell me
anything, child.

CLARA
You, selfish bastard!

LIVY
Now. Now. Don't fight.

SAM
Look what state you placed your
mother.

CLARA
Me? You, Sam, have used her all up.

Sam rushes at his daughter.

SAM
You, ungrateful bitch!

LIVY

Sam, no!

Sam slaps Clara hard against her face.

CLARA

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

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

Sam and Livy react.

CLARA (CONT'D)

It feels good. Doesn't it.

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

Clara leaves the room. As she does, she says.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Stop enabling him, Momma.

LIVY

Dear.

Livy starts to breathe heavy, grabs her chest.

SAM

Livy!

CLARA (V.O.)

She recovered.

END DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DAY

Joe listens to Clara.

JOE

She was already sick, Clara. You
can't do this to yourself.

CLARA

Oh, yes I can. So, the emotionless
person you see before you. Takes
great effort. Great control.

JOE

Will you miss him? 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. And her father was not long for this world.

INT. STORMFIELD - PRESENT 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

Sadly, no.

He 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?

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)
We will be together again soon.

EXT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DAY

Joan and Sam stand silently before the Hartford House.

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.

OLD 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 this roof.

OLD JOAN
So?

SAM
The best of my life was experienced
within those hallowed halls.

OLD JOAN
The best?

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

OLD JOAN
Impossible.

SAM

Yet true.

OLD 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. Then a younger version of Susy
pops out of window.

SUSY

Papa!

Sam waves up, whispers.

SAM

She's not real.

OLD JOAN

What is reality? But a common
belief.

SAM

She died because of me.

OLD JOAN

That's not true, Sam. You were not
responsible for her spinal
meningitis.

SAM

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

OLD 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.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

The last time I saw Susy was at the station waving profusely at our departing train. Never to see her again, that sacred face.

OLD JOAN

Well. Here's your chance.

Joan disappears.

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

INT. HARTFORD HOUSE - DAY

Upstairs, an older Susy dances its floors, 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 on a cracked closet door.

Susy runs over and kisses it. Removes her current clothes. She puts on the white nightgown. 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 and embraces him.

SUSY

Papa! It's so good to see you.

Sam squeezes her tighter.

SAM

You too, dear. My restless spirit.

Susy pulls back and smiles.

SUSY

I am restless today. For I feel I must forever dance. And look, I found Momma's dress.

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. Yet adds.

SAM
Dance my dear, dance.

Susy delirious rants as she opens another window.

She peers out.

SUSY
Where is white head? Where have you gone?

SAM
White head is here.

SUSY
Oh yes, the shadows. You lurk there.

She turns to us.

SUSY (CONT'D)
Oh!

She stares directly at the CAMERA.

SUSY (CONT'D)
Hi. I bring no ill will.

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 (CONT'D)
I've been seeking God's light. And shunning his darkness. My inheritance is greater darkness. His vengeance. We can't get away from. No matter how hard we try.

She stares about the room expecting trouble.

SUSY (CONT'D)
His creations are everywhere.

Susy continues to walk about, gibberish mumblings.

SUSY (CONT'D)
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.

Sam whispers to himself.

SAM
She is mindless and happy.

He shouts.

SAM (CONT'D)
You're such a good dancer. Should
we continue?

SUSY
Pa. 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.

SAM
My dear child.

He tears up.

Susy stops dancing.

SUSY
I hate you Sam. You have brought
misfortune and sorrow to everyone.
But yourself.

SAM
That's not true, I...

SUSY
Farewell, Father.

Susy disappears as the empty white nightgown falls to the floor.

Sam examines it, but she is gone.

SAM

Why Lord?

Joan wanders in shot.

SAM (CONT'D)

Why be so cruel?

OLD JOAN

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

SAM

What?

OLD JOAN

Get over it.

SAM

Spirit. You're an abundant tormentor, showing me those I hurt the most.

OLD JOAN

She died mindless, and happy.

SAM

And I was a world away.

OLD JOAN

You can't have it both ways, Sam. It was to be your family or fame. Not both. And we all know Mark Twain's choice.

EXT. OLD SOUTH COTTON FIELD - DAY

There's a worn down wooden shack in the distance.

Sam is there alone. He waves his fingertips over the cotton. One of his fingers hits a thorn.

SAM

Ouch.

He inspects his finger.

SAM (CONT'D)

I know you're here. Appear.

Joan does.

OLD JOAN
De Camptown ladies sing this song.
DOO-Dah! DOO-Dah!

She picks at the cotton.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Writers aren't normally known for
their work ethic.

SAM
Work? No, Ma'am. Not a day's work
in all my life.

OLD JOAN
Surprising.

SAM
What I have done I have done,
because it has been play. If it had
been work I shouldn't have done it.

OLD JOAN
Including the lecture tours?

SAM
It was all for fun. Work? I was
never intended for that. No.

OLD JOAN
Blessed is the man...

EXT. MISSISSIPPI DOCK - NIGHT

In the shadow of a vast Riverboat.

Joan jumps on boat.

OLD JOAN
Who has found his or her real work?

Sam follows.

SAM
Cursed is the man.

OLD JOAN
Who has found some other man's
work?

SAM
And can't lose it.

Joan stands on deck and stares up at the stars.

OLD JOAN
Revolt against it. Be Sam.

SAM
Slavery, intellectual or physical,
can never be great. Nor can Sam
Clemens.

OLD JOAN
Sam.. you are virile, yet you wish
to remain decrepit. Why? Free thy
self.

SAM
Freedom. What's that?

OLD JOAN
I shall show you.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY

Clara enters the room.

CLARA
You need me, Father?

Sam is fast asleep in bed.

She walks in, sits near him, and checks his vital signs.

Clara leans closer and begins to sing.

CLARA (CONT'D)
Come then, my love! O' come along.
And feed me with your charms. A
flame like yours. Shall never die.

She rises. She leans over the bed and switches off the lamp.
Darkness.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - DAY

Sam and Joan appears in a sitting room with Livy. She 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 nods then she disappears.

LIVY

Of course, I can hear you. I have
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
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.

She caresses his chin. With cat-like reflexes, she acts to pull his 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.

OLD JOAN
She loved you.

SAM
I owe her everything.

OLD JOAN
She knows.

EXT. VILLA DI QUARTO, ITALY - GARDENS - DAY

Sam and Joan stand in the Gardens.

SAM
Spirit.

Joan turns.

OLD 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.

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

SAM
I don't comprehend.

OLD JOAN
You soon will.

SAM
And Clara?

OLD JOAN
She is as hard headed as you. But she still holds love for you.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - FUTURE DAY

Old Hollywood. Big colorful cars move up and down the Strip.

SUPER: "Hollywood. 1938."

We travel down a boulevard lined with palm trees, big houses and swimming pools. We stop upon a lush green estate.

Think Sunset Boulevard, in its prime. We enter from the rear. Cross this vast green ground leading us to a shimmering bean shaped pool. On the patio, large urns of blossoming flowers dot our path.

OLD JOAN
She just shows it in an odd way.

INT. CALIFORNIA HOME - DAY

Within this home, a much older Clara paces back and forth as she enjoys her cigarette.

Enters a white-apron-ed MAID.

MAID
Mrs. Clemens. Mister DeVoto has arrived.

We see her red lips exhaling chalky white smoke. The corners of her mouth are wrinkled.

CLARA
Show him in.

Maid turns and leaves.

INT. CLARA'S HOME - DAY

Sam and Joan enters in the back of the room.

Sam is stunned by Clara's advanced age.

SAM
She's an old woman.

OLD JOAN
Time. No human escapes it.

From the direction of the foyer.

DEVOTO arrives. He enters in a three-piece suit enters. He is now her father's new executor since Paine's death.

DEVOTO
What a journey here. Traffic here is terrible.

OLD CLARA
Before you attempt to sweep me off my feet with small talk - my answer is still no.

DEVOTO

Why? After all this time.

OLD CLARA

My father's letters are personal.

DEVOTO

I humbly disagree. Your moral management of him must end.

OLD CLARA

Moral management? Leave my father's memory be.

DEVOTO

Your father was a great writer... a great man. A great man is not injured by the truth about him, he is injured by its suppression.

Back of room, Joan mouths.

OLD JOAN

Great man? Hmm.

SAM

Shh!

OLD JOAN

Why? They can't hear us.

OLD CLARA

Paine and I decided long ago the world wants more Mark Twain. Not Sam Clemens.

DEVOTO

I believe the world is ready for the truth about Sam.

OLD CLARA

Your hints and actualization of his anti-god stance have done my father's reputation irreparable damage.

DEVOTO

Damage? Sam Clemens said the difference with choosing the right word, and the wrong is the difference between lightening and a firefly, Mrs. Clemens. So, please. Say yes!

(MORE)

DEVOTO (CONT'D)

If Mark Twain is to go on selling,
he must go on being discussed.

OLD CLARA

Have I made a mistake choosing you
as executor of my father's papers,
Mr. Devoto?

DEVOTO

No. Not yet.

He quotes more Twain.

DEVOTO (CONT'D)

But truth is stranger than fiction.
Isn't it?

OLD CLARA

That's my father for you.

DEVOTO

What?

OLD CLARA

Even after all these years, Sam
attempts to have the last word.
Good day, Mr. Devoto. You can show
yourself out.

Sam and Joan in the back of room.

SAM

My persona. My stage name of Mark
Twain is an invention of my own.
And I outgrew it.

OLD JOAN

Time changes. People don't.

They wander outside by the shimmering pool.

SAM

Are you the devil?

OLD JOAN

Me? The devil? N-o-o-o.

SAM

You sure?

OLD JOAN

How could I be?

SAM
Are you telling me the truth?

OLD JOAN
Why would I lie?

SAM
Hmm. Lies. I would rather tell
seven. Than make one true
explanation.

OLD JOAN
I like you, Sam. You know the human
nature.

SAM
Do I? I have my doubts.

OLD JOAN
Doubts. I don't know what those
are. Though, I do have a question
for you.

SAM
Shoot.

OLD JOAN
You have created so many characters
in your books. In your mind.

SAM
I suppose I have.

OLD JOAN
Which one is your favorite?

SAM
I never answer that.

OLD JOAN
Humor me.

Sam deeply ponders.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Is it Tom. Or Huck?

She motions to herself.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Maybe Joan?

SAM
It is not Tom. It is not Huck.

OLD JOAN
Then who?

SAM
Jim.

OLD JOAN
The runaway slave?

SAM
Yes. Jim. In Huckleberry Finn. Only
Jim wants Jim free. No one else. I
can relate.

OLD JOAN
Tired of being Mark Twain?

SAM
I created this persona. As a mere
marketing ploy. Hmm. Now, I can't
escape it.

OLD JOAN
Are you sad?

SAM
Tired. Tired of what an old and
decrepit old man I have become.

OLD JOAN
You have done much good.

SAM
No one remembers.

OLD JOAN
You make people smile.

SAM
I can't even recall that.

OLD JOAN
Come on. Let's see a good memory.
Soap bubbles.

SAM
Soap bubbles?

END DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S STUDY - DAY

Birds outside the study CHIRP as Joe reads from Sam's 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.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN
Your words.

SAM
Hmm. Fine view.

OLD JOAN
There's more of your words.

SAM
It's as if I just left it.

He 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.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN

Leaving nothing behind but a
memory.

SAM

And sometimes not even that.

OLD 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.

She pauses as she sees a circling bubble. It falls about as
she sings to him a cut-up version of a song like, Moon River.

OLD JOAN
Moon River, wider than a mile. I'm
crossing you in style, some day.

SAM
Dream maker. Heart breaker.

OLD JOAN
We're nearing the rainbow's end, my
huckleberry friend.

SAM AND OLD JOAN
Moon River, and me.

Sam watches his girls play.

SAM
Beautiful. I can go now, Joan. Take
me where you may.

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD 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, holds hands.

SAM
What is next Joan?

OLD JOAN

The truth.

SAM

I thought we were beyond that.

OLD JOAN

Oh, Sam. I wish I held such powers to stay with you. But I don't.

SAM

You're leaving me again?

OLD JOAN

I must.

SAM

Don't go.

OLD JOAN

I must. And we shall not see each other again.

SAM

In this life, right Joan? We shall meet in another, surely?

OLD JOAN

There's no other, Sam.

Joan drops hand and turns.

SAM

What?

OLD JOAN

Life itself is only a vision, a dream.

Sam looks dumbfounded.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)

Sam, you know in your heart I speak the truth.

SAM

But, but, the paper I chased as a boy?

OLD JOAN

Blank.

SAM

Blank? Impossible...

He ponders it.

SAM (CONT'D)

We have seen the future. Clara's.
Seen it in its actuality. It's
realness.

OLD JOAN

It was a vision, it had no
existence.

SAM

A vision? A vi...

Joan repeats herself.

OLD 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!

OLD 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?

OLD JOAN

Nothing exists save empty space,
and you!

SAM

Me?

OLD 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.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN
For you will remain a thought, the
only existent thought.

Sam's reaction.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
And by your nature
inextinguishable, indestructible.

Joan's voice begins to fade as she slowly becomes
transparent.

OLD 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.

OLD JOAN
Sanity and happiness are an
impossible combination.

Joan is now gone.

SAM
My words. Funny.

OLD JOAN (V.O.)
Thank you for making me, Sam.

SAM
How can this be?

He falls. Then he looks at his hand as it slowly becomes transparent.

SAM (CONT'D)
Nothing exists but thought,
vagrant, useless thought.

Sam disappears.

OLD JOAN (V.O.)
Dream well, Sam.

SAM V.O.
I shall miss you.

OLD JOAN (V.O.)
Hmm. I shall miss you too, Sam.

END DREAM
SEQUENCE:

INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY

Surrounded by friends and family members, a frail Sam draws closer and closer to death.

Sam's breath grows shorter and shorter. His eyes are closed. He is asleep.

Clara comes closer.

CLARA
Papa? I love you.

Sam slightly smiles by instinct. He grasps. Then he stops breathing.

CLARA (CONT'D)
Papa?!? Doctor! Is he gone?

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. Double doors closes before us. THUD!
- F. Inside room, double doors.
- G. Clara locks it: Blot slides in place. CLANG.
- H. Shot of closed double doors.
- I. 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.
- D. Lands on the dead authors face.
- E. This is when a passing breeze makes the light white curtains bellows up and down.

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 void blank space. Each turns and embraces one another.

OLD JOAN

I must go.

SAM

I shall dream better dreams. Ones
with you still in them dear.

OLD JOAN
It doesn't work that way, Sam. I
wished it did.

She embraces him.

OLD JOAN (CONT'D)
Good-bye. It was a unique journey.

SAM
Yes, it was. For Life is short.

OLD 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 moves further and further away. As if, the story is over.

The closing song continues to play as Eddie-like lyrics sings 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 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.

YOUNG 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