

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Comedy

Adapted by

FRANK M. WHITING

From the Novel

by

MARK TWAIN

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

A skillful adaptation of Mark Twain's lovable story, held together through the intermissions by Huck's own narration.

Comedy. Adapted by Frank Whiting. Based on the Mark Twain novel. Cast: 10m., 4w., with doubling, or up to 20 (12m., 6w., 1 boy, 1 girl). Commencing his tale in Mark Twain's own words, Huck leads the audience through his maze of colorful adventures, sawing his way out of the cabin where he has been imprisoned, escaping down the river on a raft with a runaway slave, falling into the clutches of two itinerant rascals, and rescuing two orphan girls from their schemes, conspiring with Tom Sawyer to steal the runaway slave out of captivity. Huck appears at each intermission to bridge the gaps in his story, carrying the first-person Mark Twain flavor throughout. *Four sets. Simple 19th-century American Midwest costumes. Code: HB6.*

Family Plays

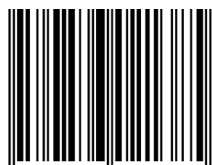
311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308

Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170

Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-87602-138-5



9 780876 021385 >

Huckleberry Finn

Huckleberry Finn

TAKEN FROM THE MARK TWAIN NOVEL

Adapted for the stage

By

FRANK M. WHITING

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

© Family Plays

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1948 by
THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(HUCKLEBERRY FINN)

ISBN: 978-0-87602-138-5

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of those who have helped in countless ways to make a play of HUCKLEBERRY FINN. He is especially indebted to Corinne Holt Sawyer, who was co-author of an earlier dramatization, and to Sara Spencer for advice, encouragement, and assistance in composing the final version.

Huckleberry Finn was presented for the first time, in an earlier version, in 1949, by the University of Minnesota Theatre, in Minneapolis, under the direction of the author.

The play was later revised, and in its present version was given its premiere performance by the Peppermint Tent Theatre of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1967, again under the direction of the author.

INTRODUCTION

Mark Twain's *HUCKLEBERRY FINN* is probably America's greatest novel. Obviously some of its greatness must be sacrificed in compressing it into a play of less than two hours in length. Nevertheless my hope is that the present edition retains a bit of the freedom, some of the humanity, plus a great deal of the language, fun, and adventure that have made the novel an American classic.

It is not a play for very young children. In fact, children under ten should be left at home unless they are unusually advanced, or accompanied by an adult; but I know of no other play that can be more rewarding for adolescent young people—as well as for their elders.

Needless to say anyone planning to produce *HUCKLEBERRY FINN* will need to find actors capable of unusual sincerity, skill, and sensitivity for the roles of Huck and Jim. All of the characters can, of course, benefit from fine performances, but Huck and Jim demand it. They must capture our belief, our interest, and our sympathy, from the very first. If such actors are not available a less difficult play should be selected.

—FRANK M. WHITING
Minneapolis, Minnesota
January, 1968

Scenes

ACT ONE

- Scene 1. A cabin on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River, daylight.
- Scene 2. The raft, adrift on the Mississippi, at night.
- Scene 3. The raft, tied to shore, daylight.
- Scene 4. The raft, in motion on the River, daylight.
- Scene 5. The raft, anchored in a cove, afternoon.

ACT TWO

- Scene 1. Sitting room in the Wilks house, afternoon.
- Scene 2. Sitting room in the Wilks house, early next morning.

ACT THREE

- Scene 1. Back yard of the Phelps farmhouse, daylight.
- Scene 2. Back yard of the Phelps farmhouse, about a week later, daylight.
- Scene 3. Back yard of the Phelps farmhouse, the following night.

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

TAKEN FROM THE MARK TWAIN NOVEL
Adapted for the stage by Frank M. Whiting

Cast

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

JIM

THE DUKE

THE KING

WIDOW BARTLEY

MARY JANE WILKS

SUSAN WILKS

DOCTOR ROBINSON

LOT COVEY

HARVEY WILKS

WILLIAM WILKS

MRS. HOBSON

ABE TURNER

BEN RUCKER

LIZE

AUNT SALLY

MATILDA ANGELINA

THOMAS BENJAMIN ELEXANDER

UNCLE SILAS

TOM SAWYER

THE SOUND

Two musical numbers are recommended, for background accompaniment to this play: Kern's *Mark Twain*, and Grofe's *Mississippi Suite*, both of which have been recorded by Columbia Records.

These may or may not be used, but in any event much of the play's success depends upon sensitive, rhythmic co-ordination of lights, sound, and action.

HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Taken from the Mark Twain Novel

Adapted for the stage by Frank M. Whiting

Act One, Scene 1

(The overture cross fades into slow, soft music as the house lights dim and forestage lights come up revealing Huckleberry Finn, sprawled against a mossy rock, asleep. His tattered straw hat slouches over his eyes, a willow fishing pole is cocked between his knees. In time with the lazy theme of the music, he brushes away a fly, then stretches back into dreams. There is a nibble on the line. It goes unnoticed. The nibble is repeated. Then, as the music breaks into an exciting climax, Huck comes to his senses, jumps to his feet, sets the hook, and for a few minutes, there is a wild tussle, ending in a kick of disappointment as the line breaks. Suddenly, Huck becomes aware of hundreds of bright eyes that fill the auditorium).

HUCK. Jee-hosophat!

(He dives quickly behind the rock, then after a moment peers over the top. A smile breaks across his face as he speaks directly to his audience).

I'll bet you don't know who I am?

CHILDREN IN THE AUDIENCE *(who never miss their cue—have one or two posted, though, just in case).* Huckleberry Finn!

HUCK. That's right! You don't really know about me, though, without you've read a book called "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth—mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly, he told the truth. Now the way that book winds up is—the Widow Douglas adopted me, and allowed she'd sivilize me, and she come mighty nigh to doing it too. She made me wash. They combed me all to thunder. I had to wear shoes all day Sunday, and go to church, and sweat. I couldn't chaw. I couldn't cuss. I couldn't smoke. I couldn't yawn, nor stretch, nor scratch in front of folks. But I tried it. It come near to killing me, but I did it.

(Music fades in).

But every once in a while, I'd slip down to the slave cabins and have a good smoke with old Mrs. Watson's, Jim. Jim was first rate. He knew all kinds of bad-luck signs, and one night, when he conjured for me with his hair-ball, he told me that bad luck was a-heading my way. And sure enough, the next day, my old Pap laid for me, and catched me, and took me up the river about

three mile in a skiff to an old log hut, where the timber was so thick, nobody else could find it. Pap watched me all the time, and I never got a chance to run off. He'd lock me up in that cabin, and go off for two or three days at a spell. Then he'd come back, roaring drunk, and beat me. Onct he thought I was the destroying angel and chased me all around the cabin with his clasp knife trying to kill me! I knew then I jest had to git away somehow, and shure enough—next time he locked me in and headed for town I found an old rusty saw blade stuck down in between two logs—but let me show you what happened—

(The music swells as Huck exits. Lights come up on the stage, and the sound of sawing wood is heard. Directly, it stops, and we see a section of one of the logs of the cabin pushed outward from inside the cabin, a moment later Huck crawls through the opening. He shades his eyes, then rubs his aching arm and hand).

HUCK (*puffing with his exertions*). Whew!

(Then, suddenly alert, he steps lightly onto the tree stump, and looks intently out toward the river. Apparently satisfied that he is alone, he whistles a few notes of the Mark Twain theme and begins to work. Crawling back into the cabin he reappears a moment later, with a gallon jug, which he sets outside on the ground, then disappears again).

There is a rustling in the bushes and Jim appears. He too steps up on the tree stump to look out over the river, then notices the gallon jug, picks it up, hears something, becomes alert, and hurries off stage still carrying the jug with him. Huck reappears at the opening, with an old battered coffee pot which he sets outside, then disappears again. Jim reappears, notices the coffee pot and picks it up).

JIM. Funny, Ah didn' see dat befo'.

(Hearing Huck begin to whistle inside the cabin, he clasps the jug and the coffee pot, then hides and watches. Huck pokes an old iron skillet out of the opening, notices the coffee pot and the gallon jug missing, and takes alarm. He vanishes instantly, inside the cabin. Jim takes advantage of his absence to slip across and appropriate the skillet, then stands at upstage corner of the cabin, with skillet poised. A moment later, instead of Huck's head, the barrel of an old gun comes out through the opening. Jim backs around the upstage corner of the cabin, and reappears a few moments later down right, still holding his skillet in a menacing position. By this time, Huck has crawled out, cocked his gun, and starts circling the cabin in Jim's direction. Jim hastily reverses his direction, reappears at the upstage corner of the cabin, then noiselessly slips across and crouches behind the rock. Huck reappears with his gun, baffled).

HUCK (*eying the ground, where he left his things*). Those dad-blame goats! Blame if I thought they'd eat an iron skillet!

(Reassured, he crawls back into the cabin, taking his gun with him. Jim once more, steps across to the upstage corner of the cabin, raises his skillet. This time, it is a bag of cornmeal that Huck pushes through the opening, but it is too late to stop the downswing of Jim's skillet, which descends squarely on the bag).

That ain't no goat!

(Jim leaps for the shelter of the rock again, as Huck wriggles quickly out of the cabin, with his gun cocked. He stands for a moment, listening and watching. Jim, in suspense, peeps cautiously up over the top of the rock, then ducks back again, but he has been too slow. Huck quietly creeps toward the rock, and crouches on the opposite side. Both hold their breath a minute, then simultaneously, unable to bear the suspense, both raise their heads. For a moment, they stare at one another, too scared to move. Then Huck breathes the word "Jim!"—and at the same time Jim gasps, "Huckleberry Finn!"—and both burst into a spasm of half-embarrassed, half-relieved laughter).

JIM. Huckleberry Finn! Ho, ha, ha, if you warn't te mos' ska'dest person I evah did see!

HUCK. Maybe so, but you was plenty scared yourself.

JIM. Who, me? Aw, I 'uz jes' follin'.

HUCK. Like fun you was!

JIM. Well, if I wuz a little bit sca'd, I had a right to be. I thought you 'uz one of de men dat's after me.

HUCK. After you? Who's after you, Jim? What'uv you done?

JIM. I—I—I better not tell.

HUCK. Why?

JIM. Well, dey's reasons. But eff'n I wuz to tell—

HUCK. Jim, I won't tell on you, no matter what you done, blamed if I will. Honest Injun—I'll sign in blood if you want me to.

JIM. Nemmine, Huck, nemmine de blood. I'll believe you.

HUCK. Well, then?

JIM (*looking cautiously about*). I—I done run away, Huck!

HUCK. Jim!

JIM. But mind, you said you wouldn't tell on me.

HUCK. Well, I won't, I said I wouldn't, and I'll stick to it. But how'd you come to do it, Jim?

JIM. Well, Huck, see, it 'uz dis way. Las' night, I heered 'em talkin'—Old Missus and dat slave-trader from New Orleans. I heered 'im say he'd gib her eight hund'd dollahs for me, an' Missus she 'low dat's a big stack of money, an' she say she'll think it over. Well, I never wait to hear no mo'. I lit out fo' de river—didn't wait to fin' no raf'—no nothin'—jes' jumped in and swum acrost. I thought dey wouldn' fin' me here.

HUCK. But Jim—you ran away! Now you can't ever get your freedom!

JIM. Yes I will, Huck. Dey's places in dis country where all de folks is free—black and white, en' I's gwyne fin' one, if it's de las' thing I ever do, so don't you tell on me, Huck.

HUCK. Tell on you? I'll help you!

JIM. Oh no, Huck, you better not. You know what happen to white folks dat helps a slave run away.

HUCK. That don't make no difference. Old Mrs. Watson says I'm good and wicked already, and that I'm bound to go to the bad place for it, so as long as I'm in, I might as well go the whole hog and help you.

JIM. But Huck—

HUCK. And anyway, Jim—I'm running away myself!

JIM. You runnin' away?

HUCK. Yep. Pap's had me locked up here for two month or more, and he's gone half the time, and it's too lonesome. And when he gets back, he licks me till I'm all over welts—so I'm fixing to run away.

JIM (*alarmed*). Is yo' Pap here too?

HUCK. Not now he ain't. He rowed over to town yesterday, and'll likely be gone two or three days. I found me an old rusty saw-blade, and 'lowed I'd saw my way out first chanct I got. I been sawing on that blame log most all night long, and just now got out.

JIM. But Huck, how is you gwyne run away?

HUCK. I got me a raft!

JIM. A raf'? How come you got yo'se'l a raf', when you'se locked up?

HUCK. Come floatin' down the river in the high water this spring. I found it one evenin' when Pap sent me down to fish. And I hid it in some bushes where he hain't found it.

JIM. Huck, you sho' is a bright boy.

HUCK. Shucks, that ain't nothin'. I'm aiming to fix it so Pap won't even come looking for me.

JIM. Why Huck, he's bound' to look fo' you, when he fin's you gone.

HUCK. Not if he thinks I'm dead, he won't.

JIM. Thinks you's daid?

HUCK. Sure. He'll think robbers broke in and killed me. Here, you go load up the raft, while I fix things up.

JIM. How is you gwyne fix things up?

HUCK. You'll see. Here, load up this truck, while I get out the rest of it. He'll think the robbers got in and cleaned out the place.

JIM (*starting toward the river with a load of things including the sack of cornmeal, and Huck's gun*). Where I gwyne fin' dis raf'?

HUCK (*pointing off*). Down there, in that clump of willows.

(*Jim exits; Huck calls after him*).

And stay on the grass, so's you don't leave no track.

(*Huck, reaching in through the hole in the cabin, pulls out a variety of things including a blanket, an old bed quilt, a lantern, and an empty gunny sack.*)

JIM (*calling from off stage*). Dis sho' is a mighty pretty little ol' raf'.

HUCK (*as he sets something out*). Aw, it's not much for looks, Jim, but it floats!

JIM. Oh Huck, it's beautiful! It's de Promised Lan'! It's gwyne make a free man out of ol' Jim!

HUCK. Well, it ought to carry us down to Cairo, where the free states begin.

JIM (*reappearing*). If dat ol' raf' take me to Cairo, I'll be so thankful I'll get right down an' kiss every log in it!

HUCK. Now here, Jim, carry the rest of this stuff down—and pick me up some rocks on your way back—all you can carry.

JIM. What you want wid rocks, Huck?

HUCK. I want to put 'em in this gunny sack, that's what. Go on now; I've got to cover up these tracks.

JIM. Yassuh, boss, I'se gwyne.

(*He goes off with his load. Huck fits the log into place in the cabin, and props it there with two rocks, so it looks undisturbed.*)

A shot is heard, off in Jim's direction. Huck stiffens and looks toward the river as Jim shouts from offstage).

Huck! Huck, look! I got 'im, Huck! I got 'im!

HUCK. Jim! Is that you?

JIM (*running on excitedly, carrying a small dead pig in one hand and the sack of corn meal in the other*). Look, Huck, look! A little wild pig! I got 'im right between de eyes!

HUCK. Jee-hosophat! Nice, fat one too!

JIM. He 'uz jes' startin' to tear into our bag o' corn meal, but I fixed him!

HUCK. Jim, that's just what I need. Get me the axe from the wood-pile.

JIM. He's already daid, Huck. What you want wid de axe?

HUCK. I want him to bleed, that's what, inside the cabin.

JIM. But Huck, ain' we gwyne eat him?

HUCK. No. We're going to make out that robbers broke into the cabin and killed me, and splashed blood around. Here you take the axe and smash in the cabin door.

JIM. Shur 'nuff, you da boss.

(Jim disappears behind cabin; a moment later we hear the sound of a door being battered and splintered with an axe. Huck meanwhile takes a look at the river to make sure no one is coming).

JIM (*off*). There she is, Huck. All busted open.

HUCK. Good. I'll bloody up the place while you fill that sack with rocks.

(Huck picks up the dead pig in his arms and goes into the cabin).

JIM (*as he appears and begins filling the gunny sack*). What de sack a' rocks for, Huck?

HUCK (*From inside cabin*). We're gonna drag the sack of rocks from the cabin down to the river, and leave plenty of tracks, so's they'll think the robbers killed me and dragged me down there and threw me in.

JIM. Gives me de shivvers!

HUCK (*appearing with pig wrapped up in his jacket*). Got the rocks ready?

JIM. Huck, yo' jacket's a sight!

HUCK (*putting the pig in the gunny sack*). Shure is. Jeehosophat, that's bully! I'll just chop it up some and leave it as evidence!

JIM (*looking at the cabin door, then at Huck who is chopping the bloody jacket*). Tom Sawyer couldn't 'a thought up no better plan!

HUCK. Tom plays adventures for fun, but this ain't just fun! We both got to get free.

JIM (*picking up the bloody axe*). Sho' looks like robbers been here.

HUCK. Don't take the axe; let's leave it. I know! Pull out some of my hair.

JIM. But, Huck—

HUCK. Go ahead, pull!

(*Jim pulls!*)

Ow!

JIM. I'se sorry—

HUCK. Don't be sorry. Now, if this don't convince 'em I'm murdered nothing will.

(*Huck drives the axe into the chopping block and tangles the hair under the bloody blade*).

JIM. Sho' looks awful.

HUCK. Nobody could 'a done no better without a corpse.

JIM (*quietly*). I sure glad you ain't a corpse, Huck.

HUCK. Now you drag that bloody gunny sack down to the river.

JIM. Anything you say, boss.

HUCK. Wait a minute. I've got a better idea. We want to leave tracks for 'em to foller, but we don't want 'em to foller down the river, the way we're a-going.

JIM. You right about dat.

HUCK. There's a little lake over that-a-way—

(*points down right*)

about a hundred yards, that's plenty deep and about a mile wide. A creek leads out of it on t'other side that goes miles away, I don't know where, but it don't go to the river. That's the way we want 'em to think the robbers went.

JIM (*who has finished stuffing the pig into the sack of rocks*). Is dat where yo' wants to make de trail, Huck?

HUCK. That's the way. Drag a heavy trail right down to the lake, and heave it in. And be sure it sinks out of sight.

JIM. I'll make a trail dey cain't miss, Huck.

HUCK. Wait a minute. I got another idea. If I wuz to take and rip a hole in this bag of cornmeal—

JIM. Why Huck, it'll spill.

HUCK. That's just what I want it to do—spill a little track all the way over to the lake. Then they'll know it was done by robbers, and that the robbers went that way.

JIM. Doggone if dat ain't so!

HUCK. You go ahead with the gunny sack, and I'll follow along with the meal.

JIM. Huck, anybody as smaht as you is, dey ought to be president!

(He leaves as Huck, turning to get the bag of corn meal, glimpses something through the branches that arouses his suspicion. He steps up on the rock and looks toward the river).

HUCK. Jim! Jim, hurry up! Pap's a comin'! He's half-way across!

JIM *(off right)*. Lawsy me! I'se-a-runnin', Huck!

(Working at frantic speed, Huck pulls the bag of cornmeal center, and starts to rip a hole in it with his saw. He is kneeling there, with one bare foot behind the rock. Suddenly, he drops the cornmeal, and grabs his foot, howling with pain).

HUCK. Ow-w-w-w! *(Glancing behind the rock, he becomes terrified)*. Jeehosophat! Jim! Jim, come quick! A rattlesnake!

JIM *(rushing in)*. I'se a-comin', Huck!

HUCK. Rattlesnake! Behind that rock! Don't miss him, Jim! Look out! He's fixin' to strike again!

(Jim grabs a stout stick, and begins to belabor the snake behind the rock).

JIM. Dar you is! You ain' a-gwyne bother nobody no mo'!

(He throws the dead snake off stage).

HUCK. He's bothered one too many already.

JIM. Huck! He done bit you!

HUCK. He bit me good!

(Tries to put weight on his foot).

Ow-w-w!

JIM. Don' try to step on it. Here, let ol' Jim carry you.

HUCK. Jim, it ain't no use. Pap's on his way. He'll be here in fifteen minutes.

JIM (*peering toward the river*). Lawsy, Huck, what we better do?

HUCK. One of us could get away, Jim. But not two of us, and me with a lame foot. You go jump on that raft, and slide!

JIM. Me? Why, Huck, is you crazy? Wat'll yo' Pappy do, when he fin' you here, an' all dat wrack in dah?

HUCK. Oh, he'll lick me, I reckon, but that ain't nothin'. I been licked before. Now don't fool around, Jim. Pap's a-gettin' closer. Go ahead and take the raft.

JIM. Huck, yo' foot is p'isoned wid dat snake-bite. An' ain't nobody know how to cure a snake-bite like ol' Jim. You's a-gwyne with me.

HUCK. Don't talk like a crazy man, Jim. I can't even walk.

JIM. Ol' Jim'll tote you.

HUCK. But Jim, you can't tote me, and make a track with that corn meal, and load up the rest of the stuff, and get out of sight before Pap gets here. And anyway, there ain't no cure for a rattlesnake bite. You die of a rattlesnake bite!

JIM. You ain' gwyne die, Huck.

(Music creeps in and under).

You's gwyne live. Ol' Jim's gwyne make you live.

(Starts to pick him up).

Res' easy now, I don't want to joggle you none.

HUCK. Jim, you may be a slave, but no one else 'ud risk his life for the likes of me.

JIM. You'se talkin' out o yo' haid, Huck.

HUCK. I ain't neither. You're a-savin' my life!

JIM (*as he carries the boy off*). I hopes so, Huck, I sho' does hope so!

(The music swells as the stage lights fade out on the scene).

Act One, Scene 2

(Almost immediately, Huck appears on the forestage telling his story. The music fades under the narration).

HUCK. Jim knowed just what to do. Soon as we got to the raft he jabbed the wound with his knife and sucked out the poison. Then he burned the place with a tallow candle. After that he went to

work like lightning making the cornmeal track and bringing the rest of our stuff to the raft. We stayed hid in the willows long enough to see Pap land and find the bloody wreck inside the cabin. Pap warn't long in figgering out just what we aimed for him to, and then you should-a seen him jump in his skiff and row back toward town to get help.

Soon as he was out of sight Jim slid the raft into the current and we started down stream. It was getting dark by now so's nobody could see us.

For the next week or so we tied up and hid in the daytimes, but at nights we was free. We slid along smooth and quiet. Sometimes we caught fish, or talked, or took a swim now and then to keep off sleepiness. At times on the black banks we'd see a spark which was a candle in a cabin window, and once or twice of a night we'd see a steamboat coughing along up river outside the main current, and now and then she'd belch up a whole world of sparks out of her chimbleys and they'd rain down into the river and look awful pretty. But most of the time we just drifted along watching the stars, or watching the moon slide in and out amongst the clouds.

(Music under the narration fades into a gentle wind and the sound of Jim playing his harmonica as the stage lights come up and Huck takes his place on the raft. The trees are scarcely visible, there seems to be only the raft against drifting clouds and the night sky.)

JIM. Dey's gwyne be a mighty big storm tonight, Huck.

HUCK. Shure looks that way.

JIM. Mebbe we bes' tie into de shore.

HUCK. Aw, let's enjoy ourselves; I like warm, wet, summer storms.

(Murmur of wind and very distant thunder).

Look at them thunder clouds roll under the old moon.

JIM. Anything you say, boss. B'sides dey's still a lot of stars ovah in de wes' dat ain' been gobbled up yet.

HUCK. Wonder where they all come from, Jim?

JIM. Oh, mebbe de moon done made 'em.

HUCK. There's too many of 'em for that.

JIM. Well, den, mebbe de moon done laid 'em.

HUCK. That sounds more reasonable. I saw a frog lay almost that many eggs once.

(A slight pause, we hear the wind).