

# ***TOM 'N HUCK***

*By Craig Sodaro*

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### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

The irrepressible Tom Sawyer, his best buddy Huck Finn, and many other beloved characters created by Mark Twain come to life in this all-American classic adventure.

When the two boys are accused of stealing Becky Thatcher's gold necklace, and with even Aunt Polly and the Widder Douglas doubting them, Tom and Huck decide to take off for the swamp.

The real culprit, Herman Cornwallis, better known as Hermy Wormy, is delighted to see them run away so he can have more time with Becky.

In the swamp the boys meet up with Mary Meechum who has been banished by the good citizens of Hannibal for being a witch.

Accidentally the three overhear the suspicious Slade sisters planning to scam the town and witness the sisters' partner, Ezra, kill someone who wanted in on the action.

Together Tom, Huck, and Mary, save the town and regain their good names.

This play is Americana at its best. Lots of humor, interesting roles as kids and adults, and easy sets make it a star-spangled delight.

**CHARACTERS**

*(27 parts - 10 m, 15 w, 2 flexible)*

**MR. TETTLER:** City attorney.  
**MARY MEECHUM:** About 60, banished to swamp.  
**SHERIFF McDUFF:** Town constable.  
**JUDGE THATCHER:** Leading citizen.  
**MISS WITTENBAUM:** Accuses Mary Meechum.  
**MRS. WEEKS:** Schoolteacher's wife  
**MR. WEEKS:** The schoolteacher.  
**ROSE THATCHER:** Judge's wife.  
**BECKY THATCHER:** Their daughter, sweet on Tom.  
**AUNT POLLY:** Guardian to Tom.  
**WIDDER DOUGLAS:** Guardian to Huck.  
**HERMAN CORNWALLIS:** The new kid, obnoxious.  
**MRS. CORNWALLIS:** His doting mother  
**TOM SAWYER:** Young hero.  
**HUCK FINN:** Tom's best buddy.  
**SADIE SLADE:** A stranger from New Orleans.  
**SARAH SLADE:** Her sister.  
**NICK PIKE:** Not-so-upstanding citizen.  
**MIKE CARTER:** Tom and Huck's friend.  
**ELLY CARTER:** His sister.  
**TINA:** A friend of Becky's.  
**PATTY:** Another.  
**GRETCHEN:** Another.  
**COUSIN EZRA:** Slade sisters' cohort.  
**MRS. CARTER:** Mike and Elly's mom.  
**TOWNSFOLK 1**  
**TOWNSFOLK 2**

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

### **Act I**

Scene 1: The trial, noon on a spring day at the square.

Scene 2: Later that afternoon in the square.

Scene 3: That night in the swamp.

### **ACT II**

Scene 1: The next day at the town square.

Scene 2: That evening at the fair.

Scene 3: Later that night in the swamp.

## **SETTING**

The play has two settings. The main one is the town center of Hannibal, Missouri, about 1850. A platform CS is decorated as a gazebo and should be large enough to hold a table and several people. Two park benches are DS of it and trees and bushes are around it. We see the outlines of buildings behind the gazebo. SR is Aunt Polly's "house" with a clothesline. In Act II the square will be decorated for the fair.

The other setting is the swamp which is suggested by moss-draped trees, plants and bushes. Several boulders are needed to hide behind and to "bury" the body of Nick Pike.

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: The JUDGE is seated behind a table in the center of the gazebo. MYRA WITTENBAUM and MR. TETTLER stand at right of the judge's table while SHERIFF MCDUFF guards MARY MEECHUM at the other side of the table. Mary's hands are tied. The rest of the TOWNSPEOPLE, including WIDOW DOUGLAS, AUNT POLLY, BECKY THATCHER, HERMAN CORNWALLIS, MRS. CORNWALLIS, ROSE THATCHER, MIKE AND ELLY CARTER, MR. AND MRS. WEEKS, MRS. CARTER, TINA, PATTY, GRETCHEN and EXTRAS all sit and stand here and there intensely interested in the proceedings.)*

TETTLER: Just tell us in your own words, Miss Wittenbaum, what happened.

MARY: You think she'll tell the truth?

JUDGE: *(Rapping HIS gavel.)* Silence! If I hear another word out of the defendant, she'll be charged with contempt of court!

MARY: Why? It's already contemptible enough!

JUDGE: Silence! Now, proceed, Miss Wittenbaum.

MISS WITTENBAUM: *(Terrified.)* I don't know if I ought to, Judge Thatcher. There's no tellin' what Mary Meechum will do to me!

MRS. WEEKS: *(Standing, loudly.)* That's right, your honor!

MR. WEEKS: *(To MRS. WEEKS.)* Eulalie, please!

MRS. WEEKS: Well, it's true! Mary Meechum might just turn poor Miss Wittenbaum into a toad or something and then won't you feel sorry!

JUDGE: What your husband means, Mrs. Weeks, is that in a court of law, I must acknowledge you 'fore you can speak.

MR. WEEKS: Like school, my dear. One must raise a hand.

MRS. WEEKS: I still say, she's a witch! *(SHE points to MARY. CROWD mumbles loudly.)*

JUDGE: Order! Order in the court! Miss Wittenbaum,  
PLEASE tell us what happened!

MISS WITTENBAUM: All right. If you're sure I'll be safe,  
don't you know!

*(MARY laughs wickedly.)*

JUDGE: The defendant will stop laughing! *(MARY shuts up immediately.)* You will be safe, Miss Wittenbaum. I'll stake my reputation on it.

MARY: Pretty thin collateral, Miss W.

JUDGE: You're in contempt! And if you don't spit out your story, Miss Wittenbaum, you'll be in contempt too!

MISS WITTENBAUM: *(Whining.)* You don't have to yell!

JUDGE: *(Yelling.)* I'm not yelling!!

*(ROSE approaches JUDGE.)*

ROSE: Here, dear, take a whiff of this smelling salt to clear your head.

JUDGE: I don't want it - *(SHE sticks it under his nose. HIS eyes pop out, and he gasps for breath. After a second, he becomes serene.)* Now, Miss Wittenbaum, your story. *(MISS WITTENBAUM looks to MARY, then to JUDGE, then back at Mary. Controlling terrible frustration he shouts:)* MISS WITTENBAUM!

MISS WITTENBAUM: *(Through HER tears.)* I was hanging up my wash, don't you know. A brisk breeze came up and pulled my best shawl from the line. I had to catch it, don't you know, so I chased it across the yard and into the woods where it got snagged on a tree. And while I was pulling it off the branch, I heard strange mumbling.

TETTLER: English?

MISS WITTENBAUM: If it were English it wouldn't have been strange, don't you know?

TETTLER: Do you speak any other language, Miss Wittenbaum?

MISS WITTENBAUM: Latin. Well, pig Latin, if that counts. But it wasn't pig Latin.

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