

Drama Duets: Two Mark Twain Classics

Adapted by Nona and Cal Claus



ArtAge
Publications



ArtAge supplies books, plays, and materials to older performers around the world. Directors and actors have come to rely on our 30+ years of experience in the field to help them find useful materials and information that makes their productions stimulating, fun, and entertaining.

ArtAge's unique program has been featured in *Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Tribune*, *LA Times*, *American Theatre*, *Time Magazine*, *Modern Maturity*, on *CNN*, *NBC*, and in many other media sources.

ArtAge is more than a catalog. We also supply information, news, and trends on our top-rated website, *www.seniortheatre.com*. We stay in touch with the field with our very popular e-newsletter, *Senior Theatre Online*. Our President, Bonnie Vorenberg, is asked to speak at conferences and present workshops that supplement her writing and consulting efforts. We're here to help you be successful in Senior Theatre!

We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

ArtAge Publications

Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President

PO Box 19955

Portland OR 97280

503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998

bonniev@seniortheatre.com

www.seniortheatre.com

NOTICE

Copyright: This play is fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, Canada, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

The laws are specific regarding the piracy of copyrighted materials. Sharing the material with other organizations or persons is prohibited. Unlawful use of a playwright's work deprives the creator of his or her rightful income.

Cast Copies: Performance cast copies are required for each actor, director, stage manager, lighting and sound crew leader.

Changes to Script: Plays must be performed as written. Any alterations, additions, or deletions to the text must be approved.

Permission to Film: Rights to produce, film, or record, in whole or in part, in any medium or in any language, by any group amateur or professional, are fully reserved.

Royalty: Royalties are due when you perform the play for any audience, paying or non-paying, professional or amateur. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.

The royalty for amateur productions of this show is posted online. It is payable two weeks prior to your production. Contact us for professional rates or other questions. Royalty fees are subject to change.

Insert the following paragraph in your programs:

***"Performed with special permission from ArtAge Publications'
Senior Theatre Resource Center at 800-858-4998,
www.seniortheatre.com."***

Copyright © 2013

WARNING!

FREEVIEW – Copyrighted Material!

Excerpts from THE DIARY OF ADAM* and EVE'S DIARY

Translated by
Mark Twain

[*NOTE: I translated a portion of this diary some years ago, and a friend printed a few copies in an incomplete form, but the public never got them. Since then I have deciphered some more of Adam's hieroglyphics, and think he has now become sufficiently important as a public character to justify this publication. —M. T.]

Abridged and sequenced by Nona and Cal Claus

CAST

ADAM: The first man in The Garden
EVE: The first woman in The Garden

Place

In the Garden of Eden

Time

Shortly before once upon a time

Introduction to This Reading

Mark Twain began writing *The Diary of Adam* in 1892. It went through several versions with the final one appearing in 1904. After his wife, Livy, passed away in that same year he wrote *Eve's Diary*. It has been said that he composed this piece as a kind of therapy to lift him out of the funk he was in after the death of his beloved. In a way it truly is a kind of love story. Studs Terkel thought so. Each year at Valentine's Day he read these two diaries on his Chicago radio program.

This was our inspiration in 1982 when put together a condensed version. They were originally written as two quite separate works as this was the way Studs read them. However, we thought it might make some sense to bring them together in a sequence with Eve reading her day, followed by Adam's notes about that same day or one near it in time. Since it takes a while to read these diaries aloud, we decided to edit them down to a 45 minute Readers Theatre

performance. Furthermore, we felt it might be well to have the days in sequence, with the first being presented through Eve's eyes, followed by Adam's impressions of events. This alternation continues until we find Adam at Eve's grave for the last word.

We have been totally faithful to the words of Mark Twain. The alternation and sequencing of diary entries also follow closely the day-to-day chronicling according to Twain's translations "from the original." A similar type of editing was done in 1988 by David Birney. He and his wife, Meredith Baxter Birney, performed their 58-minute version on public television. This was done completely independent of our adaptation, and is available on a VHS tape. We think this modern translation of Mark Twain will be fun for you!

[Adam and Eve are in repose within The Garden. They seem puzzled by their surroundings, consider their circumstances, and have recorded their thoughts.]

EVE: Saturday — I am almost a whole day old now. I arrived yesterday. That is as it seems to me. And it must be so, for if there was a day-before-yesterday I was not there when it happened, or I should remember it. It will be best to start right and not let the record get confused, for some instinct tells me that these details are going to be important to the historian some day. For I feel like an experiment, I feel exactly like an experiment. I followed the other experiment around yesterday afternoon, at a distance, to see what it might be for, if I could, but I was not able to make it out. I think it is a man. I had never seen a man, but it looked like one, and I feel sure that that is what it is. I realize that I feel more curiosity about it than about any of the other reptiles, if it is a reptile, and I suppose it is. For it has frowsy hair and blue eyes, and looks like a reptile. It has no hips; it tapers like a carrot; when it stands it spreads itself apart like a derrick; so I think it is a reptile. I was afraid of it at first, and started to run every time it turned around, for I thought it was going to chase me; but by-and-by I found it was only trying to get away, so after that I was not timid any more, but tracked it along, several hours, about twenty yards behind, which made it nervous and unhappy. At last it was a good deal worried, and climbed a tree. I waited a good while, then gave it up and went home.

Sunday — It is up there yet. Resting, apparently. But that is a subterfuge: Sunday isn't the day of rest; Saturday is appointed for that. It looks to me like a creature that is more interested in resting than in anything else. It would tire me to rest so much. It tires me just to sit around and watch the tree. I do wonder what it is for; I never see it do anything.

ADAM: Monday — This new creature with the long hair is a good deal in the way. It is always hanging around and following me about. I don't like this; I am not used to company. I wish it would stay with the other animals ... Cloudy today, wind in the east; think we shall have rain ... We? Where did I get that word? — I remember now — the new creature uses it. Tuesday — Been examining the great waterfall. It is the finest thing on the estate, I think. The new creature calls it Niagara Falls — why, I am sure I do not know. Says it looks like Niagara Falls. That is not a reason, it is mere waywardness and imbecility. I get no chance to name anything myself. The new creature names everything that comes along, before I can get in a protest. And always that same pretext is offered — it looks like the thing. There is the Dodo, for instance. Says the moment one looks at it one sees at a glance that it, "looks like a Dodo." It will have to keep that name, no doubt. It wearies me to fret about it, and it does no good, anyway. Dodo! It looks no more like a Dodo than I do.

EVE: Wednesday — It has low tastes, and is not kind. When I went there yesterday evening in the gloaming it had crept down and was trying to catch the little speckled fishes that play in the pool, and I had to clod it to make it go up the tree again and let them alone. I wonder if that is what it is for? Hasn't it any heart? Hasn't it any compassion for those little creatures? Can it be that it was designed and manufactured for such ungentle work? It has the look of it. One of the clods took it back of the ear, and it used language. It gave me a thrill, for it was the first time I had ever heard speech, except my own. I did not understand the words, but they seemed expressive. When I found it could talk I felt a new interest in it, for I love to talk; I talk, all day, and in my sleep, too, and I am very interesting, but if I had another to talk to I could be twice as interesting, and would never stop, if desired.

ADAM: Wednesday — Built me a shelter against the rain, but would not have it to myself in peace. The new creature intruded. When I tried to put it out it shed water out of the holes it looks with, and wiped it away with the back of its paws, and made a noise such as some of the other animals make when they are in distress. I wish it would not talk; it is always talking. That sounds like a cheap fling at the poor creature, a slur; but I do not mean it so. I have never heard the human voice before, and any new and strange sound intruding itself here upon the solemn hush of these dreaming solitudes offends my ear and seems a false note. And this new sound is so close to me; it is right at my shoulder, right at my ear, first on one side and then on the other, and I am used only to sounds that are more or less distant from me.

Friday — The naming goes recklessly on, in spite of anything I can do. I had a very good name for the estate, and it was musical and pretty — Garden of Eden. Privately, I continue to call it that, but not any longer publicly. The new creature says it is all woods and rocks and scenery, and therefore has no resemblance to a garden. Says it looks like a park, and does not look like anything but a park. Consequently, without consulting me, it has been new-named — Niagara Falls Park. This is sufficiently high-handed, it seems to me. My life is not as happy as it was.

EVE: Saturday — All the week I tagged around after him and tried to get acquainted. I had to do the talking, because he was shy, but I didn't mind it. He seemed pleased to have me around, and I used the sociable "we" a good deal, because it seemed to flatter him to be included.

ADAM: Saturday — The new creature eats too much fruit. We are going to run short, most likely. "We" again — that is its word; mine too, now, from hearing it so much. Good deal of fog this morning. I do not go out in the fog myself. The new creature does. It goes out in all weathers, and stumps right in with its muddy feet. And talks. It used to be so pleasant and quiet here.

EVE: Wednesday — We are getting along very well indeed, now, and getting better and better acquainted. He does not try to avoid me any more, which is a good sign, and shows that he likes to have me with him. That pleases me, and I study to be useful to him in every way I can, so as to increase his regard. During the last day or two I have taken all the work of naming things off his hands, and this has been a great relief to him, for he has no gift in that line, and is evidently very grateful. He can't think of a rational name to save him but I do not let him see that I am aware of his defect. Whenever a new creature comes along I name it before he has time to expose himself by an awkward silence. In this way I have saved him many embarrassments. I have no defect like his. The minute I set eyes on an animal I know what it is. I don't have to reflect a moment; the right name comes out instantly, just as if it were an inspiration, as no doubt it is, for I am sure it wasn't in me half a minute before. I seem to know just by the shape of the creature and the way it acts what animal it is. When the Dodo came along he thought it was a wildcat — I saw it in his eye. But I saved him. And I was careful not to do it in a WAY THAT COULD HURT HIS PRIDE.

END OF FREEVIEW
You'll want to read and perform this show!