

My granddad used to tell me, "Boy, when I was just your age, I was a river pilot on a showboat called The Stage. I'd hobnob with them southern belles and ev'ry roustabout. I'd listen to them paddle wheels and hear the leadsman shout!

Mark Twain, it's two fathoms deep below. Mark Twain, heave the gang plank. Start the show.
Mark Twain, play those banjos as we go down the Mississippi, 'round the Gulf of Mexico.

There were gamblers, crooks and fakers and a minstrel man who'd dance. A singin' gal, Simone Lamour, imported straight from France.

It was a floatin' palace, boy, that showboat called The Stage, and granddad was the king of it when he was just my age."

The calliope is quiet now. The rudder's thick with rust. The man in deck and the paddle wheels are covered high with dust. But granddad's in his glory, still standin' on the bow. A halo 'round his pilot's cap and I can hear him now.