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The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Mark Twain

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Brief comment and general introduction

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The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is often considered to be Twain's masterpiece. It combined his raw humor with startlingly mature material to create a novel that directly attacked many of the traditions the South held dear. Through Huckleberry Finn's eyes the South is revealed and judged. His companion, a runaway slave named Jim, provides Huck with friendship and protection during their journey along the Mississippi. The primary theme of the novel is the conflict between civilization and "natural life." Huck represents natural life through his freedom of spirit, his uncivilized ways, and his desire to escape from civilization. He was brought up without any rules and has a strong resistance to anything that might "civilized" him. Throughout the novel, Twain seems to suggest that the uncivilized way of life is better; he draws on the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his belief that civilization corrupts rather than improves human beings.



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2. GHF Mark Twain 5! \$! J (1835K 1910)

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Huckleberry Finn ! " # \$ % &

Jim PQ

Tom Sawyer RQ\$ST

4. UVWXF First person narration (Y Z N[UV)

5. Good Quotations: (\] ^)

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and feeling rested and ruther comfortable and satisfied.

(2) I thought I was dreaming; and whei wa t0.02976 Tc (w) Tj-0.05952 Tc (h) TjTj0.0

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shape.

(6) I went down the road away in the night, and slipped around front, and see her setting there by her candle in the window with her eyes towards the road and the tears in them; and I wished I could do something for her, but I couldn't, only to swear that I wouldn't never do nothing to grieve her any more.



Chapter1

You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer; but that is no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There were things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I had never seen anybody but lied one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly—Tom's Aunt Polly, she is—and Mary, and the Widow Douglas are all told about in that book, which is mostly a true book, with some stretchers, as I said before.

Now the way that the book winds up is this: Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece P all gold. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher took it and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece all the year round—more than what a body could tell to do with. The Widow Douglas took me for her son, and allowed that she would civilize me; but it was rough living in the house all the time, and so when I couldn't stand it any longer I lit out. I got into my old rags and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But Tom Sawyer hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

The widow cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and put me in the new clothes again, and I couldn't do anything but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well, then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rang a bell for supper, and you had to come on time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the food.

Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try not to do it any more. Her sister, Miss Watson, a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on, had

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just come to live with her, and took a set at me now with a spelling-book. She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stand it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. She told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean any harm. All I wanted was to go somewhere; all I wanted was a change. She said she was going to live so as to go to the good place, but I couldn't see any advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind that I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do any good.

Miss Watson kept pecking at me, and it got tiresome and lonesome. By and by they fetched the niggers in and had prayers, and then everybody was off to bed. I went up to my room with a piece of candle, and put it on the table. Then I set down in a chair by the window and tried to think of something cheerful, but it was no use. I felt so lonesome that I almost wished I was dead. Well, after a long time I heard the clock away off in the town go boom—boom—boom—twelve licks; and all still again—still than ever. Pretty soon I heard a twig snap down in the dark something was a stirring. I set still and listened. Directly I could just barely hear a “Me-yow! Me-yow!” down there. That was good! Said I, “Me-yow! Me-yow!” as soft as I could, and then I put out the light and scrambled out of the window on to the shed. Then I slipped down to the ground and crawled in among the trees, and, sure enough, there was Tom Sawyer waiting for me.

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Chapter2

We went tiptoeing along a path amongst the trees back towards the end of the widow's garden, stooping down so as the branches wouldn't scrape our heads. When we were passing by the kitchen I fell over a root and made a noise. We crouched down and laid still. Miss Watson's big nigger, named Jim, was setting in the kitchen door; we could see him pretty clear, because there was a light behind him. He got up and stretched his neck out about a minute, listening. Then he said:

) Who?"

He listened some more; then he came tiptoeing down and stood right between us; we could touch him, nearly. Well, likely it was minutes and minutes that there wasn't a sound, and we were all there so close together. Pretty soon Jim said: "Say, what are you? Well, I know what I'm going to do: I'm going to set down here and listen till I hear it again."

So he set down on the ground and leaned his back up against a tree, and stretched his legs out till one of them almost touched one of mine. My nose began to itch. It itched till the



Jim's hat off of his head and hung it on a limb right over him, and Jim stirred a little, but he didn't wake. Well, when Tom and me got to the edge of the hill-top we looked away down into the village and could see three or four lights twinkling. We went down the hill and found Jo Harper and Ben Rogers, and two or three more of the boys, hid in the old tanyard. So we unhitched a skiff and pulled down the river two miles and a half, to the hillside, and went ashore.

We went to a clump of bushes, and Tom made everybody swear to keep the secret, and then showed them a hole in the hill, right in the thickest part of the bushes. Then we lit the candles, and crawled in on our hands and knees. We went about two hundred yards, and then the cave opened up. We went along a narrow place and got into a kind of room, all damp and sweaty and cold, and there we stopped. Tom said:

) Now, we'll start this band of robbers and call it Tom Sawyer's Gang. Everybody that wants to join has got to take an oath, and write his name in blood."

Everybody was willing. So Tom got out a sheet of paper that he had written the oath on, and read it. It swore every boy to stick to the band, and never tell any of the secrets; and if anybody did anything to any boy in the band, whichever boy was ordered to kill that person and his family must do it, and he mustn't eat and he mustn't sleep till he had killed them and hacked a cross in their breasts, which was the sign of the band. And nobody that didn't belong to the band could use that mark, and if he did he must be sued; and if he did it again he must be killed. And if anybody that belonged to the band told the secrets, he must have his throat cut, and then have his carcass burnt up and the ashes scattered all around, and his name blotted off of the list with blood and never mentioned again by the gang, but have a curse put on it and be forgotten forever.

Some thought it would be good to kill the families of boys who told the secrets. Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and wrote it in. Then Ben Rogers said:

) Here's Huck Finn, he has got no family; what you are going to do about him?"

) Well, hasn't he got a father?" said Tom Sawyer.

) Yes, he's got a father, but you can never find him these

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days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs` in the tanyard, but he hadn't been seen in these parts for a year or more."

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They talked it over, and they were going to rule me out, because they said every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it wouldn't be fair and square for the others. I was almost ready to cry; but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them Miss Watson—they could kill her. Everybody said:

) Oh, she'll do. That's all right. Huck can come in."

Then they all stuck a pin in their fingers to get blood to sign with, and I made my mark on the paper.

Then we elected Tom Sawyer first captain and Jo Harper second captain of the Gang, and so started home.

I climbed up the shed and crept into my window just before day was breaking. My new clothes were all greased up and clayey, and I was dog-tired.

Chapter3

Well, I got a good going-over in the morning from old Miss Watson on account of my clothes; but the widow didn't scold, but only cleaned off the grease and clay, and looked so sorry that I thought I would behave awhile` if I could. Then Miss Watson took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing came of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it wasn't so. I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I said to myself, if a body could get anything they prayed for, Why couldn't the widow get back her silver snuffboxa that was stolen? Why couldn't Miss Watson fat up? No, said I to myself, there was nothing in it. I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body could get by praying was "spiritual gifts".

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This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant. I must help other people, and did everything I could for other people, and looked out for them all the time, and never thought about myself. This was including Miss Watson, as I took it.

I went out in the woods and turned it over in my mind a long time, but I couldn't see any advantage about it—except for the other people; so at last I reckoned③ I wouldn't worry about it any more, but just let it go.

Pap hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him any more. He used to always whale me when he was sober and could get his hands on me; though I used to take to the woods most of the time when he was around. Well, about this time he was found in the river drowned, about twelve miles above town, so people said. They judged it was him, anyway; but they couldn't make anything out of the face, because it had been in the water so long and it wasn't much like a face at all. They said he was floating on his back in the water. They took him and buried him on the bank. But I wasn't comfortable long, because I happened to think of something. I knew mighty well that a drowned man didn't float on his back, but on his face. So I knew, then, that this wasn't pap, but a woman dressed up in a man's clothes. So I was uncomfortable again. I judged the old man would turn up again by and by, though I wished he wouldn't.

We played robber now and then about a month, but we hadn't robbed anybody, hadn't killed any people, but only just pretended. One time Tom sent a boy to run about town with a blazing stick(which was the sign for the Gang to get together), and then he said he had got secret news that the next day a whole parcel of Spanish merchants and rich Arabs was going to camp in Cave Hollow with two hundred elephants, six hundred camels, and over a thousand mules`, all loaded down with diamonds, and they did have only a guard of four hundred soldiers, and so we would lay in ambuscadea. When he called it, we just went out and killed the lot and scooped the things. In order to see the camels and elephants, I was on hand the next day, Saturday, and when we got the word we rushed out of the woods and down the hill. It wasn't anything but a Sunday-school picnic, and only a primer-class was at that. We busted it up, and chased the children up the hollow; then the teacher charged in, and made us drop everything and cut. I didn't see diamonds, and I told Tom Sawyer so. I reckoned he believed in the Arabs and the elephants, but as for me, I thought different. It had all the marks of a Sunday school.

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Chapter 4

Well, three or four months ran along, and it was well into the winter now. I had been to school most of the time and could spell and read and write just a little, and could say the multiplication table up to six times seven is thirty-five, and I didn't reckon I could ever get any further than that if I was to live forever. I didn't take any stock in mathematics, anyway.

At first I hated the school, but by and by I got so I could stand it. I was getting sort of used to the widow's ways, too, and they weren't so raspy on me. I liked the old ways best, but I was getting so I liked the new ones, too, a little bit. The widow said I was coming along slowly but sure, and oing very satisfactorily. She said she wasn't ashamed of me.

One morning I happened to turn over the saltcellar at breakfast. I reached for some of it as quickly as I could to throw over my left shoulder and keep off the bad luck, but Miss Watson was in ahead of me, She said, "Take your hands away, Huckleberry; what a mess you are always making!" The widow put in a good word for me, but that wasn't going to keep off the bad luck, I knew that well enough. I started out, after breakfast, feeling worried and shaky, and wondering where it was going to fall on me and what it was going to be.

I went down to the front garden and climbed over the stile through the high board fence. There was an inch of new snow on the ground, and I saw somebody's tracks. They had come up from the quarry and stood around the stile a while, but they hadn't come in, after standing around so. It was very curious, somehow. I was going to follow around, but I stooped down to look at the tracks first. I didn't notice anything at first, but next I did. There was a cross in the left boot-heel made with big nails, to keep off the devil.

I was up in a second and shinning down the hill. I looked over my shoulder every now and then, but I didn't see anybody. I was at Judge Thatcher's as quickly as I could get there. He said:

) Why, my boy, you are all out of breath. Do you come for

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your interest?"

) No, sir," I said; "Is there some for me?"

) Oh, yes, over a hundred and fifty dollars. Quite a fortune for you. You had better let me invest it along with your six thousand, because if you take it you'll spend it."

) No, sir," I said, "I don't want to spend it. I want you to take it; I want to give it to you—the six thousand and all."

He said:

) Well, I'm puzzled. Is something the matter?"

) Please take it," said I, "And don't ask me anything—then I won't have to tell lies."

He studied a while, and then he said:

) Oho-o! I think I see. You want to sell all your property to me—not give it. That's the correct idea."

Then he wrote something on a paper and read it over, and said:

) There; you see it says 'for a consideration'. That means I have bought it from you and paid you for it. Here's a dollar for you. Now you sign it."

So I signed it, and left.

Miss Watson's nigger, Jim, had a hairball as big as your fist, which had been taken out of the fourth stomach of an ox, and he used to do magic with it. He said there was a spirit inside it, and it knew everything. So I went to him that night and told him pap was here again, for I found his tracks in the snow. What I wanted to know was, what he was going to do, and was he going to stay? Jim got out his hairball and said something over it, and then he held it up and dropped it on the floor. It fell pretty solid; Jim got down on his knees, and put his ear against it and listened. But it was no use; he said it wouldn't talk. He said sometimes it wouldn't talk without money. I gave him a quarter and Jim put it under the hairball, and got down and listened again. This time he said the hairball was all right. He said:

) Your father doesn't know yet what he's going to do. The best way is to let the old man take his own way."

When I lit my candle and went up to my room that night there sat pap—his own self!

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Chapter 5

I had shut the door. Then I turned around. And there he was. I used to be scared of him all the time, he tanned me so much. But right away after I saw him I was not scared of him worth bothering about.

I stood looking at him; he set there looking at me, with his chair tilted back a little. I set the candle down. I noticed the window was up; so he had climbed in by the shed. He kept looking at me all over. By and by he said:

) Starchy clothes. You think you're a good deal of a big-bug, don't you?"

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) Maybe I am, maybe I am not," I said.

) Don't give me any of your lip." said he.

) You've put on considerable many frills since I was away. You're educated, to o, they say—can read and write. You think you're better than your father, now, don't you, because he can't? I'll take it out of you. Who told you that you might meddle with such foolishness? Who told you that you could?"

) The widow. She told me."

) The widow, hey?—And who told the widow she could put in her shovel about a thing that is none of her business?"

) Nobody told her."

) Well, I'll teach her how to meddle. And looky here you drop that school, you hear? I am not the man to stand it—you hear?" Then after a while, he said: "

Say, lemme hear you read."

I took up a book and began something about General Washington and the wars. When I'd read about half a minute, he fetched the book and knocked it across the house. He said:

) It's so. You can do it. I had my doubts when you told me. Now looky here; you stop putting on frills. If I catch you about that school, I'll tan you good." He took up a little blue and yellow picture of some cows and a boy, and said:

) What's this?"

) It's something they gave me for learning my lessons well."

He tore it up, and said:) I'll give you something better I'll give you a cowhide,

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He set there mumbling and growling a minute, and then he said:

) Looky here—I've been in town for two days, and I heard nothing but about you being rich. That's why I come. You give me that money tomorrow—I want it.”

) I have got no money, I tell you. You ask Judge Thatcher; he'll tell you the sa me.”

) All right. I'll ask him; and I'll make him pungle`, too, or I'll know the reason why. Say, how much have you got in your pocket? I want it.,

) I have got only a dollar, and I want that to—”

) It doesn't make any difference what you want it for—you just shell it out.”

He took it and bit it to see if it was good, and then he said he was going down town to get some whisky; said he hadn't had a drink all day.

The next day he was drunk, and he went to Judge Thatcher's and tried to make him give up the money; but he couldn't, and then he swore he'd make the law force him.

The judge and the widow went to law to get the court to take me away from him and let one of them be my guardiana; but it was a new judge that had just come, and he didn't know the old man; so he said courts mustn't interfere and separate families if they could help it. So Judge Thatcher and the widow had to quit on the business.

That pleased the old man till he couldn't rest. He said he'd cowhide me till I was black and blue if I didn't raise some money for him. I borrowed three dollars from Judge Thatcher, and pap took it and got drunk, and went blowing around the town till almost midnight; then the next day people in town had him before court, and jailed him again for a week.

When he got out, the new judge said he was going to make a man of him. So he took him to his own house, and dressed him up clean and nice, and had him to breakfast and dinner and supper with the family. But one night he got powerful thirsty, and towards daylight he crawled out again drunk as a fiddler, and rolled off the porch and broke his left arm in two places, and was almost frozen to death when somebody found him after sunup.

The judge felt kind of sore` . He said he reckoned a body could reform the old man with a shotgun, maybe, but he didn't know other ways.

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Chapter 6

Well, pretty soon the old man was up and around again, and then he went for Judge Thatcher in the courts to make him give up that money, and he went for me, too, for not stopping school. I didn't want to go to school much before, but I reckoned I'd go now to spite pap. That law trial was a slow business, so every now and then I'd borrow two or three dollars off from the judge for him. Every time he got money he got drunk; and every time he got drunk he raised Cain around town; and every time he raised Cain he got jailed. He was just suited—this kind of thing was right in his line.

He got to hang around the widow's too much and so she told him at last that if he didn't quit using around there she would make trouble for him. Well, wasn't he mad? He said he would show who was Huck Finn's boss. So he watched out for me one day in the spring, and caught me, and took me up the river about three miles in a skiff, and crossed over to the Illinois shore where it was woody. There was no house but an old log hut in the place, and the timber was so thick that you couldn't find it if you didn't know where it was.

He kept me with him all the time, and I never got a chance to run off. We lived in that old cabin, and he always locked the door and put the key under his head nights. The widow found out where I was by and by, and she sent a man over to try to get hold of me; but pap drove him off with the gun, and it wasn't long after that till I was used to being where I was, and liked it—all but the cowhide part.

But by and by pap got to going away so much, and locking me in. Once he locked me in and was gone three days. I made up my mind I would fix up some way to leave there. I had no key and the door was so thick and solid. Pap was pretty careful not to leave a knife or anything in the cabin when he was away; But finally, I found an old rusty wood-saw without any handle; I greased it up and went to work. I was getting towards the end of it when I heard pap's gun in the woods. I got rid of the signs of my work, and dropped the blanket and hid my saw, and pretty soon pap came in.

Pap wasn't in a good humor—so he was his natural self. He said he was down town, and everything was going wrong. His lawyer said people in town allowed there'd be another trial

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to get me away from him and give me to the widow for my guardian, and they guessed it would win this time.

He said he would like to see the widow get me. He said he would watch out, he knew a place six or seven miles off to stow me in, where they might hunt till they dropped and they couldn't find me. That made me pretty uneasy again, but only for a minute; I reckoned I wouldn't stay on hand till he got that chance.

The old man made me go to the skiff and fetch the things cech ecechg iad.-15.6 TD -0.12864 (s) Tj-0.24 Tc (k) 7



) Tramp—tramp—tramp; that's the dead; they're coming after me; Oh, they're here! Don't touch me. Oh, let a poor devil alone!”

Then he rolled himself up in his blanket and wallowed in under the old pine table, still begging; and then he went to crying. I could hear him through the blanket.

By and by he rolled out and jumped up on his feet, looking wild, and he saw me and went for me. He chased me round and round with a knife, calling me the Angel of Death, and saying he would kill me. Once when I turned short and dodged under his arm he made a grab and got me by the jacket and I thought I was gone; but

I slid out of the jacket quick as lightning, c



) Well, I tried to, but I couldn't; I couldn't budge@ you.,

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) Well, all right. Go out and see if there's a fish on the lines for breakfast. I'll be along in a minute.”

He unlocked the door, and I cleared out up the riverbank. I reckoned I would have great times now if I were over at the town. The June rise used to be always luck for me; because as soon as that rise began here came cordwood floating down, and pieces of log rafts—sometimes a dozen logs together; so all you had to do was to catch them and sell them to the wood-yards and the sawmill.

I went along up the bank with one eye out for pap and the other one out for what the rise might fetch along. Well, all at once here came a canoe; I shot head-first off of the bank like a frog, clothes and all on, and struck out for the canoe. It was a drift-canoe, sure enough, and I climbed in and paddled` her ashore. But when I got to shore pap wasn't in sight yet, and as I was running her into a little creek, I struck another idea: I judged I'd hide her good, and then, in stead of taking to the woods when I ran off, I'd go down the river about fifty miles and camp in one place for good, and not have such a rough time tramping@ on foot.

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While we laid off after breakfast to sleep up, both of us were about wore out, pap raised up a minute to drink another barrel of water, and he said:

) Another time a man comes prowling round here you roust me out, you hear?” Then he dropped down and went to sleep again; but what he had been saying gave me the very idea I wanted. I said to myself, I could fix it now, so nobody wouldn't think of following me.

About twelve o'clock we turned out and went along up the bank. By and by along came parts of a log raft—nine logs fast together. We went out with the skiff and towed it ashore. After dinner, pap planed to shove it to town and sell, so he locked me in and took the skiff, and started off towing the raft about half-past three. I waited till I reckoned he had got a good start; then I outed with my saw, and went to work on that log again. Before he was on the other side of the river I was out of the hole.



I took the sack of corn meal and took it to where the canoe was hid, then I did the same with the side of bacon; I took everything that was worth a cent. I cleaned out the place. I wanted an axe, but there wasn't any, only the one out at the woodpile, and I knew why I was going to leave that. I fetched out the gun, and now I was done.

I had worn the ground a good deal by crawling out of the hole and dragging out so many things. So I fixed that as good as I could from the outside by scattering dust on the place. If you stood four or five feet away and didn't know it was sawed, you would never notice it; and besides, this was the back of the cabin, and it wasn't likely anybody would go fooling around there.

It was all grass clear to the canoe, so I hadn't left a track. All safe. So I took the gun and went up a piece into the woods, and was hunting around for some birds when I saw a wild pig; I shot this fellow and took him into camp.

I took the axe and smashed in the door. I beat it and hacked` it considerable doing it. I fetched the pig in, and took him back nearly to the table and hacked into his throat with the axe, and laid him down on the ground to bleed; Well, next I took an old sack and put a lot of big rocks in it and I started it from the pig, and dragged it to the door and through the woods

down to the river and into the water. () Tj-0.24 Tc ac (h) Tj-0.12864 Tc (e T2-0.24 Tc



accident. Then I tied up the rip in the meal sack with a string, so it would leak no more, and took it and my saw to the canoe again.

It was about dark now; so I dropped the canoe down the river under some willows that hung over the bank, and waited for the moon to rise. I made fast to a willow; then I took a bite to eat, and laid out a plan. I said to myself, they would follow the track of that sack of rocks to the shore or they would follow that meal track to the lake. But they wouldn't ever hunt the river for anything but my dead carcass. They would soon get tired of that. All right; then I could stop anywhere I wanted to. Jackson's Island was good enough for me; I knew that island pretty well, and nobody ever came there. And then I could paddle over to town nights, and slink around and pick up things I wanted. Jackson's Island was the place.

I was pretty tired, and the first thing I knew was that I was asleep. When I woke up I didn't know where I was for a minute. I set up and looked around, a little scared. Then I remembered. I took a good gap and a stretch, and was just going to unhitch and start when I heard a sound away over the water. I listened and peeped out through the willow branches; maybe it was pap, though I wasn't expecting him. The man dropped below me with the current, and he went by so close that I could reach out the gun and touch him. Well, it was pap, sure enough—and sober, too, by the way he laid his oars.

I didn't lose any time. The next minute I was spinning down stream soft but quick in the shade of the bank. I made two miles and a half, and then laid down in the bottom of the canoe and let her float. After some time I rose up, and there was Jackson's Island, about two miles and a half down stream, big and dark and solid, like a steamboat without any lights. It didn't take me long to get there. I got into the dead water and landed on the side towards the Illinois shore. I went up and set down on a log at the head of the island, and looked out on the big river, a monstrously big lumber-raft was about a mile up stream, coming along down, with a lantern in the middle of it. I watched it come creeping down, and when it was almost beside where I stood I heard a man say, "Sterna oars, there! Heave her head to stab-board! I heard that just as plain as if the man was by my side.

There was a little gray in the sky now; so I stepped into the woods, and laid down for a nap before breakfast.

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Chapter 8

The sun was up so high when I waked that I judged it was after eight o'clock. I was powerful lazy and comfortable—didn't want to get up and cook breakfast. Well, I was dozing off again when I thought I heard a deep sound of "boom!" away up the river. I rouse up, and rested on my elbow and listened; pretty soon I heard it again. I hopped up, and saw a bunch of smoke laying on the water a long way up. And there was the ferryboat full of people floating along down. I knew what was the matter now. You see, they were firing cannon over the water, trying to make my carcass come to the top.

I was pretty hungry, but it wasn't going to do for me to start a fire, because they might see the smoke. I lit a pipe and had a good long smoke, and went on watching. When the ferryboat got pretty well along down towards me, I put out my pipe and laid down behind a log on the bank in a little open place where from the log fork I could peep through.

By and by she came along, and she drifted in so close that they could run out a plank and walk ashore. Almost everybody was on the boat. Pap, and Judge Thatcher, and Bessie Thatcher, and Jo Harper, and Tom Sawyer, and his old Aunt Polly, and plenty more. Everybody was talking about the murder, but then the captain sang out:

) Stand away!" and the cannon let off such a blast right before me that it made me deaf with the noise and pretty near blind with the smoke, and I judged I was gone. If they'd had some bullets in, I reckoned they'd got the corpse they was after. Well, I saw I wasn't hurt, thanks to goodness. The boat floated on and went out of sight around the shoulder of the island. I could hear the booming now and then, further and further off, and by and by, after an hour, I didn't hear it any more.

I knew I was all right now. Nobody else would come hunting after me. And so for three days and nights. No difference—just the same thing. The next day I went exploring around down through the island. I was boss of it; it all belonged to me, so to say, and I wanted to know all about it. I had my gun along, but I hadn't shot anything; it was for protection; thought I would kill some game nigh home. About this time I mighty near stepped on a good-sized snake, and it went sliding off through the grass and flowers, and I was after it, trying to get a shot at it. I clipped along, and all of a sudden I bounded right on

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to the ashes of a campfire that was still smoking.

My heart jumped up amongst my lungs. I never waited for to look further, but uncocked mygun and went sneaking back on my tiptoes as fast as ever I could. When I got to camp I put out the fire and scattered the ashes around to look like an old last year's camp, and then climbed a tree.

I reckoned I was up in the tree for two hours; but I didn't see anything, I didn't hear anything. Well, I couldn't stay there forever. So when it was good and dark I slid out from shore before moonrise and paddled over to the Illinois bank. I went out in the woods and cooked a supper, and I had made up my mind I would stay there all night when I heard people's voices. I got everything into the canoe as quick as I could, and then went creeping through the woods to see what I could find out. I hadn't got far when I heard a man say:

) We better camp here if we can find a good place; the horses are about beaten out. Let's look around.”

I didn't wait, but shoved out and paddled away easy. I tied up in the old place, and reckoned I would sleep in the canoe.

I didn't sleep much. I couldn't, somehow, for thinking. And every time I waked p I thought somebody had me by the neck. So the sleep didn't do me any good. By and by I said to myself, I couldn't live this way; So I took my paddle and slid out from shore just a step or two, and then let the canoe drop along down amongst the shadows. A little rippy`, cool breeze began to blow, and that was as good as saying the night was about done. I gave her a turn with the paddle and brought her nose to shore; then I got my gun and slipped out and into the edge of the woods. But I hadn't any luck somehow; I couldn't seem to find the place. But by and by, sure enough, I caught a glimpse of fire away through the trees. I went for it, cautious and slow. I set there behind a clump of bushes in about six feet of him, and kept my eyes on him steady. It was getting gray daylight now. Pretty soon he gapped and stretched himself and hove off the blanket, and it was Miss Watson's Jim! I bet I was glad to see him. I said:

) Hello, Jim!” and skipped out.

He bounced up and stared at me wildly. Then he dropped down on his knees, and put his hands together and said:

) Don't hurt me—don't! I hadn't ever done any harm to a ghost. I liked dead people, and did all I could for them. You go

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and get into river again, and don't do harm to Old Jim!"

Well, It wasn't long making him understand I wasn't dead. I was ever so glad to see Jim. I talked along, but he only set there and looked at me; never said anything. Then I said:

) It's good daylight. Let's get breakfast. Make up your camp fire good."

So we went over to where the canoe was, and while he built a fire in a grassy open place amongst the trees, I fetched meal and bacon and coffee, and coffee-pot and frying-pan, and sugar and tin cups, and the nigger was set back considerably, because he reckoned it was all done with witchcraft. I caught a good big catfish, too, and Jim cleaned it with his knife, and fried it.

When breakfast was ready we lollēdā on the grass and ate it smoking hot. Jim laid it in with all his might, for he was about starved. Then when we had got pretty well stuffed, we laid off. By and by Jim said:

) But looky here, Huck, who would be killed in that shanty if it wasn't you?"

Then I told him the whole thing, and he said it was smart. Then I said:

) How do you come to be here, Jim, and how'd you get here?"

He looked pretty uneasy, and didn't say anything for a minute. Then he said:

) But you wouldn't tell on me if I tell you, would you, Huck?"

) Blamed if I would, Jim."

) Well, you see, Old missus—that's Miss Watson—she pecked on me all the time, and treated me rough, but she always said she wouldn't sell me down to Orleans. But I noticed a nigger trader round the place considerably lately, and I began to get uneasy. Well, one night I heard old missus tell the wider she was going to sell me down to Orleans, I never waited to hear the rest, and lit out mighty quick, I tell you."

) Well, I tucked out up the river road, and went about two miles or more. I said to myself, a raft was what I wanted; it would make no track."

) But I didn't have any luck. I was almost to the foot of the island before I found a good place. I had my pipe and some matches in my cap, and they weren't wet, so I was all right."

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Chapter9

I wanted to go and look at a place right about the middle of the island that I'd found when I was exploring; so we started and soon got to it, because the island was only three miles long and a quarter of a mile wide.

This place was a tolerable long, steep hill or ridge about forty feet high. We tramped and climbed around all over it, and by and by found a good big cavern in the rock, almost up to the top on the side towards Illinois. The cavern was as big as two or three rooms bunched together, and Jim could stand up straight in it, and it was cool in there.

Jim said if we had the canoe hid in a good place, and had all the traps` in the cavern, we could rush there if anybody was to come to the island, and they would never find us without dogs.

So we went back and got the canoe, and paddled up abreast the cavern, and lugged@ all the traps up there. Then we hunted up a place close by to hide the canoe in, amongst the thick willows. We took some fish off from the lines and set them again, and began to get ready for dinner.

We spread the blankets inside for a carpet, and ate our dinner in there. We put all the other things handy at the back of the cavern. Pretty soon it darkened up, and began to thunder and lighten. Directly it began to rain, and it rained like all fury, too, and I had never seen the wind blow so. It was one of these regular summer storms.

The river went on rising and rising for ten or twelve days, till at last it was over the banks. The water was three or four feet deep on the island in the low places and on the Illinois bottom. Daytimes we paddled all over the island in the canoe, It

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pine planks. Another night when we were up at the head of the island, just before daylight, here came a frame-house down, on the west side. She was two-story, and tilted over considerably. We paddled out and got aboard—climbed in at an upstairs window. But it was too dark to see yet, so we made the canoe fast and set in her to wait for daylight.

The light began to come before we got to the foot of the island. Then we looked in at the window. We could make out a bed, and a table, and two old chairs, and lots of things around about on the floor, and there was clothes hanging against the wall. There was something lying on the floor in the far corner that looked like a man. So Jim said:

) Hello, you!”

But it didn't budge, and then Jim said:

) The man isn't asleep—he's dead. You hold still—I'll go and see.”

He went, and bent down and looked, and said:

) It's a dead man. Yes, indeed; naked, too. He's been shot in the back. I reckon he's been dead two or three days. Come in, Huck, but don't look at his face—it's too ghastly.”

I didn't look at him at all. There was heaps` of old greasy cards scattered around over the floor, and old whisky bottles,

and a couple of masks maTc (bu) Tj-0.05568 Tc (t)(Tj-0.128640.48 Tc () Tj-0.1.) Tj-0.24 Tc (o2 Tc (r) Tj-0.24 Tc (o



the canoe and covered him up with the quilt, because if he set up people could tell he was a nigger a good way off. I paddled over to the Illinois shore, and drifted down most a half a mile doing it. I crept up the dead water under the bank, and hadn't any accidents and didn't see anybody. We got home all safe.

Chapter10

After breakfast I wanted to talk about the dead man and guess out how he came to be killed, but Jim didn't want to. He said a man that wasn't buried was more likely to go around than one that was planted and comfortable. That sounded pretty reasonable, so I didn't say any more.

We rummaged` the clothes we'd got, and found eight dollars in silver sewed up in the lining of an old blanket overcoat. Jim said he reckoned the people in that house stole the coat, because if they'd known the money was there they wouldn't had left it. I said I reckoned they killed him, too; but Jim didn't want to talk about that. I said:

) Now you think it's bad luck; but what did you say when I fetched in the snake-skin that I found on the top of the ridge the day before yesterday? You said it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snakeskin with my hands. Well, here's your bad luck! We've raked@ in all this truck and eight dollars besides. I wish we could have some bad luck like this every day, Jim."

) Never you mind, honey, never you mind. It's coming. Mind I tell you, it's coming." It did come, too. Well, after dinner the Friday we were lying around in the grass and got out of tobacco. I went to the cavern to get some, and found a rattlesnake` in there. I killed him, and curled him up on the

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He jumped up yelling, I laid the snake out in a second with a stick, and Jim grabbed pap's whisky-jug and began to pour it down. Jim sucked and sucked at the jug, and now and then he got out of his head and pitched around and yelled; but every time he came to himself he went to suck at the jug again.

Jim was laid up for four days and nights. Then the swelling was all gone and he was around again. I made up my mind I wouldn't ever touch a snakeskin again with my hands, now I saw what had come of it. Well, the days went along, and the river went down between its banks again; and about the first thing we did was to bait one of the big hooks with a skinned rabbit and set it and catch a catfish that was as big as a man, being six feet and two inches long. It was as big a fish as was ever caught in the Mississippi, I reckoned. Jim said he hadn't ever seen a bigger one. He would be worth a good deal over at the village.

Next morning I said it was getting slow and dull, and I wanted to get a stirring up some way. I said I reckoned I would slip over the river and find out what was going on. Jim liked that notion; but he said I must go in the dark and look sharp. Then he studied it over and said, couldn't I put on some of the old things and dress up like a girl? So we shortened up one of the calico` gowns, and I turned up my trouser-legs to my knees and got into it. I put on the sunbonnet and tied it under my chin, and then for a body to look in and see my face was like looking down a joint of stovepipe^a. Jim said nobody would know me, even in the daytime, hardly. I practiced around all day to get the hang of the things, and by and by I could do pretty well in them, only Jim said I didn't walk like a girl; and he said I must quit pulling up my gown to get at my britches^③-pocket. I took notice, and did better.

I started up the Illinois shore in the canoe just after dark. I started to the town from a little below the ferry landing, and the drift of the current fetched me in at the bottom of the town. I tied up and started along the bank. There was a light burning in a little shanty that hadn't been lived in for a long time, and I wondered who had taken up quarters there. I slipped up and peeped in at the window. There was a woman about forty years old in there knitting by a candle that was on a pine table. I didn't know her face; she was a stranger, for you couldn't start a face in that town that I didn't know. Now this

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) Almost everybody thought it at first. But before night they changed around and judged it was done by a runaway nigger named Jim. The nigger ran off the very night Huck Finn was killed. People found out he hadn't been seen since ten o'clock the night when the murder was done. So then they put it on him, you see; But I don't think so."

) Yes, I don't see anything in the way of it. But, are they after Jim yet?"

) Yes, Some folks think the nigger isn't far from here. I'm one of them—A few days ago I was pretty near certain and saw smoke over there, about the head of the island, a day or two before that, so I says to myself, like as that nigger's hiding over there; anyway, says I, it's worth the trouble to give the place a hunt."

I had got so uneasy that I couldn't set still:

) Is your husband going over there tonight?"

) Oh, yes. He went up-town with another man, to get a boat and see if they could borrow another gun. They'll go over after midnight."

) Couldn't they see better if they was to wait till daytime?"

) Yes. And couldn't the nigger see better, too? After midnight he'll likely be asleep, and they can slip around through the woods and hunt up his camp fire all the better for the dark, if he's got one."

The woman kept looking at me pretty curious while she was talking, and I didn't feel a bit comfortable. Pretty soon she said:

) What did you say your name was, honey?"

) M—Mary Williams."

Somehow it didn't seem to me that I said it was Mary before, so I didn't look up—seemed to me I said it was Sarah; so I felt sort of cornered, I wished the woman would say something more. But now she said:

) Honey, I thought you said it was Sarah when you first came in?"

) Oh, yes madam, I did. Sarah Mary Williams. Sarah's my first name. Some call me

Sarah, some call me Mary."

) Come, now, what's your real name?"

) Wh—what, madam?"

) What's your real name? Is it Bill, or Tom, or Bob? You just tell me your secret, and trust me. I'll keep it; and, what's more, I'll help you. You see, you're a runaway prentice, that's all. It isn't anything. You've been treated badly, and you made up your mind to cut. Bless you, child, I wouldn't tell on you. Tell me all



about it now, that's a good boy.”

So I said it wouldn't be any use to try to play it any longer, and I would just make a clean breast and tell her everything, but she mustn't go back on her promise. Then I told her my father and mother were dead, and the law had bound me out to a mean old farmer in the country thirty miles back from the river, and he treated me so bad that I couldn't stand it any longer; and so I took my chance and stole some of his daughter's old clothes and cleared out, and it had been three nights for me coming the thirty miles. I traveled nights, and hid daytimes and slept, and the bag of bread and meat I carried from home lasted me all the way, and I had a-plenty. I said I believed my uncle Abner Moore would take care of me, and so that was why I struck out for this town of Goshen.

) Goshen, child? Goshen's ten miles further up the river. Who told you this was Goshen?”

) Why, a man I met at daybreak this morning. He told me when the road forked I must take the right hand, and five miles would fetch me to Goshen.”

) He was drunk, I reckon. He told you just exactly wrong.”

) Well, he did act like he was drunk, but it is no matter now. I got to be moving along. I'll fetch Goshen before daylight.”

) Hold on a minute. I'll put you up a snack to eat. You might want it.”

So she put me up a snack, and said:

) Say, What's your real name, now?”

) George Peters, madam.”

) Well, try to remember it, George. And if you get into trouble, you send word to Mrs. Judith Loftus, which is me, and I'll do what I can to get you out of it.,

So I came out and went up the bank about fifty yards, and then I doubled on my tracks and slipped back to where my canoe was, I jumped in, and was off in a hurry. When I struck the head of the island I never waited to blow, though I was almost winded, but I shoved right into the timber where my old camp used to be, and started a good fire there on a high and dry spot.

Then I jumped in the canoe and dug out for our place, a mile and a half below, as hard as I could go. I landed, and roused Jim out and said:

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) Get up and hump` yourself, Jim! There isn't a minute to lose. They're after us!"

Jim never asked any questions, he never said a word. Taking everything we had in this world, we put out the campfire at the cavern the first thing, and didn't show a candle outside after that.

Then we got out the raft and slipped down in the shade, past the foot of the island dead still—never saying a word.

Chapter12

When the first streak of day began to show, we tied up to a towhead` in a big bend on the Illinois side, and hacked off cottonwood branches with the hatch

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The second night we ran between seven and eight hours, with a current that was making over four miles an hour. We caught fish and talked, and we took a swim now and then to keep off sleepiness. We shot a waterfowl now and then that got up too early in the morning or didn't go to bed early enough in the evening. Taking it all round, we lived pretty high.

The fifth night below St. Louis we had a big storm after midnight, with a power of thunder and lightning, and the rain poured down in a solid sheet. We stayed in the wigwam and let the raft take care of itself. When the lightning glared out we could see a big straight river ahead, and high, rocky bluffs on both sides. It was a steamboat that had killed herself on a rock. She was leaning over, with parts of her upper deck above water, and a chair by the big bell, with an old slouch hat hanging on the back of it, when the flashes came.

I wanted to get aboard of her and slink around a little, and see what there was there. So I said:

) Let's land on her, Jim."

Jim grumbled a little, but then gave in. The lightning showed us the wreck again just in time, and we fetched the stabboard derrick, and made fast there.

The deck was high out here. We went sneaking down the slope of it to labboard, pretty soon we struck the forward end of the skylight, and climbed onto it; and the next step fetched us in front of the captain's door, which was open, away down through the texas-hall we saw a light! And all in the same second we seemed to hear low voices in yonder !Jim whispered and said he was feeling powerfully sick, and told me to come alone. I said, all right, and was going to start for the raft; but just then I heard a voice wail out and say:

) Oh, please don't, boys, I swear I won't ever tell!"

Another voice said, pretty loud:

) It's a lie, Jim Turner. Yo8dr d .wenhi



dark till there wasn't but one stateroom between me and the cross-hall of the texas. Then in there I saw that a man stretched on the floor and tied hand and foot, and two men were standing over him, and one of them had a dim lantern in his hand, and the other one had a pistol. This one kept pointing the pistol at the man's head on the floor, and said:

) I'd like to! And I ought, too—a mean skunk!”

) Oh please don't, Bill; I'm not ever going to tell.”

And every time he said that the man with the lantern would laugh.

After a long discussion, the two men finally decided to leave Jim Turner alone in the boat. I lit out, all in a cold sweat, and scrambled forward. It was dark as pitch there; but I said, in a kind of coarse whisper, “Jim!” and he answered up, right at my elbow, with a sort of moan, and I said:

) Quick, Jim, there is no time for fooling around and moaning; there's a gang of murderers in yonder, and if we don't hunt up their boat and set her drifting down the river so these fellows can't get away from the wreck, there's one of them going to be in a bad fix. But if we find their boat, we can put all of them in a bad fix, hurry! I'll hunt the labboard side, you hunt the stabboard. You start at the raft, and—”

) Oh, my lordy, lordy! Raft? She has been broken, loosed and gone—and here we are!”

Chapter13

Well, I caught my breath and almost fainted. We'd got to find that boat now, we went quaking and shaking down the stabboard side, when we got pretty close to the cross-hall door there was the skiff, sure enough! I could just barely see her. I felt ever so thankful, and in a half second I was in the boat, and Jim came tumbling after me. I out with my knife and cut the rope, and away we went!

When we were three or four hundred yards down-stream we saw the lantern show li



ke a little spark at the texas` door for a second, and we knew by that that the rascals@ had missed their boat, and were beginning to understand that they were in just as much trouble now as Jim Turner was.

Then Jim manned the oars, and we took out after our raft. Now was the first time that I began to worry about the men—I began to think how dreadful it was, even for murderers, to be in such a fix. So said I to Jim:

) When we see the first light, we'll land a hundred yards below it or above it, in a place where it's a good hiding-0.12864 Tc (ee) T24 Tc (o) Tj0 Tc (r) Tj0.11136j-0.24 (ee) T24



) Pap, and mam, and sister, and—”

Then I broke down. He said:

) Oh, damn it now, don't take on so; we all have to have our troubles, and this will come out all right. What's the matter with them?”

) They're in an awful peck of trouble, and—and if you'd take your ferryboat and go up there—”

) Up where? Where are they?”

) On the wreck.”

) What wreck?”

) Why, there is one.”

) What, you don't mean the Walter Scott?”

) Yes.”

) Good land! What are they doing there, for gracious sakes?”

) Well, they didn't go there purposely.”

) I bet they didn't! Why, how in the nation did they ever get into such a scrape?”

) Easy enough. Miss Hooker was visiting there at Booth's Landing, and just in the edge of the evening she started over with her nigger woman in the horse-ferry to stay all night at her friend's house, but they lost their steering-oar, and swung around and went floating down, the ferryman and the nigger woman and the horses were all lost, but Miss Hooker made a grab and got aboard the wreck. Well, about an hour after dark we came along down in our trading-scow`, and it was so dark that we didn't notice the wreck till we were right on it; and so we saddle-bagged; but all of us were saved but Bill Whipple. I most wished it had been me, I do.”

) My George! And then what did you all do?”

) Well, we hollered` and took on, but it was so wide there that we couldn't make anybody hear. So pap said that somebody got to get ashore and get help somehow. But people said, ‘What, in such a night and such a current? There is no sense in it; go for the steam ferry.’ Now if you'll go and—”

) By Jackson, I'd like to, and, blame it, I don't know but I will; but who will pay for it? Do you reckon your pap—”

) Why that's all right. Miss Hooker told me, PARTICULAR, that her uncle HornbackP,

) Great guns! is he her uncle? Looky here, you break for that light over yonder-way, and turn out west when you get

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there, and about a quarter of a mile out you'll come to the tavern a [] n. VI Xde
 a . Tell them to dart you out to Jim Hornback's, and he'll foot
 the bill. Tell him I'll have his niece all safe before he can get to
 town. Hump yourself, now; I'm going up around the corner here
 to roust out my engineer."

I struck for the light, but as soon as he turned the corner I
 went back and got into my skiff and bailed her out, and then
 pulled up shore in the easy water about six hundred yards, and
 tucked myself among some wood boats; for I couldn't rest
 easily till I could see the ferryboat start. I wished the widow
 knew about it. I judged she would be proud of me for helping
 these rapscallions`, because rapscallions and dead beats were
 the kind the widow and good people took the most interest in.

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Well, before long here came the wreck, dim and dusky,
 sliding along down! A kind of cold shiver went through me, and
 then I struck out for her. She was very deep, and I saw in a
 minute there wasn't much chance for anybody being alive in her.
 I pulled all around her and hollered a little, but there wasn't any
 answer. I felt a little bit heavy-hearted about the gang, but not
 much, for I reckoned if they could stand it then I could.

It did seem a powerful long time before Jim's light showed
 up; and when it did show it looked like it was a thousand miles
 off. By the time I got there the sky was beginning to get a little
 gray in the east; so we struck for an island, and hid the raft, and
 sunk the skiff, and turned in and slept like dead people.



talking, and me reading the books, and having a general good time. I told Jim all about what happened inside the wreck and at the ferryboat, and I said these kinds of things were adventures; but he said he didn't want any more adventures. He said that when I went in the Texas and he crawled back to get on the raft and found her gone he nearly died, because he judged it was all up with him, anyway it could be fixed; for if he didn't get saved he would get drowned; and if he did get saved, whoever saved him would send him back home so as to get the reward, and then Miss Watson would sell him South, sure. Well, he was right; he was always right; he had an uncommon level head for a nigger.

I read considerably to Jim about kings and dukes and earls and such, and Jim's eyes bugged out, and he was interested. He said:

) How much does a king get?"

) Get?" I said; "why, they get a thousand dollars a month if they want it; they can have just as much as they want; everything belongs to them."

) They just set around—except, maybe, when there's a war; then they go to the war. But mostly they hang round the harem . . .

) What's the harem?"

) The place where he keeps his wives. Don't you know about the harem? Solomon had one; he had about a million wives."

) Why, yes, I—I haven't forgotten it."

) Well, Solomon was the wisest man, anyway; because the widow she told me so, her own self."

) I don't know what the widow said, but he wasn't a wise man. Do you know about that child that he was going to chop in two?"

) Yes, the widow told me all about it."

) Well done! Wasn't that the worst notion in the world?"

) But hang it, Jim, you've missed the point—blame it, you've missed it a thousand miles."

) Who? Me? Go along. Don't talk to me about Solomon, Huck, I know him by the back."

) But I tell you, you don't get the point."

I had never seen such a nigger. If he got a notion in his head once, there wasn't anything getting it out. He was the most down on Solomon of any nigger I had ever seen. So I went to

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talk about other kings, and let Solomon slide. I told about Louis Sixteenth who got his head cut off in France long time ago; and about his little boy, who would have been a king, but they took and shut him up in jail, and some said he died there. But again, we couldn't reach an agreement.

I saw it was no use wasting words—you couldn't learn a nigger to argue. So I quit.

Chapter15

We judged that three nights more would fetch us to Cairo, at the bottom of Illinois, where the Ohio River comes in, and that was what we were after. We would sell the raft and get on a steamboat and go way up the Ohio amongst the free States, and then be out of trouble.

Well, the second night a fog began to come on, and we made for a towhead to tie to, for it wouldn't do to try to run in a fog; but when I paddled ahead in the canoe, with the line to make fast, there wasn't anything but a little saplings` to tie to. I passed the line around one of them right on the edge of the cut bank, but there was a stiff current, and the raft came booming down so lively that she tore it out by the roots and away she went. I saw the fog closing down, and it made me so sick and scared that I couldn't budge for almost half a minute it seemed to me—and then there was no raft in sight; you couldn't see twenty yards. I jumped into the canoe and ran back to the stern, and grabbed the paddle and set her back a stroke. But she didn't come. I was in such a hurry that I hadn't untied her. I got up and tried to untie her, but I was so excited and my hands shook so badly that I could hardly do anything with them.

As soon as I got start I took out after the raft, hot and heavy, right down the towhead. But soon I had no idea which way I was going.

I whooped` and listened. Away down there, from somewhere I heard a small whoop, and up came my spirits. I went tearing after it, listening sharp to hear it again. The next time it came I saw I wasn't heading for it, but heading away to the right of it. And the next time I was heading away to the left of it—and not gaining on it much either, for I was flying

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around, this way and that and the other, but it was going straight ahead all the time. Well, I was tangled now. That was somebody else's whoop, or else I was turned around.

The whooping went on, and in about a minute I came booming down on a cut bank with smoky ghosts of big trees on it, and in another second or two it was solid white and still again. I just gave up then. I knew what the matter was. That cut bank was an island, and Jim had gone down the other side of it. I kept quiet, with my ears cocked, about fifteen minutes, I reckoned. I was floating along, of course, for about half an hour, I whooped now and then; at last I heard the answer a long way off, and tried to follow it, but I couldn't do it. Well, It wasn't long before I lost the whoops down amongst the towheads; and I only tried to chase them a little while, anyway, because it was worse than chasing a Jack-of-lantern. Well, I seemed to be in the open river again by and by, but I couldn't hear any sign of a whoop everywhere, so I lay down in the canoe and said I wouldn't bother any more. I didn't want to go to sleep, of course; but I was so sleepy that I couldn't help it; so I thought I would take just one little catnap` .

But I reckoned it was more than a catnap, for when I waked up, the stars were shining brightly, the fog was all gone, and I was spinning down a big bend stern first. **It was a monstrous big river here, with the tallest and the thickest kind of timber on both banks; just a solid wall, as well as I could see by the stars.** I looked away down-stream, and saw a speck, I chased that, but when I got to it I found it was nothing but a couple of sawlogs made fast together; then another, and this time I was right. It was the raft.

When I got to it Jim was setting there with his head down between his knees, asleep, with his right arm hanging over the steering-oar. The other oar was smashed off, and the raft was littered up with leaves and branches and dirt. So he'd had a rough time. I made fast and laid down under Jim's nose on the raft, and stretched my fists out against Jim, and said:

) Hello, Jim, have I been asleep? Why didn't you stir me up?"

) Goodness gracious, is that you, Huck? You are back again, the same old Huck—the same old Huck, thanks to goodness!"

) What's the matter with you, Jim? You have been

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Chapter16

We slept almost all day, and started out at night. We went drifting down into a big bend, and it clouded up and got hot at that night. There was nothing to do now but to look out sharp for the town, and not to pass it without seeing it. Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, I could tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too, to hear him, because I began to get it through my head that he was almost free—and who was going to blame for it? Why, me. It hadn't ever come to me before, but now it did; and it stayed with me, and scorched me more and more. I tried to make out to myself that I wasn't to blame, because I didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it was with no use. Conscience said, "What has poor Miss Watson done to you that you could see her nigger go off right under your eyes and never say one single word? What has that poor old woman done to you that you could treat her so mean? Why, she tried to be good to you every way she knew how. That's what she has done."

Jim talked out loud all the time while I was talking to myself. He was saying how theg mys m tt yoelft imTj1.92 Tc () Tj0.18436 Tc (a) Tj-0.48 Tc (y)Tj0 Tc (k) Tj-0.4



on accounts of Huck; I'm a free man, and I couldn't ever been free if it hadn't been for Huck; Huck did it. Jim won't ever forget you, Huck; you're the best friend Jim's ever had; and you're the only friend old Jim's gotten now."

I was paddling off, all in a sweat to tell on him; but when he said this, it seemed to kind of take the tuck all out of me. I went along slow, and just felt sick. But I said, I got to do it—I couldn't get out of it. Right then along came a skiff with two men in it with guns, and they stopped and I stopped. One of them said:

-) What's that yonder?"
-) A piece of raft," I said.
-) Do you belong on it?"
-) Yes, sir."
-) Any men on it?"
-) Only one, sir."

) Well, there have been five niggers ran off tonight up yonder, above the head of the bend. Is your man white or black?" I didn't answer up prompt. I tried to, but the words wouldn't come. I tried for a second or two to brace up and out with it, but I wasn't man enough so I just gave up trying, and up and said:

-) He's white."
-) I reckon we'll go and see for ourselves."
-) I wish you would," said I, "because it's pap there, and maybe you'd help me tow the raft ashore where the light is. He's sick—everybody went away when I wanted them to help me tow the raft ashore, and I can't do it by myself."

) Well, that's infernal mean. Odd, too. Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"

-) It's the—a—the—well, it isn't anything much."

They stopped pulling. It wasn't but a mighty little ways to the raft now. One said:

) Boy, that's a lie. What IS the matter with your pap? Answer up square now, and it'll be the better for you.,

) I will, sir, I will, honest—but don't leave us, please. It's the—the—Gentlemen, if you'll only pull ahead, and let me heave you the headline, you won't have to come near the raft—please do."

) Set her back, John, set her back!" said one. They backed in the water. "Keep away, boy; I just expect the wind

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has blew it to us. Your pap's got the smallpox③, and you know it precious well. Why didn't you come out and say so? Do you want to spread it all over?"

) Well," said I, blubbering, "I've told everybody before, and they just went away and left us."

) Poor devil, there's something in that. We are right down sorry for you, but we don't want the smallpox, you see. Now we're trying to do you a kindness; so you just put twenty miles between us, that's a good boy. Say, I reckon your father's poor, and I'm bound to say he's in pretty hard luck. Here, I'll put a twenty-dollar gold piece on this board, and you get it when it floats by. I feel mighty mean to leave you; but my kingdom! It won't do to fool with small-pox, don't you see?"

) Hold on, Parker," said the other man, "here's a twenty to put on the board for me. Good-bye, boy; you do as Mr. Parker told you, and you'll be all right."

They went off and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knew very well I had done wrong, but then, said I, what was the use you learning to do right when it was troublesome to do right and it was no trouble to do wrong, and the wages were just the same? I was stuck. I couldn't answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn't bother any more about it, but after this, always did whichever came handiest at the time.

I went into the wigwam; Jim wasn't there. I looked all around and said:

) Jim!"

) Here I am, Huck. I was listening to all the talk, I tell you, child, you saved old Jim—old Jim isn't going to forget you for that, honey."

Towards daybreak we tied up, and Jim was mighty particular about hiding the raft well. Then he worked all day fixing things in bundles, and getting all ready to quit rafting.

That night about ten we hove in sight of the lights of a town away down in a left-hand bend.

I went off in the canoe to ask about it. But it was not Cairo. I began to suspect something. So did Jim. I said:

) Maybe we went by Cairo in the fog that night."

When it was daylight, here was the clear Ohio water inshore, sure enough, and outside was the old regular Muddy! So it was all up with Cairo.

We talked it all over. There was no way but to wait for

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dark, and started back in the canoe and took the chances. So we slept all day amongst the cottonwood thicket, so as to be fresh for the work, and when we went back to the raft about dark, the canoe was gone!

We didn't say a word for a good while. But then we talked about what we'd better do, and found there was no way but just to go along down with the raft till we got a chance to buy a canoe to go back in. So we shoved out after dark on the raft.

The place to buy canoes was off of rafts lying up at shore. But we didn't see any rafts lying up; so we went along for three hours and more. It got to be very late and still, and then along came a steamboat up the river. We could hear her pounding along, but we didn't see her good till she was closed. She was a big one, and she was coming in hurry, too, and her monstrous bows and guards hung right over us. There was a yell at us, and a jingling of bells to stop the engines, and as Jim went overboard on one side and I on the other, she came smashing straight through the raft.

I dived—and I aimed to find the bottom, too, for a thirty-foot wheel had got to go over me, and I wanted it to have plenty of room. I could always stay under water a minute; this time I reckoned I stayed under a minute and a half. Then I bounced for the top in a hurry, and sung out for Jim about a dozen times, but I didn't get any answer; so I changed off and made a safe landing, then climbed up the bank. I went poking along over rough ground for a quarter of a mile or more, and then I ran across a big old-fashioned double log-house before I noticed it. I was going to rush by and get away, but a lot of dogs jumped out and went to howl and bark at me, and I knew

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for—hey?”

) I wasn't prowling around, sir, I fell overboard off of the steamboat.”

) Oh, you did, did you? Strike a light there. Your name was?”

) George Jackson, sir. I'm only a boy.”

) Now, George Jackson, do you know the Shepherds?”

) No, sir. I have never heard of them.”

) Well, that may be so, and that may not. Now, all ready. Step forward, George Jackson. Come slow, push the door open yourself—just enough to squeeze in, do you hear?” I took one slow step at a time and there wasn't a sound, when I got to the three log doorsteps I heard them unlocking and unbarring and unbolting. I put my hand on the door and pushed it a little and a little more till somebody said, “There, that's enough—put your head in.” I did it, but I judged they would take it off.

The candle was on the floor, and there they all were, looking at me: Three big men with guns pointing at me, which made me wince`.

The oldest, was about sixty, and the other two were thirty or more—all of them were fine and handsome—and the sweetest old gray-headed lady, and back of her were two young women whom I couldn't see right well. The old gentleman said:

) There; I reckon it's all right. Come in.”

As soon as I was in, the old gentleman locked the door and barred it and bolted it, but the old lady said:

) Why, bless you, Saul, the poor thing's as wet as he can be; and don't you reckon that may be he's hungry?”

) True for you, Rachel—I forgot.”

old ghy said:

True

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them how pap and me and all the family were living on a little farm down at the bottom of Arkansaw, and my sister Mary Ann ran off and got married and never was heard of any more, and Bill went to hunt them and he wasn't heard of any more, and Tom and Mort died, and then there was nobody but just me and pap left. When he died I took what there was left and started up the river, deck passage, and fell overboard; and that was how I came to be here. So they said I could have a home there as long as I wanted it. Then it was almost daylight and everybody went to bed, and I went to bed with Buck. When I waked up in the morning, drata it all, I had forgotten what my name was. So I laid there for about an hour trying to think, and when Buck waked up I said:

-) Can you spell, Buck?"
-) Yes," he said.
-) I bet you can't spell my name," said I.
-) I bet you what you dare I can," said he.
-) All right," said I, "go ahead."
-) G-e-o-r-g-e J-a-x-o-n—there now," he said.
-) Well," said I, "you did it."

I set it down, privately, because somebody might want me to spell it next, and so I wanted to be handy with it and rattle it off like I was used to it. It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house, too. I hadn't seen any house out in the country before that was so nice and had so much style. There was a big fireplace that was bricked on the bottom, and the bricks were kept clean and red by pouring water on them and scrubbing` them with another brick. Sometimes they washed them over with red water-paint that they called Spanish-brown, same as they do in town.

They had pictures hung on the walls—mainly Washingtons and Lafayettes, and battles, and Highland Marys, and one called "Signing the Declaration."

Well, as I was saying about the parlor, there were beautiful curtains on the windows: white, with pictures painted on them of castles with vines all down the walls, and cattles coming down to drink. The walls of all the rooms were plastereda , and most had carpets on the floors, and the whole house was whitewashed on the outside.

It was a double house, and the big open place between them was roofed and floored, and sometimes the table was set there in the middle of the day, and it was a cool and comfortable place. Nothing could be better.

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Chapter 18

Col. Grangerford was a gentleman. He was a gentleman all over; and so was his family.

When he and the old lady came down in the morning, all the family got up out of their chairs and gave them good-day, and didn't set down again till they had set down. Then Tom and Bob went to the sideboard and mixed a glass of bitters and handed it to him, and he held it in his hand and waited till Tom's and Bob's were mixed, and then they bowed and said, "Our duty to you, sir, and madam" and they bowed the least bit in the world and said "thank you", and so they drank, all three, and Bob and Tom poured a spoonful of water on the sugar and the mite of whisky or apple brandy in the bottom of their tumblers, and gave them to me and Buck, and we drank to the old people too.

Bob was the oldest and Tom next—tall, beautiful men with very broad shoulders and brown faces, and long black hair and black eyes. They dressed in white linen from head to foot, like the old gentleman.

Then there was Miss Charlotte; she was twenty-five, and tall and proud and grand, like her father. She was beautiful. So was her sister, Miss Sophia, gentle and sweet like a dove, and she was only twenty.

This was all there was of the family now, but there used to be more—three sons; they got killed; and Emmeline who died.

There was another clan of aristocracy around there—five or six families—mostly of the name of Shepherdson. They were as high-toned and wellborn and rich and grand as the tribe of Grangerfords. The Shepherdsons and Grangerfords used the same steam-boat landing, which was about two miles above our house; so sometimes when I went up there with a lot of our folks I used to see a lot of the Shepherdsons there on their fine horses.

One day Buck and me were away out in the woods hunting, and heard a horse coming. We were crossing the road. Buck said:

) Quick! Jump for the woods!"

We did it, and then peeped down the woods through the leaves. Pretty soon a splendid young man came galloping down the road, I had seen him before. It was young Harney

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Shepherdson. I heard Buck's gun go off at my ear, and Harney's hat tumbled off from his head. He grabbed his gun and rode straight to the place where we were hid. But we didn't wait. We started through the woods on a run, and never stopped running till we got home. The old gentleman's eyes blazed a minute, then his face sort of smoothed down, and he said, kind of gentle:

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) What raft, Jim?"

) Our old raft."

) You mean to say our old raft wasn't smashed all to flinders?"

) No, she wasn't. And now she's all fixed up again almost as good as new."

I don't want to talk much about the next day. I reckon I'll cut it pretty short.

I waked up about dawn, and was going to turn over and go to sleep again when I noticed how still it was—didn't seem to be anybody stirring. Down by the wood-pile I came across my Jack, and said:

) What's it all about?"

Said he:

) Well, Miss Sophia's run off! Run off to get married to that young Harney Shepherdson, you know."

) Buck went off without waking me up."

) Well, I reckon he did! They weren't going to mix you up in it."I took up the river road as hard as I could put. By and by I began to hear guns a good ways off. There were four or five men cavorting around on their horses in the open place before the log store. I stayed in the tree till it began to get dark, afraid to come down. I judged that that piece of paper meant that Miss Sophia was to meet Harney somewhere at half-past two and run off; and I judged I ought to tell her father about that paper and the curious way she acted, and then maybe he would lock her up, and this awful mess wouldn't ever happen.

When I got down out of the tree I crept along down the riverbank apiece, and found the two bodies lying in the edge of the water, I covered up their faces, and got away as quick as I could. I cried a little when I was covering up Buck's face, for he was mighty good to me.

It was just dark now. I never went near the house, but struck through the woods and made for the swamp. Jim wasn't on his island, and the raft was gone! I couldn't get my breath for almost a minute. Then I raised a yell. A voice not twenty-five feet from me said:

) Good! Is that you, honey? Don't make any noise."

It was Jim's voice—nothing ever sounded so good before. I ran along the bank a piece and got aboard, and Jim grabbed me and hugged me, he was so glad to see me. He said:

) Laws bless you, child, everything is all ready for shoving out and leaving, I'm mighty glad to get you back again, honey."



I said:

) All right—that's mighty good; they won't find me, and they'll think I've been killed, and floated down the river so don't lose time, Jim, but just shove off for the big water as fast as ever you can."

I never felt easy till the raft was two miles below there and out in the middle of the Mississippi. Then we hang up our signal lantern, and judged that we were free and safe once more.

Chapter19

Two or three days and nights went by; I reckoned I might say they swum by, they slid along so quiet and smooth and lovely.

Once or twice of a night we would see a steamboat slipping along in the dark, and now and then she would belch` a whole world of sparks up out of her chimneys, and they would rain down in the river and look awful pretty. Then she would turn a corner and her lights would wink out and her powwow shut off and leave the river still again; and by and by her waves would get to us, a long time after she was gone, and joggle the raft a bit, and after that you wouldn't hear anything for you couldn't tell how long, except maybe frogs or something.

One morning about daybreak I found a canoe and crossed over a chute to the main shore to see if I could get some berries. Just as I was passing a place where a kind of a cowpath crossed the creek, here came a couple of men tearing up the path as tight as they could foot it. I was about to dig out from there in a hurry, but they were pretty close to me then, and sang out and begged me to save their lives—said they hadn't been doing anything, and were being chased for it—said there were men and dogs coming. They wanted to jump right in, but I said:
) Don't do it. I don't hear the dogs and horses yet, you've got time to crowd through the brush and get up the creek a little ways; then you take to the water and wade down to me and get in—that'll throw the dogs off the scent."

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They did it, and as soon as they were aboard, I lit out for our towhead, and in about five or ten minutes we heard the dogs and the men away off, shouting. By the time we had left a mile of woods behind us and struck the river, everything was quiet, and we paddled over to the towhead and hid in the cottonwoods and were safe.

One of these fellows was about seventy or upwards, and had a bald head and the other fellows were about thirty, and dressed about as ornery. After breakfast we all lay off and talked, and the first thing that came out was that these chaps didn't know one another.

) Old man," said the young one, "I reckon we might double-team it together; what do you think?"

) I think so. What's your line—mainly?"

) Jour printer by trade; do a little in patent medicines; theater-actor—tragedy, you know; take a turn to mesmerism and phrenology when there's a chance. Oh, I do lots of things almost anything that comes handy, so What's your lay?"

) I've done considerably in the doctoring way in my time. And I can tell a fortune pretty well when I've got somebody along to find out the facts for me."

Nobody said anything for a while; then the young man hove a sigh and said:

) To think I should have lived to be leading such a life, and be degraded down into such company." And he began to wipe the corner of his eye with a rag.

) Ah, you would not believe me; the world would never believe the secret of my birth—"

) The secret of your birth! Do you mean to say—"

) Gentlemen," said the young man, very solemn, "I will reveal it to you, for I feel I may have confidence in you. By rights I am a duke! My great-grandfather, eldest son of the Duke of Bridgewater, fled to this country about the end of the last century, to breathe the pure air of freedom; married here, and died, leaving a son, his own father dying about the same time. The second son of the late duke seized the titles and estates—the infant who was the real duke was ignored. I am the lineal descendant of that infant I am the rightful Duke of Bridgewater; and here am I, forlorn, torn from my high estate, hunted by men, despised by the cold world, ragged, worn, heart-broken, and degraded to the companionship of felons③

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on a raft!

Jim pitied him ever so much, and so did I. We tried to comfort him, but he said it wasn't much use, he couldn't be much comforted; said if we were a mind to acknowledge him, that would do him more good than almost anything else. He said we ought to bow when we spoke to him, and said "Your Grace," or "My Lord," and one of us ought to wait on him at dinner, and do any little thing for him he wanted to be done.

Well, that was all easy, so we did it. But the old man got pretty silent by and by. So, along in the afternoon, he said:

) Looky here, Bilgewater," he said, "I'm nation sorry for you, but you aren't the only person who has had troubles like that."

And he began to cry.

) Hold! What do you mean?"

) Yes, gentlemen, you see before you, in blue jeans and misery, the wandering, exiled, trampled-on, and suffering rightful King of France."

Well, he cried and took on so that me and Jim didn't know what to do, we were so sorry—and so glad and proud we'd got him with us, too. So we set in, like we did before with the duke, and tried to comfort him. But the duke kind of soured on him, and didn't look a bit satisfied with the way things were going; still, the king acted real friendly towards him, but the duke stayed huffy a good while, till by and by the king said:

) Like as not we got to be together a blamed long time on this raft, Bilgewater, and so what's the use of your being sour? Make the best of things the way you find them, say IP that's my motto. This isn't a bad thing that we've struck here, come, give us your hand, duke, and let's all be friends."

The duke did it, and Jim and me were pretty glad to see it. But it didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars

weren't kings nor dukes at all, but just frauds. But I never said anything, never let on; kept it to myself; it was the best way. If I ever learnt anything from pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people was to let them have their own way.

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Chapter 20

They asked us considerably many questions; wanted to know what we covered up the raft that way for, and laid by in the daytime instead of running—was Jim a runaway nigger? Said I:

) My folks were living in Pike County, and they all died off but me and pap and my brother Ike. Pap wanted to go down and live with Uncle Ben, but we were so poor that there was nothing left but sixteen dollars and our nigger, Jim. That wasn't enough to take us fourteen hundred miles, deck passage nor other ways. Well, when the river rose pap caught this piece of raft; so we reckoned we'd go down to Orleans on it. But a steamboat ran over the raft one night, only Jim and me came up all right. Well, for the next day or two we had considerable trouble, because people were always coming out in skiffs and trying to take Jim away from me, saying they believed he was a runaway nigger. We don't run day-times any more now; nights they don't bother us."

The duke said:

) Leave me alone to cipher out a way so we can run in the daytime if we want to. I'll think the thing over—I'll invent a plan that'll fix it. We'll let it alone for today, because of course we don't want to go by that town yonder in daylight—it mightn't be healthy."

There was a little one-horse town about three miles down the bend, and after dinner the duke said he had ciphered out his idea about how to run in daylight without it being dangerous for Jim; so he allowed he would go down to the town and fix that thing. The king allowed he would go, too, and see if he could strike something. We were out of coffee, so Jim said I would better go along with them in the canoe and get some.

When we got there, there was nobody stirring; streets empty, and perfectly dead and still, like Sunday. We found a sick nigger sunning himself in a back yard, and he said everybody was gone to camp meeting, about two miles back in the woods. The king got the directions, and allowed he'd go and work that camp meeting for all it was worth, and I might go, too.

The duke said what he was after was a printing office. And we

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ound it, a little bit of a concern, up over a carpenter shop—carpenters and printers all gone to the meeting, and no doors locked. It was a dirty, littered-up place, and had ink marks, and handbills with pictures of horses and runaway niggers on them, all over the walls. The duke shed his coat and said he was all right now. So I and the king lit out for the camp meeting.

We got there in about half an hour fairly dripping, the preaching was going on under the sheds.

The first shed we came to the preacher was lining out a hymn. He lined out two lines, everybody sang it, and it was kind of grand to hear it. Then the preacher began to preach, every now and then he would hold up his Bible and spread it open, and kind of pass it around this way and that, shouting, “It’s the brazen serpent in the wilderness! Look upon it and live!” And people would shout out, “Glory!—A-a-men!” And so he went on, the people groaning and crying and saying amen:

) Oh, come to the mourners’ bench!—Come with a broken spirit! Come with a contrite heart! Come in your rags and sin and dirt! The water that cleanse is free, the door of heaven stands open—oh, enter in and be at rest!” And so on. And when all the mourners had got up there to the front benches in a crowd, they sang and shouted and flung themselves down on the straw, just crazy and wild.

Well, the first I knew the king got going, and you could hear him over everybody; and the preacher begged him to speak to the people, and he did it. He told them he was a pirate, and he was home now to take out some fresh men with him, but he’d been robbed last night and put ashore off from a steamboat without a cent, and he was glad of it; it was the blessedest thing that had ever happened to him, because he was a changed man now, and happy for the first time in his life; and, poor as he was, he was going to start right off and work his way back to the Indian Ocean, and put in the rest of his life trying to turn the pirates into the true path; for he could do it better than anybody else, being acquainted with all pirate crews in that ocean; and though it would take him a long time to get there without money, he would get there anyway, and every time he convinced a pirate, he would say to him, “Don’t thank me, don’t give me any credit; it all belongs to them-dear people in Pokeville camp meeting, natural brothers and benefactors of the

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race, and that dear preacher there, the truest friend a pirate ever had!"

And then he busted into tears, and so did everybody. Then somebody sang out, "Take up a collection for him, take up a collection!" Well, half a dozen made a jump to do it, so the king went all through the crowd with his hat, blessing the people and praising them and thanking them for being so good to the poor pirates away off there.

When we got back to the raft he found he had collected eighty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents. The king said, took it all around, it laid over any day he'd ever put in the missionarying line.

The duke was thinking he'd been doing pretty well till the king came to show up, but after that he didn't think so much. Well, he took in nine dollars and a half, and said he'd done a pretty square day's work for it.

Then he showed us another little job he'd printed and hadn't charged for, because it was for us. It had a picture of a runaway nigger with a bundle on a stick over his shoulder, and "\$200 reward" under it. The reading was all about Jim, and just described him to a dot. It said he ran away from St. Jacques' plantation, forty miles below New Orleans, last winter, and likely went north, and whoever would catch him and send him back he could have the reward and expenses.

) Now," said the duke, "after tonight we can run in the daytime if we want to. Whenever we saw anybody coming we could tie Jim hand and foot with a rope, and lay him in the wigwam and show this handbill and say we captured him up the river, and too poor to travel on a steamboat, so we got this little raft on credit from our friends and were going down to get the reward."

We all said the duke was pretty smart, and there couldn't be any trouble about running daytimes.

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Chapter 21

It was after sun-up now, but we went right on and didn't tie up. After breakfast the king took a seat on the corner of the raft, and lit his pipe, and went to get his Romeo and Juliet by heart. When he had got it pretty good, he began to practice it together with the duck.

Well, next they got out a couple of long swords that the duke made out of oak laths, and began to practice the sword fight—the duke called himself Richard III. And the way they laid on and pranced around the raft was grand to see. But by and by the king tripped and fell overboard, and after that they took a rest, and had a talk about all kinds of adventures they'd had in other times along the river.

Then the duke had some show bills printed; and after that, for two or three days as we floated along, the raft was a most uncommon lively place, for there was nothing but swords fighting and rehearsing. One morning, when we were pretty well down the State of Arkansaw, all of us except Jim took the canoe and went down there to see if there was any chance in that place for our show.

We struck it mighty lucky; there was going to be a circus there that afternoon, and the country people were already beginning to come in. The circus would leave before night, so our show would have a pretty good chance. The duke hired the courthouse, and we went around and stuck up our bills. They read like this:

Shaksperean Revival!!!
 Wonderful Attraction!
 For One Night Only!
 Romeo and Juliet!!!
 Romeo Mr. Garrick
 Juliet Mr. Kean
 Assisted by the whole strength of the company!
 New costumes, new scenes, new appointments!
 Also:
 The thrilling, masterly, and blood-curdling
 Broadsword conflict
 In Richard 3!!!
 Richard 3 Mr. Garrick
 Richmond Mr. Kean
 Also:

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(by special request)

Hamlet's Immortal Soliloquy ` !!

By The Illustrious Kean!

Done by him 300 consecutive nights in Paris!

For One Night Only,

On account of imperative European engagements!

Admission 25 cents; children and servants, 10 cents.

Then we went loafing around town. All the stores were along one street. They had white domestic awnings` in front, and the country people hitched their horses to the awning-posts.

On the riverfronta, some of the houses were sticking out over the bank, and they were bowed and bent, and the people had moved out of them.

The nearer it got to noon that day, the thicker and thicker were the wagons and horses in the streets. Families fetched their dinners with them from the country, and ate them in the wagons. There was considerable whisky drinking going on, and I had seen three fights. By and by somebody sang out:

) Here comes the old Boggs!—From the country for his little old monthly drunk; here he comes, boys!”

All the loafers looked glad; I reckoned they were used to having fun out of Boggs. Boggs rode up before the biggest store in town, and bent his head down so he could see under the curtain of the awning and yelled:

) Come out here, Sherburn! Come out and meet the man you've swindled③. You're the man I'm after, and I'm going to have you, too!,

And so he went on, calling Sherburn everything he could lay his tongue to, and the whole street was packed with people listening and laughing and going on. By and by a proud-looking man about fifty-five—and he was the best dressed man in that town, too—stepped out of the store, and the crowd dropped back on each side to let him come. He said to Boggs, mighty calm and slow—he said:) I'm tired of this, but I'll endure it till one o'clock. Till one o'clock, mind—no longer. If you open your mouth against me only once after that time you can travel so far but I will find you.”

Then he turned and went in. The crowd looked mighty sober; nobody stirred, and there was no more laughing. Boggs

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turned around on his heels and walked off.

They took Boggs to a little drug store, the crowd pressing around just the same, the whole town following, and I rushed and got a good place at the window, where I was close to him and could see in. They tore open his shirt first, and I saw where one of the bullets went in. He made about a dozen long gasp, and after that he laid still; he was dead. Then they pulled his daughter away from him, screaming and crying, and took her off. She was about sixteen, and very sweet and gentle looking, but awful pale and scared.

Well, pretty soon the whole town was there, pushing and shoving to get at the window and have a look, so I slid out, thinking maybe there was going to be trouble. The street was full, and everybody was excited. Everybody who had seen the shooting was telling how it happened, and there was a big crowd packed around each one of these fellows, stretching their necks and listening. Well, by and by somebody said Sherburn ought to be lynched. In about a minute everybody was saying it; so away they went, mad and yelling, and snatching down every clothes-line they came to to do the hanging with.

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Chapter22

They swarmed up towards Sherburn's house, whooping and raging like Injuns, and everything had to clear the way or get run over and tromped to mush, and it was awful to see. Lotsof the women and girls were crying and taking on, scared almost to death.

They swarmed up in front of Sherburn's palings as thick as they could jam together, and you couldn't hear yourself thinking for the noise. Just then Sherburn stepped out onto the

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roof of his little front porch, with a double-barrel gun in his hand, and took his stand, perfectly calm and deliberate, not saying a word. He just stood there, looking down. The stillness was awful creepy and uncomfortable. Then pretty soon Sherburn laughed; not the pleasant kind, but the kind that made you feel like when you were eating bread that's got sand in it.

Then he said, slowly and scornfully:

) The idea of you lynching anybody! It's amusing. Because you're brave enough to tar a and feather poor friendless cast-out women that come along here, did that make you think you had been great enough to lay your hands on a man?"

) Do I know you? I know you clear through were born and raised in the South, and

I've lived in the North; so I know the average all around. The average man's a coward. Your newspapers call you a brave people so much that you think you are braver than any other people—whereas you're just as brave, and no braver. Why don't your juries hang murderers? Because they're afraid the man's friends will shoot them in the back, in the dark—and it's just what they would do."

) So they always acquit; and then a man goes in the night, with a hundred masked cowards at his back and lynches the rascal. Your mistake is that you didn't bring a man with you; that's one mistake, and the other is that you didn't come in the dark and fetch your masks. You brought part of a man—Buck Harkness, there—and if you hadn't had him to start you, you'd take it out in blowing."

) Now the thing for you to do is to droop your tails and go home and crawl in a hole. If any real lynching is going to be done, it will be done in the dark, Southern fashion; and when they come, they'll bring their masks, and fetch a man along. Now leave—and take your half-a-man with you"—tossing his gun up across his left arm and cocking it when he said this.

The crowd washed back suddenly, and then broke all apart, and went tearing off every which way, and Buck Harkness heeled it after them, looking tolerable cheap. I could have stayed if I wanted to, but I didn't want to.

I went to the circus and loafed around the backside till the watchman went by, and then dived in under the tent. It was a real bully circus. It was the splendidest sight that ever was when they all came, riding in, two and two, a gentleman and

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lady, side by side. It was a powerful fine sight; I had never seen anything so lovely. And then one by one they got up and stood, and went weaving around the ring, so gentle and wavy and graceful, and then faster and faster they went, all of them dancing, first one foot out in the air and then the other, the horses leaning more and more, and at last one after the other they all skipped off into the ring, and made the sweetest bow I had ever seen, and then scampered out, and everybody clapped their hands and went just about wild.

Well, all through the circus they did the most astonishing things; and all the time that clown carried on so it almost killed the people. And by and by a drunk man tried to get into the ring—said he wanted to ride; said he could ride as well as anybody that ever was. They argued and tried to keep him out, but he wouldn't listen, and the whole show came to a standstill. So, then, the ringmaster made a little speech, if the man would promise he wouldn't make any more trouble, he would let him ride if he thought he could stay on the horse. So everybody laughed and said all right, and the man got on.

The minute he was on, the horse began to rip and tear, and the drunk man hung onto his neck, his heels flying in the air every jump, and the whole crowd of people stood up shouting and laughing till tears rolled down. But pretty soon he grabbed the bridle, and the next minute he sprung up and dropped the bridle and stood! He just stood up there, sailing around as easy and comfortable as if he wasn't ever drunk in his life—and then he began to pull off his clothes and sling them. And, then, there he was, slim and handsome, and dressed the gaudiest and prettiest you had ever seen, and finally skipped off, and made his bow and danced off to the dressing-room, and everybody was just howling with pleasure and astonishment.

Well, that night we had our show; but there were only about twelve people there—just enough to pay expenses. And they laughed all the time, and that made the duke mad; he said these people couldn't come up to Shakespeare; what they wanted was low comedy, he reckoned. He said he could size their style. So next morning he got some big sheets of wrapping paper and some black paint, and drew off some handbills, and stuck them up all over the village. The bills said:

AT THE COURT HOUSE!

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FOR 3 NIGHTS ONLY!
 The World-Renowned Tragedians
 DAVID GARRICK THE YOUNGER!
 AND
 EDMUND KEAN THE ELDER!
 Of the London and Continental
 Theatres,
 In their Thrilling Tragedy of
 THE KING'S CAMELEOPARD,
 OR
 THE ROYAL NONESUCH!!!
 Admission 50 cents.

Then at the bottom was the biggest line of all, which said:
 LADIES AND CHILDREN NOT ADMITTED.
) There,” said he, “if that line won't fetch them, I don't
 know Arkansaw!”

Chapter23

Well, all day he and the king were hard at it, and that night the house was jam full of men in no time. When the place couldn't hold any more, the duke quit tending door and went around the back way and came onto the stage and stood up before the curtain and made a little speech, and at last when he'd got everybody's expectations up high enough, he rolled up the curtain, and the next minute the king came prancing out on all fours, naked; and he was painted all over, ring-streaked-and-striped, all sorts of colors, as splendid as a rainbow. And—but never mind the rest of his outfit; it was just wild, but it was awful funny. The people almost killed themselves laughing; and when the king got done capering` and capered off behind the scenes, they roared and clapped and stormed and haw-hawed till he came back and did it over again, and after that they made him do it another time.

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Then the duke let the curtain down, and bowed to the people, and said the great tragedy would be performed only two nights more, and then he made them another bow, and said if he had succeeded in pleasing them and instructing them, just mentioned it to their friends and got them to come and see it.

Twenty people sang out:

) What, is it over? Is that all?"

The duke said yes. Then there was a fine time. Everybody sang out, "Sold!" and rose up mad, and was going for that stage and the tragedians. But a big, fine looking man jumped up on a bench and shouted:

) Hold on! Just a word, gentlemen." They stopped to listen. "We are sold—mighty badly sold. But we don't want to be the laughing stock of this whole town, I reckon, and never hear the last of this thing as long as we live. No. What we want is to go out of here quiet, and talk this show up, and sell the rest of the town! Then we'll all be in the same boat. All right, then—not a word about any sell. Go along home, and advise everybody to come and see the tragedy."

The next day you couldn't hear anything around that town but how splendid that show was. The house was jammed again that night, and we sold this crowd the same way. When the king and the duke and me got home to the raft we all had a supper; and by and by, about midnight, they made Jim and me back her out and floated her down the middle of the river, and fetched her in and hid her about two miles below town.

The third night the house was crammed again—and they weren't newcomers this time, but people that were at the show the other two nights. I stood by the duke at the door, and I saw that every man that went in had his pockets bulging, and I saw it wasn't perfumery, neither, not by a long sight. I smelt sickly eggs, and rotten cabbages, and such things; I couldn't stand it. Well, when the place couldn't hold any more people the duke gave a fellow a quarter and told him to tend the door for him for a minute, and then he started around for the stage door, and I was after him; but the minute we turned the corner and were in the dark he said:

) Walk fast now till you get away from the house, and then shin for the raft as quick as possible!"

I did it, and he did the same. We struck the raft at the same time, and in less than two seconds we were gliding down stream, all dark and still, and edging towards the middle of the

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river, nobody saying a word. I



reckoned the poor king was in for a gaudya time of it with the audience, but nothing of the sort; pretty soon he crawled out from under the wigwam, and said:

) Well, how'd the old thing pan out this time, duke?" He hadn't been uptown at all.

We never showed a light till we were about ten miles below the village. Then we lit up and had a supper, and the king and the duke fairly laughed their bones loose over the way they'd served the people.

By and by, when they were asleep and snoring③, Jim said:

) Doesn't it surprise you the way the kings carry on, Huck?"

) No," I said, "it doesn't."

) Why doesn't it, Huck?"

) Well, it doesn't, because it's in the breed. I reckon they're all alike,"

) But, Huck, these kings are regular rascallions; that's just what they are;

they're regular rascallions."

) Well, that's what I'm saying; all kings are mostly rascallions, as fur as I can make out."

) Is that so? Well, anyway, I don't hanker` for more, Huck. This is all I can stand."

) It's the way I feel, too, Jim. But we've got them on our hands, and we got to remember what they are, and make allowances. Sometimes I wish we could hear of a country that's out of kings."

What was the use to tell Jim these weren't real kings and dukes? It wouldn't do any good; and, besides, it was just as I said: you couldn't tell them from the real kind.

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Chapter 24

The next day, towards night, we laid up under a little willow towhead out in the middle, and the duke and the king began to lay out a plan for working the towns. Jim said he hoped it wouldn't take but a few hours, because it got mighty heavy and tiresome to him when he had to lie all day in the wigwam tied with the rope. So the duke said it was kind of hard to have to lie roped all day, and he'd cipher out some way to get around it.

He was uncommon bright, and he soon struck it. He dressed Jim up in King Lear's outfit; and then he took his theater paint and painted Jim's face and hands and ears and neck all over a dead, dull, solid blue, like a man who's been drowned nine days. Then the duke took and wrote out a sign on a shingle` so:

Sick Arab—but harmless when not out of his head.

Jim was satisfied. He said it was a sight better than lying tied a couple of years every day, and trembling all over every time there was a sound.

These rapsCALLIONS wanted to try the Nonesuch again, but they judged it wouldn't be safe, because maybe the news might work along down by this time; so at last the duke said he reckoned he'd lay off and work his brains an hour or two and see if he could put up something on the Arkansaw village; and the king allowed he would drop over to the other village without any plan, but just trust in Providence to lead him the profitable way—meaning the devil, I reckoned. We had all bought store clothes where we stopped last; and now the king put his on, and he told me to put mine on. I never knew how clothes could change a body before. Why, the king looked that grand and good and pious`. Jim cleaned up the canoe, and I got my paddle ready. There was a big steamboat laying at the shore away up under the point, about three miles above the town—been there a couple of hours, taking on freight. Said the king:

) Seeing how I'm dressed, I reckon maybe I would better arrive down from St. Louis or Cincinnati, or some other big places. Go for the steamboat, Huckleberry; we'll come down to the village on her."I didn't have to be ordered twice to go and take a steamboat ride. Pretty soon we came to a nice

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innocent-looking young country man setting on a log swabbing the sweat off of his face, for it was powerful warm weather; and he had a couple of big carpet-bags by him.

) Run her nose in shore," said the king. I did it. "Where do you bound for, young man?"

) For the steamboat; going to Orleans."

) Get aboard," said the king. "Hold on a minute, my servant will help you with the bags. Jump out and help the gentleman, Adolphus"—meaning me, I saw.

I did so, and then we three all started on again. The young chap was mighty thankful; he asked the king where he was going, and the king told him he was going up a few miles to see an old friend on a farm. The young fellow said:

) When I first saw you I said to myself, 'It's Mr. Wilks, sure, and he comes mighty near getting here in time.' But then I said again, 'No, I reckon it isn't him, or else he wouldn't be paddling up the river.' You aren't him, are you?"

) No, my name's Blodgett—Elexander Blodgett, I suppose I must say, as I'm one of the Lord's poor servants. But still I'm just as able to be sorry for Mr. Wilks for not arriving in time, all the same, if he's missed anything by it—which I hope he hasn't."

) Well, he doesn't miss any property by it, because he'll get that all right; but he's missed seeing his brother Peter die—which he mayn't mind, nobody can tell as to that—but his brother would give anything in this world to see him before he died; never talked about anything else all these three weeks; hadn't seen him since they were boys together—and hadn't ever seen his brother William at all—who's the deaf and dumb one—William isn't more than thirty or thirty-five. Peter and George were the only ones who came out here; George was the married brother; he and his wife both died last year. Harvey and William are the only ones who have left now; and, as I was saying, they haven't got here in time."

) Did anybody send them word?"

) Oh, yes. A month or two ago, when Peter was first taken; because Peter said then that he felt like he wasn't going to get well this time. You see, he was pretty old, and George's girls were too young to be much company for him, except Mary Jane, the red-headed one; and so he was kinder lonesome after George and his wife died, and didn't seem to care much to live. He most desperately wanted to see Harvey—and William, too, because he was one of the kind that couldnt bear to make a will. He left a letter behind for Harvey, and said he'd told in it



where his money was hid, and how he wanted the rest of the property divided up—for George didn't leave anything. And that letter was all they could get him to put a pen to.”

) Why do you reckon Harvey won't come? Where does he live?”

) Oh, he lives in England—Sheffield—preaches there. He hasn't had too much time—and besides he mightn't get the letter at all, you know.”

) Too bad, too bad he couldn't live to see his brothers, poor soul. You are going to Orleans, you say?”

) Yes, but that is only a part of it. I'm going in a ship, next Wednesday for Ryo Janeero, where my uncle lives.”

) It's a pretty long journey. But it'll be lovely; I wish I were going. Is Mary ane the oldest? How old are the others?”

) Mary Jane's nineteen, Susan's fifteen, and Joanna's about fourteen—that's the one who gives herself to good works and has a hare-lip.”

) Poor things! To be left alone in the cold world.”

) Well, they could be worse off. Old Peter had friends, and they aren't going to let them come to any harm. There's Hobson, the Babtis' preacher; and Deacon Lot Hovey, and Ben Rucker, and Abner Shackelford, and Levi Bell, the lawyer; and Dr. Robinson, and their wives, and the widow Bartley, and—well, there are a lot of them; but these are the o

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When the boat was gone, the king made me paddle up another mile to a lonesome place, and then he got ashore and said:

) Now hustle back, right off, and fetch the duke up here, and the new carpet-bags. And if he's gone over to the other side, go over there and get him. And tell him to get himself up regardless. Shove along, now."

I saw what he was up to; but I never said anything, of course. When I got back with the duke, we hid the canoe, and then they set down on a log, and the king told him everything.

About the middle of the afternoon a couple of little boats came along, but they didn't come from high enough up the river; but at last there was a big one, and they hailed her. She sent out her yawl, and we went aboard, and soon we got to the village. About two dozen men flocked down when the king said:

) Can any of you gentlemen tell me where Mr. Peter Wilks lives?" they gave a glance at one another, and nodded their heads, as much as to say, "What do I tell you?" Then one of them said, kind of soft and gentle:

) I'm sorry, Sir, but the best we can do is to tell you where he did live yesterday evening."

Sudden as winking, the ornery old creature went to smash, and fell up against the man, and put his chin on his shoulder, and cried down his back, and said:

) Alas, alas, our poor brother—gone, and we never got to see him; oh, it's too, too hard!"

Then he turned around, and made a lot of idiotic signs to the duke on his hands, and the duke busted out crying.

Well, the men gathered around and sympathized with them, and said all sorts of kind things to them, and carried their carpet-bags up the hill for them, and let them lean on them and cry, and told the king all about his brother's last moment, and the king told it all over again on his hands to the duke. Well, if ever I struck anything like it, I was a nigger. It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race.

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Chapter 25

The news was all over town in two minutes, and you could see the people tearing down on the run from every which way, some of them putting on their coats as they came.

When we got to the house, the street in front of it was packed, and the three girls were standing in the door. Mary Jane was so glad her uncles came. The king spread his arms, and Mary Jane jumped for them, and the harelip jumped for the duke, and there they had it! Everybody almost, leastways women, cried for joy to see them meet again at last and have such good times.

Then the king hunched the duke private—I saw him do it—and then he looked around and saw the coffin, over in the corner on two chairs; so then he and the duke, with a hand across each other's shoulder, and the other hand to their eyes, walked slowly and solemnly over there. And when they got there they bent over and took one sight, and then they busted out crying so you could hear them to Orleans, almost. I had never seen anything so disgusting.

Well, by and by the king got up and came forward a little, and worked himself up and slobbered out a speech, and then he blubbered③ out a pious goody-goody Amen, and turned himself loose and went to crying fit to bust.

Then the king began to work his jaw again, and said how he and his nieces would be glad if a few of the main principal friends of the family would take supper here with them this evening, and help set up with the ashes of the diseased. And he said if his poor brother laying yonder could speak, he knew who he would name, for they were names that were very dear to him, and mentioned often in his letters; and so he would name the same, to wit, as follows, Rev. Mr. Hobson, and Deacon Lot Hovey, and Mr. Ben Rucker, and Abner Shackleford, and Levi Bell, and Dr. Robinson, and their wives, and the widow Bartley.

And then he again mentioned all sorts of little things that happened one time or another in the town, or to George's family, or to Peter. And he always let on that Peter wrote him the things. But that was a lie: he got every blessed one of them out of that young flathead who we canoed up to the steamboat.

Then Mary Jane fetched the letter her father left behind,

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and the king read it out aloud and cried over it. It gave the dwelling-house and three thousand dollars, gold, to the girls; and it gave the tanyard (which was doing a good business), along with some other houses and land (worth about seven thousand), and three thousand dollars in gold to Harvey and William, and told the six thousand cash was hid down cellar. So these two frauds said they'd go and fetch it up, and have everything square and above-board; and told me to come with a candle. We shut the cellar door behind us, and when they found the bag they spilt it out on the floor, and it was a lovely sight. My, the way the king's eyes did shine!

Almost everybody would have been satisfied with the pile, and took it on trust; but no, they must counted it. So they count it, and it came out four hundred and fifteen dollars short.

They worried over that awhile, and ransacked all around for it. Then the duke said:

) Well, he was a pretty sick man, and likely he made a mistake—I reckon that's the way of it. The best way's to let it go, and keep still about it. We can spare it. Let's make up the deffisit," and he began to haul out money out of his pocket.

It almost busted them, but they made up the six thousand clean and clear.

) Say," said the duke, "I got another idea. Let's go upstairs and count this money, and then take and give it to the girls."

) Good land, duke, let me hug you! Let them fetch along their suspicions now if they want to—this will lay them out."

When we got upstairs, everybody gathered around the table, and the king counted it and stacked it up, three hundred dollars in a pile—twenty elegant little piles. Then they raked it into the bag again, and said:

) Here, Mary Jane, Susan, Joanner, take the money—take it all. It's the gift of him who lays yonder, cold but joyful."

Mary Jane went for him; Susan and the harelip went for the duke, and then such another hugging and kissing that I had never seen yet. And everybody crowded up with the tears in their eyes, and most shook the hands with the frauds, saying all the time:

) You dear good souls!—How lovely!—How could you!" Well, then, pretty soon an iron-jawed man laughed right in his face. Everybody was shocked. Everybody said, "Why, doctor!" and Abner Shackleford said:

) Why, Robinson, hadn't you heard the news? This is Harvey Wilks."

The doctor turned to the poor girls and said:





And when it was all done, I and the harelip had supper in the kitchen off of the leavings, whilst the others were helping the niggers clean up the things. The harelip got to pumping me about England, and blest if I did think the ice was getting mighty thin sometimes.

So then I lit out—for bed, I said, meaning some time or another. When I got by myself I went to thinking the thing over. I said to myself, should I go to that doctor, private, and blew on these frauds? No—that wouldn't do. He might tell who told him; then the king and the duke would make it warm for me. Should I go, private, and tell Mary Jane? No—Her face would give them a hint, sure. They've got the money, and they'd slide right out and get away with it. No, there was no good way but one. I got to steal that money, somehow; and I got to steal it some way that they wouldn't suspect that I did it. I would steal it and hide it, and by and by, when I was away down the river, I would write a letter and tell Mary Jane where it was hid. But I better hive it tonight if I can, because the doctor maybe hadn't let up as much as he let on he had; he might scare them out of here yet.

So, thought I, I went and searched their rooms. Upstairs the hall was dark, but I found the duke's room, and started to paw around it with my hands; About that time I heard their footsteps coming, and was going to skip under the bed; I reached for it, but it wasn't where I thought it would be; but I touched the curtain that hid Mary Jane's frocks`, so I jumped in behind that and snuggleda` in amongst the gowns, and stood there perfectly still.

They came in and shut the door; and the first thing the duke did was to get down and look under the bed. Then I was glad I hadn't found the bed when I wanted it. They set down then, and the king said:

) Well, what is it? Duke?"

) That we would better glide out of this before three in the morning, and clip it down the river with what we've got. Specially, seeing we got it so easy—given back to us, flung at our heads, as you may say, when of course we allowed to have to steal it back. I'm for knocking off and lighting out." That made me feel pretty bad. About an hour or two ago it would be

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a little different, but now it made me feel bad and disappointed,
The king ripped out and said:

) What! And not sell out the rest of the property? March off like a passel` of fools and leave eight or nine thousand dollars worth of property lying around?"

Well, the king talked him blind; so at last the duck gave in, and said all right, but said he believed it was blamed foolishness to stay, with that doctor hanging over them. But the king said:

) Cuss the doctor! What do we care for him? Hadn't we got all the fools in town on our side? And is that a big enough majority in any town?"

So they got ready to go downstairs again. The duke said:

) I don't think we put that money in a good place."

That cheered me up. I'd begun to think I wasn't going to get a hint of any kind to help me. The king said:

) Why?"

) Because Mary Jane will be in mourning from this out; and first you know the nigger who does up the rooms will get an order to box these duds up and put them away; and do you reckon a nigger can run across money and not borrow some of it?,

) Your head's level again, duke,, said the king; and he came fumbling` under the curtain two or three feet from where I was. They took and shoved the bag through a rip in the

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Chapter 27

I crept to their doors and listened; they were snoring. So I tiptoed along, and got downstairs all right. I peeped through a crack of the dining-room door, and saw the men who were watching the corpse all sound asleep on their chairs. I passed along, and the parlor door was open. But I saw there was nobody in there but the remainder of Peter, so I shoved on by. Unfortunately the front door was locked, and the key wasn't there. Just then I heard somebody coming down the stairs, back behind me. I ran in the parlor and took a swift look around, and the only place I saw to hide the bag was in the coffin. I tucked the money-bag in under the lid, just down beyond where his hands were crossed, which made me creep, they were so cold, and then I ran back across the room and behind the door.

The person coming was Mary Jane. She went to the coffin, and I saw she began to cry, though I couldn't hear her, and her back was to me. I slid out, and as I passed the dining-room I thought I'd make sure the watchers hadn't seen me, so I looked through the crack, and everything was all right. They hadn't stirred.

I slipped up to bed, feeling rather blue, on accounts of the thing playing out that way after I had taken so much trouble and run so much risk about it. Of course I wanted to slide down and get it out of there, but I didn't try it. Every minute it was getting earlier now, and pretty soon some of the watchers would begin to stir, and I might get caught—caught with six thousand dollars in my hands that nobody had hired me to take care of. I didn't wish to be mixed up in such business as that, I said to myself.

Towards the middle of the day the undertaker came with his man, and they set the coffin in the middle of the room on a couple of chairs, and then set all our chairs in rows, and borrowed more from the neighbors till the hall and the parlor and the dining-room were full. I saw the coffin lid was the way it was before, but I dared not to go to look in under it, with folks around.

When the place was packed full, the undertaker slid around in his black gloves with his softy soothing ways, putting on the last touches, getting people and things all ship-shaped and comfortable, and making no more sound than a cat. He never spoke, just moved people around, and signed with his hands. Then he took his place over against the wall. He was

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hadn't been near your room since Miss Mary Jane took you and the duke and showed it to you."

The duke said:

-) Have you seen anybody else go in there?"
-) No, your grace, not as I remember, I believe."
-) Stop and think."

I studied awhile and saw my chance; then I said:

-) Well, I saw the niggers go in there several times."

Both of them gave a little jump, and looked like they hadn't ever expected it, and then the duke said:

-) What, all of them?"

) No—leastways, not all at once—that is, I don't think I ever saw them all come out at once but just one time."

-) Hello! When was that?"

) It was the day we had the funeral. In the morning. It wasn't early, because I overslept. I was just starting down the ladder, and I saw them."

) Well, go on, go on! What did they do? How did they act?"

) They didn't do anything and they didn't act anyway much, as far as I saw. They tiptoed away; so I saw, easy enough, that they'd shoved in there to do up your majesty's room, or something, supposing you were up; and found you weren't up, and so they were hoping to slide out of the way of trouble without waking you up, if they hadn't already waked you up."

) Great guns, this is a go!" said the king; and both of them looked pretty sick and tolerably silly.

-) Is something gone wrong?"

The king whirled on me and ripped out:

-) None of your business!"

As they were starting down the ladder the duke chuckled again, and said:

) Quick sales and small profits! It's a good business—yes."

The king swapped around and lit into me again. He gave me down the banks for not coming and telling him I saw the niggers come out of his room acting that way—said any fool would know something was up. So they went off jawing; and I felt dreadful glad I'd worked it all off onto the niggers, and yet hadn't done the niggers any harm by it.



Chapter 28

By-and-by it was getting-up time. So I came down the ladder and started for downstairs; but as I came to the girls' room, the door was open, and I saw Mary Jane setting by her old hair trunk, which was open and she'd been packing things in it—getting ready to go to England. But she had stopped now with a folded gown in her lap, and had her face in her hands, crying. I felt awful bad to see it; of course anybody would. I went in there and said:

) Miss Mary Jane, you can't bear to see people in trouble, and I can't—most always. Tell me about it." So she did it. And it was the niggers—I just expected it. She said the beautiful trip to England was almost about spoiled for her; she didn't know how she was ever going to be happy there, knowing the mother and the children weren't ever going to see each other any more—and then busted out bitterer than ever, and flung up her hands, and said:

) Oh, dear, dear, to think they aren't ever going to see each other any more!"

) But they will—and inside of two weeks—and I know it!" said I.

Laws, it was out before I could think! And before I could budge, she threw her arms around my neck and told me to say it again, say it again, say it again! I saw I had spoken too sudden and said too much, and was in a close place. I asked her to let me think a minute; and she set there, very impatient and excited and handsome, but looking kind of happy and eased-up, like a person who's had a tooth pulled out. So I went to studying it out. I must lay it by in my mind, and think it over some time or other; it was so kind of strange and irregular. I had never seen anything like it. Well, I said to myself at last, I was going to ch

ance it; I would up and tell the truth this time. Then I said:

) Miss Mary Jane, is there any place out of town a little ways where you could go and stay three or four days?"

) Yes; Mr. Lothrop's. Why?"

) Never mind why yet. Will you go to Mr. Lothrop's and stay four days?"

) Four days!" she said; "I'll stay a year!"

) All right," I said, and came back and set down again,



) Just set still and take it like a man. I get to tell the truth, and you want to brace up, Miss Mary, because it's a bad kind, and going to be hard to take, but there is no help for it. These uncles are not uncles at all; they're a couple of frauds. There, now we're over the worst of it, you can stand the rest middling easy."

It jolted her up like everything, of course; but I was over the shoal water now, so I went right along, and told her every blame thing, from where we first struck that young fool going up to the steamboat, clear through to where she flung herself onto the king's breast at the front door and he kissed her sixteen or seventeen times—and then up she jumped, with her face afire like sunset, and said:

) The brute! Come, don't waste a minute—not a second—we'll have them tarred and feathered, and flung in the river!"

Said I:

) Certainly. But do you mean before you go to Mr. Lothrop's, or—"

) Oh," she said, "what am I thinking about!" she said, and set right down again. "I never thought, I was so stirred up," she said; "now go on, and I won't do so any more. You tell me what to do, and whatever you say I'll do it."

) Miss Mary Jane, I'll tell you what we'll do, and you won't have to stay at Mr.

Lothrop's so long, either. How far is it?"

) A little short of four miles—right out in the country, back here."

) Well, now you go along out there, and lay low till nine or half-past tonight, and then get them to fetch you home again—tell them you've thought of something. If you get here before eleven, put a candle in this window, and if I don't turn up, wait till eleven, and then if I don't turn up, it means I'm gone, and out of the way, and safe. Then you come out and spread the news around, and get these beats jailed."

) Good," she said, "I'll do it."

) And if it just happens so that I don't get away, but get taken up along with them, you must up and say I told you the whole thing beforehand, and you must stand by me all you can."

) Stand by you! Indeed I will." she said, and I saw her nostrils spread and her eyes snap when she said it, too.

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) If I get away I shall not be here," I said, "to prove these rascallions aren't your uncles, and I couldn't do it if I was here. I can swear they are beats and bummers, that's all. Well, there are others can do that better than what I can, and they're people who aren't going to be doubted as quickly as I'd be. Well, I'll tell you how to find them. Gimme a pencil and a piece of paper. There—"Royal Nonesuch, Bricksville.' Put it away, and don't lose it. When the court wants to find out something about these two, let them send up to Bricksville and say they've got the men that played the Royal Nonesuch, and ask for some witnesses—why, you'll have that entire town down here before you can hardly wink, Miss Mary. And they'll come biling③, too.,

=Give me"

I judged we had got everything fixed about right now. So I said:

) Just let the auction go right along, and don't worry. Nobody have to pay for the things they buy till a whole day after the auction on accounts of the short notice, and they aren't going out of this till they get that money; and the way we've fixed it, the sale isn't going to count, and they aren't going to get money. It's just like the way it was with the niggers, they will be back before long. Why, they can't collect the money for the niggers yet—they're in the worst kind of fix, Miss Mary."

) Well," she said, "I'll run down to breakfast now, and then I'll start straight for Mr. Lothrop's."

) Indeed, by no manner of means, go before breakfast."

) Why?"

) Why, it's because you aren't one of these leather-face people. Do you reckon you can go and face your uncles when they come to kiss you good-morning, and never—"

) There, there, don't! Yes, I'll go before breakfast—I'll be glad to. And leave my sisters with them?"

) Yes, never mind about them. They've got to stand it yet a while. They might suspect something if all of you were to go. I'll tell Miss Susan to give your love to your uncles and say you've gone away for a few hours to get a little rest and change, or to see a friend, and you'll be back tonight or early in the morning."

) Gone to see a friend is all right, but I won't have my love given to them."

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) Well, then, it shan't be." It was well enough to tell her so—no harm in it.

Then I said: "There's one more thing—that bag of money."

) Well, they've got that; and it makes me feel pretty silly to think how they got it."

) No, you're out, there. They hadn't got it."

) Why, who's got it?"

) I wish I knew, but I don't. I had it, because I stole it from them; and I stole it to give to you; and I know where I hid it, but I'm afraid it isn't there any more. I'm awful sorry, Miss Mary Jane, I'm just as sorry as I can be, but I did the best I could. I came nigh getting caught, and I had to shove it into the first place I came to, and ran—and it wasn't a good place."

) Oh, stop blaminop wasn' aghs



But by and by the thing dragged through, and everything was sold—everything but a little old trifling lot in the graveyard. They'd got to work that off. Well, whilst they were at it, a steamboat landed, and in about two minutes up came a crowd whooping and yelling and laughing and carrying on, and singing out:

) Here's your opposition line! Here are your two sets of heirs to old Peter Wilks—and you pay your money and you take your choice!”

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Chapter 29

They were fetching a very nice-looking old gentleman along, and a nice-looking younger one, with his right arm in a sling. And, my souls, how the people yelled and laughed, and kept it up. I judged it would strain the duke and the king some to see any. I reckoned they'd turn pale. But no, nary a pale did they turn. The king just gazed and gazed down sorrowful on the new-comers like it gave him the stomach-ache in his very heart to think there could be such frauds and rascals in the world. Oh, he did it admirably. Lots of the principal people gathered a round the king, to let him see they were on his side. That old gentleman who had just come looked all puzzled to death. Pretty soon he began to speak, and I saw straight off he pronounced like an Englishman—not the king's way, though the king's was pretty good for an imitation. I couldn't give the old gent's words, nor I could imitate him; but he turned around to the crowd, and said, about like this:

) This is a surprise to me which I wasn't looking for; and I'll acknowledge, candidly and frankly, I am not very well fixed to meet it and answer it; for my brother and me have had misfortunes. He's broken his arm, and our baggage got put off at a town above here last night in the night by a mistake. I am Peter Wilks' brother Harvey, and this is his brother William, which can't hear nor speak—and can't even make signs to amount to much, now he's only got one hand to work them with.

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We are who we say we are, and in a day or two, when I get the baggage, I can prove it. But up till then I won't say anything more, but go to the hotel and wait.”

So he and the new dummy started off. The king laughed, and so did everybody else, except three or four, or maybe half a dozen. One of these was that doctor, another one was a sharp-looking gentleman that had just come off from the steamboat and was talking to the doctor in a low voice, and glancing towards the king now and then and nodding their heads—it was Levi Bell, the lawyer who was gone up to Louisville; and another one was a big rough husky that came along and listened to all the old gentleman said, and was listening to the king now. And when the king got done, this husky was up and said:

) Say, if you are Harvey Wilks, when did you come to this town?”

) The day before the funeral, friend,” said the king.

) How did you come?”

) I came down on the Susan Powell from Cincinnati.”

) Well, then, how did you come to be up at the Pint in the morning—in a canoe?,

) I wasn't up at the Pint in the morning.”

) It's a lie.”

Several of them jumped for him and begged him not to talk that way to an old man and a preacher.

) Preacher be hung, he's a fraud and a liar. He was up at the Pint that morning. I live up there, don't I? Well, I was up there, and he was up there. I saw him there. He came in a canoe, along with Tim Collins and a boy.

The doctor was up and said:

) Would you know the boy again if you were to see him, Hines?”

) I reckon I would, but I don't know. Why, yonder he is, now. I know him perfectly easy.”

It was me he pointed at. The doctor said:

) Neighbors, I don't know whether the new couple are frauds or not; but if these two aren't frauds, I am an idiot, that's all. I think it's our duty to see that they don't get away from here till we've looked into this thing. We'll take these fellows to the tavern and affront them with the other couple, and I reckon we'll find out something before we get through.”

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We all got in a big room in the hotel, and lit up some candles, and fetched the new couple. First, the doctor said:

) I don't wish to be too hard on these two men, but I think they're frauds, and they may have complices who we don't know anything about. If they have, won't the complices get away with that bag of gold Peter Wilks left? It isn't unlikely. If these men aren't frauds, they won't object to sending that money and letting us keep it till they prove they're all right—is that so?"

Everybody agreed to that. But the king only looked sorrowful, and said:

) Gentlemen, I wish the money was there, but, alas, the money isn't there; you can send and see, if you want to."

) Where is it, then?"

) Well, when my niece gave it to me to keep for her I took and hid it inside of the straw tick of my bed, but the niggers stole it the very next morning after I had gone downstairs; and when I sold them I hadn't missed the money yet, so they got clean away with it. My servant here can tell you about it, gentlemen."

The doctor and several said "Shucks!" and I saw nobody altogether believed him. One man asked me if I saw the niggers steal it. I said no, but I saw them sneaking out of the room and hustling away, and I never thought anything, only I reckoned they were afraid they had waked up my master and were trying to get away before he made trouble with them. That was all they asked me. Then the doctor whirled on me and said:

) Are you English, too?"

I said yes; and he and some others laughed, and said, "Stuff!"

Well, then they sailed in on the general investigation, and there we had it, up and down, hour in, hour out, and it was the worst mixed-up thing you had ever seen. They made the king tell his yarn, and they made the old gentleman tell his, and anybody would have seen that the old gentleman was spinning truth and the other one was lying.

Then the doctor started to say something, and turned and said:

) If you'd been in town at first, Levi Bell—"The king broke in and reached out his hand, and said:

) Why, is this my poor dead brother's old friend that he had written so often about?"

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The lawyer and he shook hands, and the lawyer smiled and looked pleased, and they talked right along awhile, and then got to one side and talked low; and at last the lawyer spoke up and said:

) That will fix it. I'll take the order and send it, along with your brother's, and then they'll know it's all right."

So they got some paper and a pen, and the king set down and twisted his head to one side, and scrawled off something; and then they gave the pen to the duke—and then for the first time the duke looked sick. But he took the pen and wrote. So then the lawyer turned to the new old gentleman and said:

) You and your brother please write a line or two and sign your names."

The old gentleman wrote, but nobody could read it. The lawyer looked powerful astonished, and said:

) Well, it beats me"—and snaked a lot of old letters out of his pocket, and examined them, and then examined the old man's writing; and then said: "These old letters are from Harvey Wilks; and here are these two's handwritings, and anybody can see they didn't write them" (the king and the duke looked sold and foolish, I tell you, to see how the lawyer had taken them in), "and here's this old gentleman's hand writing, and anybody can tell, easy enough, he didn't write the m—fact is, the scratches he made aren't properly writing at all. Now, here are some letters from—"

The new old gentleman said:

) If you please, let me explain. Nobody can read my hand but my brother there—so he copied for me. It's his hand you've got there, not mine."

) Well!" said the lawyer, "this is a state of things. I've got some of William's letters, too; so if you'll get him to write a line or so we can com—"

) He can't write with his left hand," said the old gentleman. "If he could use his right hand, you would see that he wrote his own letters and mine too. Look at both, please—they're by the same hand."

The lawyer did it, and said:

) I believe it's so—and if it isn't so, there's a heap stronger



Indeed he wouldn't. Said it wasn't a fair test, but pretty soon the new gentleman broke in, and said:

) I've thought of something. Is there anybody here that helped to lay out my brother—helped to lay out the late Peter Wilks for burying?"

) Yes," said somebody, "me and Turner did it. We're both here."

Then the old man turned towards the king, and said:

) Perhaps this gentleman can tell me what was tattooed on his breast?"

It was mighty still in there, and everybody bending a little forwards and gazing at him. I reckoned he thought he'd keep the thing up till he tired the people out, so they'd thin out, and he and the duke could break loose and get away. Anyway, he set there, and pretty soon he began to smile, and said:

) Mf! It's a very tough question, isn't it! Yes, sir, I can tell you what's tattooed on his breast. It's just a small, thin, blue arrow—that's what it is; and if you don't look close, you can't see it. Now what do you say—hey?"

Well, I had never seen anything like that old blister for clean out-and-out cheek.

The new old gentleman turned brisk towards Turner and the other fellow, and his eyes lit up like he judged he'd got the king this time, and said:

) There—you've heard what he said! Was there any such mark on Peter Wilks' breast?"

Both of them spoke up and said:

) We didn't see such mark."

) Good!" said the old gentleman. "Now, what you did see on his breast was a small dim P, and a B (which is an initial he dropped when he was young), and a W, with dashes between them, so: P—B—W"—and he marked them that way on a piece of paper. "Come, isn't that what you saw?"

Both of them spoke up again, and said:

) No, we didn't. We didn't see any mark at all."

Well, everybody was in a state of mind now, and they sang out:

) All frauds! Let's duck them! Let's ride them on a rail!" and everybody was whooping at once, but the lawyer jumped on the table and yelled, and said:

) Gentlemen! Hear me just a word! There's one way yet—let's go and dig up the corpse and look."

That took them.

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) We'll do it!, they all shouted;) and if we don't find the marks we'll lynch` the whole gang!,

I was scared, now, I tell you. As we went by our house I wished I hadn't sent Mary Jane out of town; because now if I could tip her the wink she'd light out and save me, and blow on our dead-beats.

I couldn't bear to think about it; and yet, somehow, I couldn't think about anything else. It got darker and darker, and it was a beautiful time to give the crowd the slip; but that big husky had me by the wrist. He dragged me right along, he was so excited, and I had to run to keep uep

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mighty well, and held my breath and listened and waited; and sure enough, when the next flash busted out over the water, here they came!—And just laying to their oars and making their skiff hum! It was the king and the duke.

So I wilted right down onto the planks then, and gave up; and it was all I could do to keep from crying.

Chapter30

When they got aboard the king went for me, and shook me by the collar, and said:

) Trying to give us the slip, weren't you, you pup! Tired of our company, hey?"

I said:

) No, your majesty, we weren't—please don't, your majesty!"

) Quick, then, and tell us what was your idea, or I'll shake the insides out of you!"

) Honest, I'll tell you everything just as it happened, your majesty. The man that had a-holt of me was very good to me, and kept saying he had a boy about as big as me who died last year, and he was sorry to see a boy in such a dangerous fix; and when they were all taken by surprise by finding the gold, and made a rush for the coffin, he let go of me and I lit out. So when I got here I told Jim to hurry, or they'd catch me and hang me yet, and said I was afeard you and the duke weren't alive now, and I was awful sorry, and so was Jim, and was awful glad when we saw you coming; you may ask Jim if I didn't."

Jim said it was so; and the king told him to shut up, and shook me up again, and said he reckoned he'd drown me. But the duke said:

) Let go the boy, you old idiot! Would you do any difference? Did you inquire around for him when you got loose? I don't remember it."

So the king let go of me, and began to cuss that town and everybody in it. Then the king said, kind of absent-minded like:

) Mf! And we reckoned the niggers stole it!"

That made me squirm!

The duke said, pretty briskly:

) When it comes to that, maybe you'll let me ask, what



were you referring to?"

) Shucks!" said the king, very sarcastic, "but I don't know—maybe you were asleep, and didn't know what you were about."

The duke bristled up now, and said:

) Oh, let up on this cussed nonsense; do you take me for a blame' fool? Don't you reckon I know who hid that money in that coffin?"

) Yes, sir! I know you do know, because you did it yourself!"

) It's a lie!"—and the duke went for him. The king sang out:

) I wished I never die if I did it, duke, and that's honest. I won't say I wasn't going to do it, because I was; but you—I mean somebody—got in ahead of me."

) It's a lie! You did it, and you got to say you did it, or—"

The king began to gurgle, and then he gasped out:

) Nough!—I own up!"

I was very glad to hear him say that, it made me feel much more easier than what

I was feeling before. So the duke took his hands off and said:

) If you ever deny it again I'll drown you. I have never seen such an old ostrich forwanting to gobble everything P and I am trusting you all the time, like you were my own father. You ought to be ashamed of yourself to stand by and hear it saddled onto a lot of poor niggers, and you never said a word for them. Cuss you, I can see now why you were so anxious to make up the deffisit—you wanted to get that money I'd got out of the Nonesuch and one thing or another, and scoop it all!"

The king said, timidly, and still snuffling:

) Why, duke, it was you that said made up the deffisit; it wasn't me."

) Dry up! I don't want to hear any more out of you!" said the duke. So the king sneaked into the wigwam and took to his bottle for comfort, and before long the duke tackled his bottle; and so in about half an hour they were as thick as thieves again, but I noticed the king didn't get mellow enough to forget to remember not deny about hiding the money-bag again. That made me feel easy and satisfied. Of course when they got to snoring we had a long gabble, and I told Jim everything.

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Chapter31

We didn't stop again at any town for days and days; kept right along down the river. We were down south in the warm weather now, and a mighty long ways from home. So now the frauds reckoned they were out of danger, and they began to work the villages again.

They tackled missionarying, and mesmerizing, and doctoring, and telling fortunes, and a little of everything; but they couldn't seem to have any luck. So at last they got just about dead broken, and laid around the raft as she floated along, thinking and thinking, and never saying anything, by half a day at a time, and dreadful blue and desperate.

And at last they took a change and began to lay their heads together in the wigwam and talk low and confidentially two or three hours at a time. Jim and I got uneasy. We judged they were studying up some kind of worse deviltry than ever. So then we made up an agreement that we wouldn't have anything in the world to do with such actions, and if we ever got the least show, we would give them the cold shake and clear out and leave them behind. Well, early one morning we hid the raft in a good, safe place about two miles below a little bit of a shabby village named Pikesville, and the king went ashore and told us all to stay hid whilst he went up to town. And he said if he wasn't back by midday the duke and me would know it was all right, and we were to come along.

So we stayed where we were. I was good and glad when midday came and no king; we could have a change, anyway—and maybe a chance for the chance on top of it. So I and the duke went up to the village, and hunted around there for the king, and by and by we found him in the back room of a little low doggerly, very tight, and a lot of loafers bullyragging him for sport. The duke began to abuse him for an old fool, and the king began to sass back, and the minute they were fairly at it I lit out and spun down the river road like a deer, for I saw our chance; I got down there all out of breath but loaded up with joy, and sang out:

) Set her loose, Jim! We're all right now!"

But there was no answer, and nobody came out of the

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wigwam. Jim was gone! I set down and cried; I couldn't help it. But I couldn't set still long. Pretty soon I went out on the road, trying to think what I would better do, and I ran across a boy walking, and asked him if he'd seen a strange nigger dressed so and so, and he said:

) Yes."

) Where about?" said I.

) Down to Silas Phelps' place, two miles below here. He's a runaway nigger, and

they've got him. Are you looking for him?"

) You bet I am not! I ran across him in the woods about an hour or two ago, and he said if I hollered he'd cut my livers out—and told me to lie down and stay where I was; and I did it. Been there ever since; afeard to come out."

) Well," he said, "you needn't be afeard any more, because they've got him. He

ran off from down South, somewhere."

) Yes, it is—and I could have it if I'd been big enough; I saw him first. Who nailed him?"

) It was an old fellow—a stranger—and he sold out his chance in him for forty dollars, because he's got to go up the river and couldn't wait. Think of that, now! You bet



so—goodness knows we had trouble enough for him. So when we saw the raft was gone and we were flat broken, there wasn't anything for it but to try the Royal Nonesuch another shake. And I've pegged along ever since, dry as a powder-horn. Where's that ten cents? Give it here."

I had considerable money, so I gave him ten cents, but begged him to spend it for something to eat, and gave me some, because it was all the money I had, and I hadn't had anything to eat since yesterday. He never said anything. The next minute he whirled on me and said:

) Do you reckon that nigger would blow on us?"

) How can he blow? Hadn't he run off?"

) No! That old fool sold him, and never divided with me, and the money's gone."

) Sold him?" I said, and began to cry; "why, he was my nigger, and that was my money. Where is he?—I want my nigger."

) Well, you can't get your nigger, that's all—so dry up your blubbering. Looky here—do you think you'd venture to blow on us? Blamed if I think I'd trust you. Why, if you were to blow on us—"

He stopped, but I had never seen the duke look so ugly out of his eyes before. I went on whimpering, and said:

) I don't want to blow on anybody; I get to turn out and find my nigger."

He looked kinder bothered, and stood there with his bills fluttering on his arm, thinking, and wrinkling up his forehead. At last he said:

) I'll tell you something. We get to be here three days. If you promise you won't blow, and won't let the nigger blow, I'll tell you where to find him."

So I promised, and he said:

) A farmer by the name of Silas Ph——" and then he stopped. You see, he started to tell me the truth; but when he stopped that way, and began to study and think again, I reckoned he was changing his mind. And so he was. He wouldn't trust me; he wanted to make sure of having me out of the way the whole three days. So pretty soon he said:

) The man who bought him is named Abram Foster—Abram G. Foster—and he lives forty miles back here in the country, on the road to Lafayette."

) All right," I said, "I can walk there in three days. And I'll start this very afternoon."

) No you wont, you'll start now; and don't you lose any time



about it, nor do any gabbling by the way. Just keep a tight tongue in your head and move right along, and then you won't get into trouble with us, don't you hear?"

That was the order I wanted, and that was the one I played for. I wanted to be left free to work my plans.

So I left, and struck for the backcountry. I didn't look around, but I kinder felt like he was watching me. But I knew I could tire him out at that. I went straight out in the country as much as a mile before I stopped; then I doubled back through the woods towards Phelps'. I reckoned I'd better start on my plan straight off without fooling around, because I wanted to stop Jim's mouth till these fellows could get away. I didn't want any trouble with their kind. I'd seen all I wanted to from them, and wanted to get entirely shut of them.

Chapter32

When I got there it was all still and Sunday-like, and hot and sunshiny; the hands were gone to the fields; Phelps' was one of these little one-horse cotton plantations, and they all looked alike. A rail fence rounded a two-acre yard; a stile made out of logs sawed off and up-ended in steps, like barrels of a different length, to climb over the fence with, and for the women to stand on when they were going to jump onto a horse; some sickly grass-patches in the big yard, but mostly it was bare and smooth.

I went around and climbed over the back stile by the ash-hopper, and started for the kitchen. When I got a little ways I heard the dim hum of a spinning-wheel wailing along up and sinking along down again; and then I knew for certain I wished I was dead—for that IS the loneliest sound in the whole world.

I went right along, not fixing up any particular plan, but just trusting to Providence to put the right words in my mouth when the time came; for I'd noticed that Providence always did put the right words in my mouth if I left it alone.

When I got half-way, first one hound and then another got up and went for me, and of course I stopped and faced them, and kept still. In a quarter of a minute I was a kind of a hub of a wheel, and a circle of fifteen of them packed together around

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me, with their necks and noses stretched up towards me; you could see them sailing over fences and around corners from everywhere.

A nigger woman came tearing out of the kitchen with a rolling-pin in her hand, and she fetched first one and then another of them a clip and sent them howling`, and then the rest followed; and the next second half of them came back, wagging their tails around me, and making friends with me.

And then came the white woman running from the house, about forty-five or fifty years old, bareheaded, with her spinning-stick in her hand; and behind her came her little white children. She was smiling all over so she could hardly stand and said:

) It's you, at last!—Isn't it?"

I outed with a "Yes madam." before I thought.

She grabbed me and hugged me tight; and then gripped me by both hands and shook and shook; and kept saying, "You don't look as much like your mother as I reckoned you would; but law sakes, I don't care for that, I'm so glad to see you! Dear, dear, it does seem like I could eat you up! Children, it's your cousin Tom!—Tell him howdya .,

But they ducked their heads, and put their fingers in their mouths, and hid behind her. So she ran on:

) Lize, hurry up and get him a hot breakfast right away—or did you get your breakfast on the boat?"

I said I had got it on the boat. So then she started for the house, leading me by the hand, and said:

) Now I can have a good look at you; and, laws-a-me, I've been hungry for it amany and a many a time, all these long years, and it came at last! We have been expecting you a couple of days and more. What kept you?—Boat get aground?"

) Yes madam—she—"

) Don't say yes—say Aunt Sally. Where did she get aground?"

I didn't rightly know what to say, because I didn't know whether the boat would be coming up the river or down. Now I struck an idea, and fetched it out:

) It wasn't the grounding—that didn't keep us back but a little. We blew out a cylinder-head."

) Good gracious! Anybody hurt?"

) No madam. Killed a nigger."

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) Well, it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt. Your uncle's been up to the town every day to fetch you. And he's gone again, not more than an hour ago; he'll be back any minute now. You must have met him on the road, didn't you?P
Oldish man, with a—”

) No, I didn't see anybody, Aunt Sally. The boat landed just at daylight, and I left my baggage on the wharf-boat and went looking around the town and out a piece in the country, to put in the time and not to get here too soon; and so I came down the back way.”

) Who'd you give the baggage to? How'd you get your breakfast so early on the boat?”

It was kinder thin ice, but I said:

) The captain saw me standing around, and told me I'd better have something to eat before I went ashore; so he took me in the texas to the officers' lunch, and gave me all I wanted.”

I was getting so uneasy that I couldn't listen well. I had my mind on the children all the time; I wanted to get them out to one side and pump them a little, and find out who I was. But I couldn't get any show, Mrs. Phelps kept it up and ran on so. Pretty soon she made the cold chills streak all down my back, because she said:

) But here we're running on this way, and you hadn't told me a word about Sister, nor any of them. Now I'll rest my works a little, and you start up yours; just tell me everything—tell me all about them all every one of them; and how they are, and what they're doing, and what they told you to tell me; and every last thing you can think of.”

Well, I saw I was up a stump—and up it good. So I said to myself, here's another place where I got to risk the truth. I opened my mouth to begin; but she grabbed me and hustled me behind the bed, and said: e e



become of him? Dear, what will Sis say! He must come! You must have missed him. He—”

) Oh, don't distress me any more than I'm already distressed. I don't know what in the world to make of it. But there's no hope that he's come; for he couldn't come and me missed him. Sally, it's terrible—just terrible—something's happened to the boat, sure!”

) Why, Silas! Look yonder!—Up the road!—Isn't that somebody coming?”

He sprung to the window at the head of the bed, and that gave Mrs. Phelps the chance she wanted. She stooped down quickly at the foot of the bed and gave me a pull, and out I came; and when he turned back from the window there she stood, beaming and smiling like a house afire, and I standing pretty meek and sweaty alongside. The old gentleman stared, and said:

) Why, who's that?”

) Who do you reckon it is?”

) I have no idea. Who IS it?”

) It's Tom Sawyer!”

By jings, I almost slumped through the floor! The old man grabbed me by the hand and shook, and kept on shaking; and all the time how the woman did dance around and laugh and cry; and then how they both did fire off questions about Sid, and Mary, and the rest of the tribe.

I was so glad to find out who I was. Well, they froze to me for two hours; I had told them more about my family—I mean the Sawyer family—than ever happened to any six Sawyer families. And I explained all about how we blew out a cylinder-head at the mouth of White River, and it took us three days to fix it.

Now I was feeling pretty comfortable all down one side, and pretty uncomfortable all up the other. Being Tom Sawyer was easy and comfortable, and it stayed easy and comfortable till by and by I heard a steamboat coughing along down the river. Then I said to myself, supposed Tom Sawyer came down on that boat? And supposed he stepped in here any minute, and sang out my name before I could throw him a wink to keep quiet?

Well, I couldn't have it that way; I must go up the road and waylay him. So I told the folks I reckoned I would go up to the town and fetch down my baggage. The old gentleman was for going along with me, but I said no, I could drive the horse myself, and I'd rather he wouldn't take any trouble about me.



Chapter33

So I started for town in the wagon, and when I was half-way I saw a wagon coming, and sure enough it was Tom Sawyer, and I stopped and waited till he came along. I said "Hold on!" and it stopped alongside, and his mouth opened up like a trunk, and stayed so; and then said:

) I hadn't ever done you any harm. You know that. So, then, what you want to come back and haunt me for?"

I said:

) I hadn't come back—I hadn't been gone. I wasn't ever murdered at all—I played it on them. You come in here and feel of me if you don't believe me."

So he did it; and it satisfied him; and he was so glad to see me again that he didn't know what to do. And he wanted to know all about it right off, because it was a grand adventure, and mysterious, and so it hit him where he lived. But I said, left it alone till by and by; and told his driver to wait, and we drove off a little piece, and I told him the kind of fix I was in, and what did he reckon we'd better do? He said, let him alone a minute, and didn't disturb him. So he thought and thought, and pretty soon he said:

) I've got it. Take my trunk in your wagon, and let on it's yours; and you turn back and fool along slow, so as to get to the house about the time you ought to; and I'll go towards town a piece, and take a fresh start, and get there a quarter or a half an hour after you; and you needn't let on to know me at first." I said:

) All right; but wait a minute. There's one more thing—a thing that nobody knows but me. And that is, there's a nigger here that I'm trying to steal out of slavery, and his name is Jim—old Miss Watson's Jim."

He said:

) What! Why, Jim is—"

He stopped and went to studying. I said:

) I know what you'll say. You'll say it's dirty, low-down business; but what if it is? I'm going to steal him, and I want you keep mum and not let on. Will you?"

His eye lit up, and he said:

) I'll help you steal him!"

Well, I let go all holts then, like I was shot. I couldn't believe it. Tom Sawyer a nigger-stealer!

) Oh, shucks!" I said; "you're joking."

) I am not joking, either."



) Well, then," I said, "joking or no joking, if you hear anything said about a

runaway nigger, don't forget to remember that you don't know anything about him, and I don't know anything about him."

Then we took the trunk and put it in my wagon, and he drove off his way and I drove mine. But of course I forgot all about driving slow on accounts of being glad and full of thinking; so I got home a heap too quick for that length of a trip.

Then in about half an hour Tom's wagon drove up to the front stile, and Aunt Sally saw it through the window, because it was only about fifty yards, and said:

) Why, there's somebody coming! Why, I do believe it's a stranger. Jimmy" (that's one of the children), "run and tell Lize to put on another plate for dinner.,

Everybody made a rush for the front door. Tom had his store clothes on, and an audience—and that was always nuts for Tom Sawyer. In the circumstances it was no trouble for him to throw in an amount of style that was suitable. When he got afront of us he lifted his hat ever so gracious and dainty`, like it was the lid of a box that had butterflies asleep in it and he didn't want to disturb them, and said:

) Mr. Archibald Nichols, I presume?"

) No, my boy," said the old gentleman, "I'm sorry to say your driver has deceived you; Nichols's place is down a matter of three miles more. Come in, come in.,

Tom took a look back over his sTj-0,15648 Tc (r) Tj1 () Tj-154.08 Tc (n) Tj0.72 Tc (M) Tj-0.63648 87n54.08 T



) You owdacious puppy!”

He looked kind of hurt, and said:

) I'm surprised at you, m'am. I wasn't expecting it. They told me to. They all told me to. They all said, kissed her; and said she'd like it. They all said it—every one of them. But I'm sorry, m'am, and I won't do it any more—I won't, honest.”

) You won't, won't you? Well, I reckon you won't!”

) No m'am, I'm honest about it; I won't ever do it again—till you ask me.”

) Till I ask you! Well, I have never seen the beat of it in my born days!”

) Well,” he said, “it does surprise me so. They said you would, and I thought you would. But—” He stopped and looked around to me, and said:

) Tom, didn't you think Aunt Sally 'd open out her arms and say, ‘Sid Sawyer—

) My land!” she said, breaking in and jumping for him, “you impudent young rascal, to fool a body so—” and was going to hug him, but he fended her off, and said:

) No, not till you've asked me first.”

So she didn't lose any time, but asked him; and hugged him and kissed him over and over again:

) Why, dear me, I have never seen such a surprise. Sis never wrote to me about anybody coming but him.”

) It's because it wasn't intended for any of us to come but Tom,” he said; “but I begged and begged, and at the last minute she let me come, too; so, coming down the river, Tom and I thought it would be a first-rate surprise for him to come here to the house first, and for me to by and by tag along and drop in, and let on to be a stranger. But it was a mistake, Aunt Sally. This is not healthy place for a stranger to come.”

We had dinner out in that broad open passage between the house and the kitchen; There was a considerably good deal of talk all the afternoon, and I and Tom were on the lookout all the time; but it was no use, they didn't happen to say anything about any runaway nigger. But at supper, at night, one of the little boys said:

) Pap, mayn't Tom and Sid and me go to the show?”

) No,” said the old man, “I reckon there isn't going to be any; and you couldn't go if there was; because the runaway nigger told Burton and me all about that scandalous show, so I reckon they've driven the owdacious loafers out of town before this time.”

So there it was!—but I couldn't help it. Tom and I were



) No! Where?"

) In that hut down by the ash-hopper. Why, looky here. When we were at dinner, didn't you see a nigger man go in there with some vittles? Well, the nigger unlocked the padlock when he went in, and he locked it again when he came out. He fetched uncle a key about the time we got up from table—same key, I bet. All right—I'm glad we found it out detective fashion; I wouldn't give shucks for any other way. Now you work your mind, and study out a plan to steal Jim, and I will study out one, too; and we'll take the one we like the best."

I went to thinking out a plan, but only just to be doing something; I knew very well where the right plan was going to come from. Pretty soon Tom said:

) Ready?"

) Yes," I said.

) All right—bring it out."

) My plan is this," I said. "We can easily find out if it's Jim in there. Then get up my canoe tomorrow night, and fetch my raft over from the island. Then the first dark night that comes steal the key out of the old man's britches after he goes to bed, and shove off down the river on the raft with Jim, hiding daytimes and running nights, the way me and Jim used to do before.

Wouldn't that plan work?"

) Work? Why, certainly it would work, but it's too simple; Huck, it wouldn't make any more talk than breaking into a soap factory." He told me what it was, and I saw in a minute it was worth fifteen of mine for style, and would make Jim just as free a man as mine would, and maybe get us all killed besides. And that was what he had done.

Well, one thing was dead sure, and that was that Tom Sawyer was in earnest, and was actually going to help steal that nigger out of slavery. That was the thing that was too much for me. Here was a boy that was respectable and well brought up; and yet here he was, without any more pride, or rightness, or feeling, than to stoop to this business, and make himself a shame, and his family a shame, before everybody. It was outrageous, and I knew I ought to just up and tell him so; and let him quit the thing right where he was and saved himself. And I did start to tell him; but he shut me up, and said:

) Don't you reckon I know what I'm about? Don't I



generally know what I'm about?,

) Yes.”

) Well, then.”

That's all he said, and that's all I said. It was no use to say any more; If he was bound to have it so, I couldn't help it.

When we got home, the house was all dark and still; so we went on down to the hut by the ash-hopper to examine it. When we got to the cabin we took a look at the front and the two sides; and on the side I wasn't acquainted with—which was the north side—we found a square window-hole, up tolerable high, with just one stout board nailed across it. I said:

) Here's the ticket. This hole's big enough for Jim to get through if we wrench off the board.”

Tom said:

) It's as easy as playing hooky. I should hope we could find a way that's a little more complicated than that, Huck Finn. There is no hurry; let's keep on looking around.”

Between the hut and the fence, on the back side, was a lean-to that joined the hut at the eaves, and was made out of plank. The door to it was at the south end, and was padlocked. Tom went to the soap-kettle and searched around, and fetched back the iron thing so he took it and prized out one of the staples. The chain fell down, and we opened the door and went in, and saw the shed was only built against a cabin and hadn't any connection with it; Tom was joyful. He said:

) Now we're all right. We'll dig him out. It will take about a week!”

In the morning we were up at break of day, and down to the nigger cabins to pet the dogs and make friends with the nigger that fed Jim—if it was Jim that was fed. The niggers were just getting through breakfast and starting for the fields; and Jim's nigger was piling up a tin pan with bread and meat and things; and whilst the others were leaving, the key came from the house.

This nigger had a good-natured chuckle-headed face, and his wool was all tied up in little bunches with thread. That was to keep witches off. He said the witches were pestering him awfully these nights, and he didn't believe he was ever witched so long before in his life. He got so worked up, and got to running on so about his troubles, he forgot all about what he'd been going to do. So Tom said:

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) What's the vittles for? Going to feed the dogs?"

) Yes, Mars Sid, a dog. Do you want to go and look at him?"

) Yes."

I hunched Tom, and whispered:

) You are going, right here in the daybreak? That wasn't the plan."

) No, it wasn't; but it's the plan now."

So, we went along, but I didn't like it much. When we got in we could hardly see anything, but Jim was there, sure enough, and could see us; and he sang out:

) Why, Huck! And good land! Is that Mister Tom?"

I just knew how it would be; I just expected it. I didn't know anything to do; and if I had, I couldn't do it, because that nigger busted in and said:

) Why, the gracious sakes! Does he know you gentlemen?"

We could see pretty well now. Tom looked at the nigger, steady and kind of wondering, and said:

) Does who know us?"

) Why, this runaway nigger."

) I don't reckon he does; but what put that into your head?"

) What put that? Didn't he just this minute sing out like he knew you?"

Tom said, in a puzzled-up kind of way:

) Well, that's mighty curious. Who sang out? When did he sing out? What did he sing out?" And turned to me, perfectly calm, and said, "Did you hear anybody sing out?"

) No, I didn't." Then he turned to Jim, and looked him over like he never saw him before, and said:

) Did you sing out?"

) No," said Jim, "I hadn't said anything."

So Tom turned to the nigger, which looked wild and distressed, and said, kind of severe:

) What do you reckon the matter with you, anyway? What made you think somebody sang out?"

) Oh, it's the dad-blamed witches, sir, and I wished I was dead, I do. And they do almost kill me. Please don't tell anybody about it sir, and old Mars Silas will scold me."

Tom gave him a dime, and said we wouldn't tell anybody; and told him to buy some more threads to tie up his wool with; and then looked at Jim, and said:



) I wonder if Uncle Silas is going to hang this nigger. If I was to catch a nigger that was ungrateful enough to run away, I wouldn't give him up, I'd hang him., And whilst the nigger stepped to the door to look at the dime and bite it to see if it was good, he whispered to Jim and said:

) Don't ever let on to know us. And if you hear any digging going on at nights, it's us; we're going to set you free." Jim only had time to grab us by the hand and squeeze it; then the nigger came back, and we said we'd come again some time if the nigger wanted us to; and he said he would, more particular if it was dark, because the witches went for him mostly in the dark, and it was good to have folks around then.

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Chapter35

It would be almost an hour yet till breakfast, so we left and struck down into the woods; because Tom said we got to have some light to see how to dig by, what we must have was a lot of the rotten chunks that's called fox-fire, and just made a soft kind of a glow when you laid them in a dark place. We fetched an armful and hid it in the weeds, and set down to rest, and Tom said, kind of dissatisfied:

) Blame it, this whole thing is just as easy and awkward as it can be. And so it makes it so rotten difficult to get up a difficult plan. There is no watchman to be drugged—now there ought to be a watchman. There isn't even a dog to give a sleeping-mixture to. And there's Jim chained by one leg, with a ten-foot chain, to the leg of his bed: why, all you get to do is to lift up the bedstead and slip off the chain. Now, whilst I think of it, we get to hunt up something to make a saw out of the first chance we get."

) What do we want of a saw?"

) Will we get to saw the leg of Jim's bed off, so as to get the chain loose?"

) Why, you just said a body could lift up the bedstead and slip the chain off.,

) No, the way all the best authorities do is to saw the bed-leg in two, and leave it just so, and swallow the sawdust, so it can't be found, and put some dirt and grease around the sawed



place. Then, the night you're ready, fetch the leg a kick, down it goes; slip off your chain, and there you are. Huck. I wish there was a moat to this cabin. If we get time, the night of the escape, we'll dig one."

I said:

) What do we want of a moat when we're going to snake him out from under the cabin?"

But he never heard me. He had forgotten me and everything else. He had his chin in his hand, thinking. Pretty soon he sighed and shook his head; then sighed again, and said:

) No, it wouldn't do—there isn't necessity enough for it."

) For what?" I said.

) Why, to saw Jim's leg off," he said.

) Good land!" I said; "why, there is no necessity for it. And what would you want to saw his leg off for, anyway?"

) Well, some of the best authorities have done it. But we get to let that go. Jim's a nigger, and wouldn't understand the reasons for it, and how it's the custom in Europe; so we'll let it go. But there's one thing—he can have a rope ladder; we can tear up our sheets and make him a rope ladder easy enough. And we can send it to him in a pie; it's mostly done that way."

) Why, Tom Sawyer, how you talk," I said; "Jim doesn't need a rope ladder."

) He has got use for it. You don't know anything about it. He's got to have a rope ladder; they all do."

) Well, all right, Tom, fix it your own way; but if you'll take my advice, you'll let me borrow a sheet off from the clothesline."

He said that would do. And that gave him another idea, and he said:

) Borrow a shirt, too."

) What do we want of a shirt, Tom?"

) Want it for Jim to keep a journal on."

) Journal your granny—Jim can't write."

) Suppose he can't write—he can make marks on the shirt, can't he, if we make him a pen out of an old pewter spoon or a piece of an old iron barrel-hoop?"

) Why, Tom, we can pull a feather out of a goose and make him a better one; and quicker, too."

) Prisoners don't have geese running around the donjon-keep to pull pens out of, you muggins."

) Well, then, what'll we make him the ink out of?"

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) Many make it out of iron-rust and tears; but that's the common sort and women; the best authorities use their own blood. The Iron Mask always does that, and it's a blamed good way, too."

He broke off there, because we heard the breakfast-horn blowing. So we cleared out for the house.

Along during the morning I borrowed a sheet and a white shirt off of the clothes-line; and I found an old sack and put them in it, and we went down and got the fox-fire, and put that in too. We waited that morning till everybody was settled down to business, and nobody in sight around the yard; then Tom carried the sack into the lean-to whilst I stood off a piece to keep watch. By and by he came out, and we went and set down on the woodpile to talk. He said:

) Everything's all right now except tools; and that's easy fixed."

) Tools for what?"

) Why, to dig with. We aren't going to gnaw` him out, are we?,"

) Aren't the old crippled picks and things in there good enough to dig a nigger out with?" I said.

He turned on me, looking pitying enough to make a body cry, and said:

) Huck Finn, did you ever hear of a prisoner having picks and shovels, and all the modern conveniences in his wardrobe to dig himself out with?"

) Well, then," I said, "if we don't want the picks and shovels, what do we want?"

) A couple of case-knives."

) To dig the foundations out from under that cabin with?"

) Yes."

) Confound it, it's foolish, How long will it take, Tom?"

) Well, we can't risk being as long as we ought to, because it mayn't take very long for Uncle Silas to hear from down there by New Orleans. He'll hear Jim isn't from there. Then his next move will be to advertise Jim, or something like that. So we can't risk being as long digging him out as we ought to. By rights I reckon we ought to be a couple of years; but we can't. Things being so uncertain, what I recommend is this: that we really dig right in, as quick as we can; and after that, we can let on, to ourselves, that we were at it thirty-seven years. Then we can snatch him out and rush him away the first time there's an alarm. Yes, I reckon that will be the best way."

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out at the window and saw Tom doing his level best with the lightning-rod, but he couldn't come it, his hands were so sore. At last he said:) It is no use, it can't be done. What you reckon I'd better do? Can't you think of no way?"

) Yes," I said, "but I reckon it isn't regular. Come up the stairs, and let on it's a lightning-rod."

So he did it.

The next day Tom stole a pewter spoon and a brass candlestick` in the house, for to make some pens for Jim out of, and six candles; and I hang around the nigger cabins and laid for a chance, and stole three tin plates. So Tom was satisfied. Then he said:

) Now, the thing to study out is, how to get the things to Jim."

) Take them in through the hole," I said, "when we get it done."

He only just looked scornfula, and said something about nobody ever heard of such an idiotic idea, and then he went to studying. By and by he said he had ciphered out two or three ways, but couldn't decide on any of them yet. Said we'd get to post Jim first.

That night we went down the lightning-rod a little after ten, then we whirled` in with the pick and shovel, and in about two hours and a half the job was done. We crept in under Jim's bed and into the cabin, and then we woke him up gently and gradually. He was so glad to see us that he almost cried; and was for having us hunt up a cold-chisel to cut the chain off of his leg with right away, and clearing out without losing any time. But Tom set down and told him all about our plans, and how we could alter them in a minute any time there was an alarm; and not to be the least afraid, because we would see him get away, sure. So Jim said it was all right, and we set there and talked over old times awhile, and then Tom asked a lot of questions, and when Jim told him Uncle Silas came in every day or two to pray with him, and Aunt Sally came in to see if he was comfortable and had plenty to eat, and both of them were kind as they could be, Tom said:

) Now I know how to fix it. We'll send you some things by them."

So he told Jim how we'd have to smugglea in the rope-ladder pie and other large things by Nat, the nigger that

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his fork into it in three or four places first.

And whilst we were standing there in the diminisha light, here came a couple of the hounds from under Jim's bed. And they kept on piling in till there were eleven of them, and there was hardly room in there to get your breath. By jings, we forgot to fasten that lean-to door! The nigger Nat only just hollered "Witches" once, and keeled over onto the floor amongst the dogs, and began to groan like he was dying. Tom jerked` the door open and flung out a slab of Jim's meat, and the dogs went for it, and in two seconds he was out himself and back again and shut the door, and I knew he'd fixed the other door too. Then he went to work on the nigger, coaxing him and petting him, and asking him if he'd been imagining he saw something again. He raised up, and blinked his eyes around, and said:

) Mars Sid, you'll say I'm a fool, but if I didn't believe I saw almost a million dogs, or devils, or something, I wished I may die right here in these tracks."

Tom said:

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) Well, I tell you what I think. What made them come here just at this runaway nigger's breakfast-time? It's because they were hungry; that's the reason. You make them a witch pie; that's the thing for you to do."

) But Mars Sid, how am I going to make them a witch pie? I don't know how to make it."

) Well, then, I'll have to make it myself."

) Will you do it, honey?—Will you?"

) All right, I'll do it, seeing it's you, and you've been good to us and showed us the runaway nigger. But you get to be mighty careful. When we come around, you turn your back; and then whatever we've put in the pan, don't let on you see it at all. And don't look when Jim unloads the pan—something might happen, I don't know what. And above all, don't handle the witch-things."

) Mars Sid! What are you talking about? I wouldn't lay the weight or my finger on them, I wouldn't."

Chapter37

That was all fixed. So then we went away and went to the garbage-pile in the back yard, where they kept the old boots, and rags, and pieces of bottles, and wore-out tin things, and all such trucks, and scratched around and found an old tin wash-pan, and stopped up the holes as well as we could, to bake the pie in, and took it down cellar and stole it full of flour and started for breakfast, and found a couple of shingle-nails that Tom said would be handy for a prisoner to

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And when she came, she was hot and red and cross, and could hardly wait for the blessing; and then she went to sluicing out coffee with one hand and cracking the handiest child's head with her thimble^③ with the other, and said:

) I've hunted high and I've hunted low, and it does beat all what has become of your the other shirt."

My heart fell down amongst my lungs and livers and things, and Tom turned kinder blue around the gills, and it all amounted to a considerable state of things for about a quarter of a minute or as much as that, and I would sell out for half price if there was a bidder. But after that we were all right again—it was the sudden surprise of it that knocked us so kind of cold. Uncle Silas said:

) It's most uncommonly curious, I can't understand it. I know perfectly well I took it off, because—"

) Because you hadn't got but one on. Just listen at the man! I know you took it off, and whatever you do manage to do with them all is more than I can make out. A body 'd think you would learn to take some sort of care of them at your time of life."

) I know it, Sally, and I do try all I can. But it oughtn't to be altogether my fault, because, you know, I don't see them nor have anything to do with them except when they're on me; and I don't believe I've ever lost one of them off from me."

) Well, it isn't your fault if you haven't, Silas; you'd do it if you could, I reckon. And the shirt isn't all that have gone, neither. There's a spoon gone; and that isn't all. There were ten, and now there are only nine."

) Why, what else is gone, Sally?"

) There are six candles gone—that's what. The rats could get the candles, and I reckon they did; and if they weren't fools they'd sleep in your hair, Silas—you'd never find it out; but you can't lay the spoon on the rats, and that I know.,

) Well, Sally, I'm in fault, and I acknowledge it; I've been remiss` ; but I won't let tomorrow go by without stopping up the holes.,

) Oh, I wouldn't hurry; next year will do."

Just then the nigger woman stepped onto the passage, and said:

) Missus, there's a sheet gone."

) A sheet gone! Well, I reckon the world is coming to an

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end. Never seen the beat of it in all my born days. A shirt, and a sheet, and a spoon, and six can—”

) Missus,” came a young woman, “there's a brass candlestick missing.”

) Clear out from here, you hussy, or I'll take a skillet to you!”

Well, she was just biling. I began to lay for a chance; I reckoned I would sneak out and go for the woods till the weather moderated. She kept raging right along, and everybody else was mighty meek and quiet; and at last Uncle Silas, looking kind of foolish, fished up that spoon out of his pocket. She stopped, with her mouth open and her hands up; then she said:

) It's just as what I expected. So you had it in your pocket all the time; and like as you've got the other things there, too. How'd it get there?”

) I really don't know, Sally,” he said, kind of apologizing, “or you know I would tell. I was studying over my text in Acts Seventeen before breakfast, and I reckon I put it in there, not noticing, I laid the Testament down and took up the spoon, and—”

) Oh, for the land's sake! Give a body a rest! Go along now, the whole kit and biling of you; and don't come to nigh me again till I've got back my peace of mind.”

I'd hear her if she'd said it to herself, let alone speaking it out; and I got up and obeyed her. As we were passing through the setting-room, the old man took up his hat, and the shingle-nail fell out on the floor, and he just merely picked it up and laid it on the mantel-shelf, and never said anything, and went out. Tom saw him do it, and remembered about the spoon, and said:

) Well, it is no use to send things by him any more, he isn't reliable.” Then he said: “But he did us a good turn with the spoon, anyway, without knowing it, and so we'll go and do him one without him knowing it—stop up his rat-holes.”

There was a noble good lot of them down cellar, and it took us a whole hour, but we did the job tight and good and shipshape. Then we heard steps on the stairs, and blew out our light and hid; and here came the old man, went a mooning around, first to one rat-hole and then another, till he'd been to them all. Then he stood about five minutes, picking tallow-drip off from his candle and thinking.

Then he turned off slow and dreamy towards the stairs,

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saying:

) Well, for the life of me I can't remember when I did it. But never mind—let it go. I reckon it wouldn't do any good."

And so he went on mumbling upstairs, and then we left. He was a mighty nice old man. And always was.

Tom was a good deal bothered about what to do for a spoon, but he said we'd got to have it; so he took a think. When he had ciphered it out he told me how we were to do; then we went and waited around the spoon-basket till we saw Aunt Sally coming, and then Tom went to counting the spoons and laying them out to one side, and I slid one of them up my sleeve, and Tom said:

) Why, Aunt Sally, there isn't but nine spoons yet."

She said:

) Go along to your play, and don't bother me. I know better, I counted them myself."

) Well, I've counted them twice, Aunty, and I can't make but nine."

She looked out of all patience, but of course she came to count—anybody would.

) I declare to gracious there aren't but nine!" she said. "Why, what in the world—plague takes the things, I'll count them again."

So I slipped back the one I had, and when she got done counting, she said:

) There are ten now!, and she looked huffy` and bothered both. But Tom said:

) Why, Aunty, I don't think there are ten."

) You numskull@, didn't you see me count them?,

) I know, but—"

) Well, I'll count them again."

So I took one, and they came out nine, same as the other time. Well, she was in a tearing way—just trembling all over, she was so mad. But she counted and counted till she got that addled she'd start to count in the basket for a spoon sometimes; We were very well satisfied with this business, and Tom allowed it was worth twice the trouble it to



again for a couple of days till she didn't know how many sheets she had any more, and she didn't care, and wouldn't count them again to save her life; she'd rather die first.

So we were all right now, as to the shirt and the sheet and the spoon and the candles, by the help of the rats and the mixed-up counting; and as to the candlestick, it would blow over by and by.

But that pie was a job; we had no end of trouble with that pie. We fixed it up away down in the woods, and cooked it there; and we got it done at last, and very satisfied, too;

Nat didn't look when we put the witch pie in Jim's pan; and we put the three tin plates in the bottom of the pan under the vittles; and so Jim got everything all right, and as soon as he was by himself he busted into the pie and hid the rope ladder which we made out of the sheet inside of his straw tick, and scratched some marks on a tin plate and threw it out of the window-hole.

Chapter38

Making the pens was a tough job, and so was the saw; and Jim allowed the inscription was going to be the toughest of all. But he and he atnd tatnde

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thing to you, he wouldn't do it. You might pump at him a week, it wouldn't make any difference.

He'd got all that coat of arms business fixed, so now he started in to finish up the rest of the work, which was to plan out a mournful inscription—said Jim got to have one, like they all did. He made up a lot, and wrote them out on a paper, and read them off, so:

1. Here a captive heart busted.
2. Here a poor prisoner, forsook by the world and friends, fretted out his sorrowful life.
3. Here a lonely heart broke, and a worn spirit went to its rest, after thirty-seven years of solitary captivity.
4. Here, homeless and friendless, after thirty-seven years of bitter captivity, perished a noble stranger, natural son of Louis .

Tom's voice trembled whilst he was reading them, and he almost broke down. When he got done he could no way make up his mind which one for Jim to scabble onto the wall, they were all so good; but at last he allowed he would let him scabble them all on. Jim said it would take him a year to scabble such a lot of trucks onto the logs with a nail, and he didn't know how to make letters, besides; but Tom said he would block them out for him, and then he wouldn't have anything to do but just follow the lines. Then pretty soon he said:

) Come to think, the logs aren't going to do; they don't have log walls in a dungeon` : We got to dig the inscriptions into a rock. There's a gaudy big grindstone down at the mill, and we'll steal it, and carve the things on it, and file out the pens and the saw on it, too.”

It was not a good idea, but we allowed we'd tackle it, so we cleared out for the mill, leaving Jim at work. We stole the grindstone, and set out to roll her home. Our hole was pretty big, but it wasn't big enough to get the grindstone through; but Jim took the pick and soon made it

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goodness I hadn't, Mars Tom."

) All right, we'll get you some."

) But bless you, honey, I don't want any. I'm afeard of them. I'd better have rattlesnakes around., Tom thought a minute or two, and said:

) It's a good idea. And I reckon it's been done. Yes, it's a prime good idea.

Where could you keep it?"

) Keep what, Mars Tom?"

) Why, a rattlesnake."

) Please, Mars Tom—don't talk so! I can't stand it!"

) Well, we'll get you some rats. They all do. Prisoners aren't ever without rats. And they train them, and pet them, and teach them tricks, and they get to be as sociable as flies. But you have got to play music to them. You get anything to play music on?"

) I've got a juice-harp; but I reckon they wouldn't take any stock in a juice-harp."

) Yes they would. They don't care what kind of music."

) Yes, they will, I reckon, Mars Tom, Blest if I can see the point. I reckon I'd better keep the animals satisfied, and not have any trouble in the house."

Tom waited to think it over, and see if there was anything else; and pretty soon he said:

) Oh, there's one thing I forgot. Could you raise a flower here, do you reckon?,

) Mullen-stalks would grow in here, Mars Tom, I reckon, but she wouldn't be worth half the trouble she'd bring."

) Don't you believe it. We'll fetch you a little one and you plant it in the corner over there, and raise it, and water it with your tears."

) Why, I got plenty spring water, Mars Tom."

) You don't want spring water; you want to water it with your tears. It's the way they always do."

) Why, Mars Tom, She'll die on my hands, Mars Tom, she will; because I never cry."

So Tom was stumped. But he studied it over, and then said Jim would have to worry along the best he could with an onion. He promised he would go to the nigger cabins and drop one, privately, in Jim's coffee-pot, in the morning. Then Tom and I shoved for bed.

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Chapter39

In the morning we went up to the village and bought a wire rat-trap and fetched it down, and unstopped the best rat-hole, and in about an hour we had fifteen of the bulliest kind of ones; and then we took it and put it in a safe place under Aunt Sally's bed. But while we were gone for spiders, little Thomas Franklin Benjamin Jefferson Elexander Phelps found it there, and opened the door of it to see if the rats would come out, and they did; and Aunt Sally came in, and when we got back she was standing on top of the bed, and the rats were doing what they could to keep off the dull times for her. So we spent as much as two hours catching another fifteen or sixteen, and they weren't the likeliest, because the first haul was the pick of the flock. I never saw a likelier lot of rats than what that first haul was.

We got a splendid stock of sorted spiders, and bugs, and frogs, and caterpillars, and one thing or another; Then we went for the snakes, and grabbed a couple of dozen house-snakes, and put them in a bag, and put it in our room, And there wasn't a blessed snake up there when we went back—we did half tie the sack, and they worked out somehow, and left. But it didn't matter much, because they were still on the premises somewhere. So we judged we could get some of them again. No, there wasn't any real scarcity of snakes about the house for a considerable spell. You'd see them dripping from the rafters and places every now and then; and they generally landed in your plate, or down the back of your neck, and most of the time where you didn't want them. Well, they were handsome and striped, but that never made any difference to Aunt Sally; she despisedsnakes, and every time one of them flopped down on her, it didn't make any difference what she was doing, she would just lay that work down and light out. I had never seen such a woman. And we got a licking` every time one of our snakes came in her way, but I didn't mind the lickings, because they didn't amount to anything; but I minded the trouble we had to lay in another lot. But we got them laid in, and all the other things; and you had never seen a cabin as blithesomea as Jim's was when they would all swarm out for music and go for him. But he said if he ever got out this time he wouldn't ever be a prisoner again, not for a salary.

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Well, by the end of three weeks everything was in pretty good shape. The shirt was sent in early, in a pie, and every time a rat bit Jim he would get up and write a little in his journal whilst the ink was fresh; the pens were made, the inscriptions and so on were all carved on the grindstone; the bed-leg was sawed in two, and we had eaten up the sawdust, and it gave us a most amazing stomach-ache. It was the most indigestible sawdust I had ever seen; and Tom said the same. But as I was saying, we'd got all the work done now, at last; and we were all pretty much fagged out, too, but mainly Jim. The old man had written a couple of times to the plantation below Orleans to come and get their runaway nigger, but hadn't got any answer, because there wasn't such a plantation; so he allowed he would advertise Jim in the St. Louis and New Orleans papers; and when he mentioned the St. Louis ones it gave me the cold shivers, and I saw we had no time to lose. So Tom said, now for the anonymous letters.

) What are them?" I said.

) Warnings to the people that something is up. Sometimes it's done one way, sometimes another. But there's always somebody spying around that gives notice to the governor of the castle. It's a very good way, and so are the anonymous letters. We'll use them both. And it's usual for the prisoner's mother to change clothes with him, and she stays in, and he slides out in her clothes. We'll do that, too."

) But looky here, Tom, what do we want to warn anybody for that something's up? Let them find it out themselves—it's their lookout."

) Yes, I know; but you can't depend on them. It's the way they've acted from the very start—left us to do everything. They're so confiding and mullet-headed that they don't take notice of anything at all. So if we don't give them notice there won't be anybody nor anything to interfere with us, and so after all our hard work and trouble, this escape will go off perfectly flat; won't amount to anything—won't be anything to it."

So Tom wrote the anonymous letter, and I stole the yellow woman's frock that night, and put it on, and shoved the letter under the front door, the way Tom told me to. It said: Beware. Trouble is brewing. Keep a sharp lookout. UNKNOWN FRIEND.

The next night we stuck a picture, which Tom drew in blood, of a skull and crossbones on the front door; and next night another one of a coffin on the back door. I had never seen

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a family in such a sweat. So the thing was working very well, Tom said; he said he had never seen a thing work more satisfactorily. He said it showed it was done right.

So he said, now for the grand bulge! So the very next morning at the streak of dawn we got another letter ready, and was wondering what we'd better do with it, because we heard them say at supper they were going to have a nigger on watch at both doors all night. Tom went down the lightning-rod to spy around; and the nigger at the back door was asleep, and he stuck it in the back of his neck and came back. This letter said:

Don't betray me, I wish to be your friend. There is a desperate gang of cut-throats from over the Indian Territory going to steal your runaway nigger tonight, and they have been trying to scare you so as you will stay in the house and not bother them. I am one of the gang, but have got religion and wish to quit it and lead an honest life again, and will betray the hellish design. They will sneak down from northwards, along the fence, at midnight exactly, with a false key, and go in the nigger's cabin to get him. I am to be off a piece and blow a tin horn if I see any danger; but instead of that I will BA like a sheep soon as they get in and not blow at all; then whilst they are getting his chains loose, you slip there and lock them in, and can kill them at your leisure. Don't do anything but just the way I am telling you; I do not wish any reward but to know I have done the right thing.

UNKNOWN FRIEND.

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Chapter40

We were feeling pretty good after breakfast, and took my canoe and went over the river fishing, with a lunch, and had a good time, and took a look at the raft and found her all right, and got home late to supper, and found them in such a sweat and worry that they didn't know which end they were standing on, and made us go right off to bed the minute we had done supper, and wouldn't tell us what the trouble was, and never let on a word about the new letter, but didn't need to, because we knew as much about it as anybody did, and as soon as we were



half upstairs and her back was turned, we slid for the cellar cupboard and loaded up a good lunch and took it up to our room and went to bed, and got up about half-past eleven, and Tom put on Aunt Sally's dress that he stole and was going to start with the lunch, but said:

) Where's the butter?"

) I laid out a hunk` of it, I said,) on a piece of a corn-pone."

) Well, you left it laid out, then—it isn't here."

) We can get along without it," I said.

) We can get along with it, too," he said; "just you slide down cellar and fetch it. And then mosey right down the lightning-rod and come along. I'll go and stuff the straw into Jim's clothes to represent his mother in disguise, and be ready to BA like a sheep and shove as soon as you get there."

So out he went, and down cellar went I. The hunk of butter was where I had left it, so I took up the slab of corn-pone with it on, and blew out my light, and started upstairs very stealthy, and got up to the main floor all right, but here came Aunt Sally with a candle, and I clapped the truck in my hat, and clapped my hat on my head, and the next second she saw me; and she said:

) You have been down cellar?"

) Yes m'am."

) What you have been doing down there?"

) Nothing."

) Well, then, what possessed you to go down there this time of night?"

) I don't know."

) You don't know? Don't answer me that way. Tom, I want to know what you have been doing down there."

) I haven't been doing a single thing, Aunt Sally, I hope to gracious if I have.,

I reckoned she'd let me go now, and as a general thing she would; but I supposeed there were so many strange things going on she was just in a sweat about every little thing that wasn't yard-stick straight; so she said, very decidedly:

) You just march into that setting-room and stay there till I come. You have been up to something no business to you, and I lay I'll find out what it is before I'm done with you."

So she went away as I opened the door and walked into the setting-room. My, butthere was a crowd there! Fifteen farmers, and every one of them had a gun. They were setting around,

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and all of them fidgety and uneasy, but trying to look like they weren't. I wasn't easy myself, but I didn't take my hat off, all the same.

I did wish Aunt Sally would come, and get done with me, and lick me, if she wanted to, and let me get away and tell Tom how we had overdone this thing, and what a thundering hornet's-nest we had got ourselves into, so we could stop fooling around straight off, and clear out with Jim before these rips got out of patience and came for us.

At last she came and began to ask me questions, but I couldn't answer them straight, these men were in such a fidget now that some were wanting to start right now and lay for the desperadoes`, and saying it wasn't but a few minutes to midnight; and others were trying to get them to hold on and wait for the sheep-signal; and here was Aunty pegging away at the questions, and me shaking all over and ready to sink down in my tracks; and the place getting hotter and hotter, and the butter beginning to melt and run down my neck and behind my ears; and pretty soon, when one of them said, "I'm for going and getting in the cabin first and right now, and catching them when they come," I almost dropped; and a streak of butter came trickling down my forehead, and Aunt Sally saw it, and turned white as a sheet, and said:

) For the land's sake, what is the matter with the child? He's got the brain-fever as shore as you're born, and they're oozing` out!,

And everybody ran to see, and she snatched off my hat, and out came the bread and what was left of the butter, and she grabbed me, and hugged me, and said:

) Oh, what a turn you did give me! and how glad and grateful I am that it isn't any worse; Dear, dear, why don't you tell me that was what you have been down there for, I wouldn't care. Now clear out to bed, and don't let me see any more of you till morning!"

I was upstairs in a second, and down the lightning-rod in another one, and shinning through the dark for the lean-to. I could hardly get my words out, I was so anxious; but I told Tom as quickly as I could we must jump for it now, and not a minute to lose—the house was full of men, yonder, with guns!

His eyes just blazed; and he said:

) No!—Is that so? Isn't it bully! Why, Huck, if it was to do over again, I bet I could fetch two hundred! If we could put

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it off till—”

) Hurry! Hurry!” I said. “Where's Jim?”

) Right at your elbow; if you reach out your arm you can touch him. He's dressed, and everything's ready. Now we'll slide out and give the sheep-signal.”

But then we heard the tramp of men coming to the door, and heard a man say:

) I told you we would be too soon; they haven't come—the door is locked. Here, I'll lock some of you into the cabin, and you lay for them in the dark and kill them when they come; and the rest scatter around a piece, and listen if you can hear them coming.”

So in they came, but couldn't see us in the dark, and almost trod on us whilst we were hustling to get under the bed. But we got under all right, and out through the hole, swiftly but softly—Jim first, me next, and Tom last, which was according to Tom's orders. Now we were in the lean-to, and heard tramping close by outside. So he set his ear to the crack and listened, and listened, and listened, and the steps werescraping around out there all the time; and at last he nudged us, and we slid out, and stooped down, not breathing, and not making the least noise, and slipped stealthy towards the fence in Injun file, and got to it all right, and Jim and I were over it; but Tom's britches were caught fast on a splinter on the top rail, and then he heard the steps coming, so he had to pull loose, which snapped the splinter and made a noise; and as he dropped in our tracks and started somebody to sing out:

) Who's that? Answer, or I'll shoot!”

But we didn't answer; Then there was a rush, and a bang, bang, bang! And the bullets fairly whizzed around us! We heard them sing out:

) Here they are! They've broken for the river! After them, boys, and turn loose the dogs!”

So here they came, full tilt, and somebody had let them loose, and here they came, making powwow enough for a million; but they were our dogs; so we stopped in our tracks till they caught up; and when they saw it was nobody but us, and no excitement to offer them, they only just said howdy, and tore right ahead towards the shouting and clattering; and then we struck up through the bush to where my canoe was tied, and hopped in and pulled for dear life towards

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the middle of the river, but didn't make any more noise. Then we struck out, easy and comfortable, for the island where my raft was; and we could hear them yelling and barking at each other all up and down the bank, till we were so far away and the sounds got dim and died out. And when we stepped onto the raft I said:

) Now, old Jim, you're a free man again, and I bet you won't ever be a slave any more."

We were all glad as we could be, but Tom was the gladdest of all because he had a bullet in the calf of his leg.

When Jim and I heard that, we didn't feel so brash as what we did before. It was hurting him considerably, and bleeding; so we laid him in the wigwam and tore up one of the duke's shirts to bandage him, but he said:

) Give me the rags; I can do it myself. Don't stop now; don't fool around here, and the evasion booming along so handsome; Man the sweeps—man the sweeps!"

But Jim and I were consulting—and thinking. And after we'd thought a minute, I told Tom I was going for a doctor. He raised considerably row about it, but Jim and I stuck to it and wouldn't budge; so he was for crawling out and setting the raft loose himself; but we wouldn't let him. Then he gave us a piece of his mind, but it didn't do any good.

So when he saw me getting the canoe ready, he said:

) Well, then, if you re bound to go, I'll tell you the way to do when you get to the village. Shut the door and blindfold the doctor tight and fast, and make him swear to be silent as the grave, and put a purse full of gold in his hand, and then take and lead him all around the back alleys and everywhere in the dark, and then fetch him here in the canoe, in a roundabout way amongst the islands, and search him and take his chalk away from him, and don't give it back to him till you get him back to the village, or else he will chalk this raft so he can find it again. It's the way they all do."

So I said I would, and left, and Jim was to hide in the woods when he saw the doctor coming till he was gone again.



Chapter 41

The doctor was an old man; a very nice, kind-looking old man when I got him up. I told him me and my brother were hunting yesterday afternoon, and camped on a piece of raft we found, and about midnight he must have kicked his gun in his dreams, for it went off and shot him in the leg, and we wanted him to go over there and fix it and not say anything about it, nor let anybody know, because we wanted to come home this evening and surprise the folks.

) Who are your folks?" he said.

) The Phelpses, down yonder."

So he lit up his lantern, and got his saddle-bags, and we started. But when he saw the canoe he didn't like the look of her—said she was big enough for one, but didn't look pretty safe for two. But the others were all locked and chained; so he took my canoe, and said to me to wait till he came back, or I could hunt around further, or maybe I'd better go down home and get them ready for the surprise if I wanted to. But I said I didn't; so I told him just how to find the raft, and then he started.

I struck an idea pretty soon. I said to myself, supposing it took him three or four days? What were we going to do?—Laid around there till he let the cat out of the bag? No, sir; I knew what I would do. I would wait him back.

So then I crept into a lumber-pile to get some sleep; and next time I waked up the sun was away up over my head! I shot out and went for the doctor's house, but they told me he'd gone away in the night some time or other, and wasn't back yet. Well, thought I, that looked powerful bad for Tom, and I would dig out for the island right off. So away I shoved, and turned the corner, and nearly rammed my head into Uncle Silas's stomach! He said:

) Why, Tom! Where have you been all this time, you rascal?"

) I haven't been anywhere," I said, "only just hunting for the runaway nigger P me and Sid."

) Why, where ever did you go?" he said. "Your aunt's been mighty uneasy."

) She needn't," I said, "because we were all right. We followed the men and the dogs, but they outran us, and we lost them; but we thought we heard them on the water, so we got a canoe and took out after them and crossed over, but couldn't find anything of them; so we cruised along up-shore till we got



kind of tired and beat out; and tied up the canoe and went to sleep, and never waked up till about an hour ago; then we paddled over here to hear the news, and Sid is at the post-office now to see what he can hear, and I branch out to get something to eat for us, and then we're going home."

So then we went to the post-office to get "Sid"; but just as I suspected, he wasn't there; so the old man said, came along, let Sid foot it home, or canoe it but we would ride. I couldn't get him to let me stay and wait for Sid; and he said there was no use in it, and I must come along, and let Aunt Sally see we were all right.

When we got home, Aunt Sally was that glad to see me. She laughed and cried both, and hugged me, and the place was plum full of farmers and farmers' wives, to dinner; and such another clack a body never heard. Old Mrs. Hotchkiss was the worst; her tongue was going all the time. She said:

) Well, Sister Phelps, I've ransacked that-air cabin over, and I believe the nigger was crazy. Look at that-air grindstone."

) And look at that-air ladder, Sister Hotchkiss," said old Mrs. Damrell; "what in the name of goodness could he ever want of—"

) Look at the case-knife saws and things, how tedious they've been made; look at that bed-leg sawed off by him, a week's work for six men; look at that nigger made out of straw on the bed; and look at—"

) Why, dog my cats, they must have been a house-full of niggers in there every night for four weeks to do all that work, Sister Phelps. Look at that shirt—every last inch of it is covered with secret African writing done with blood! Must have been a raft of them at it right along, all the time, almost."

) Well, it does beat—"

) So help me, I wouldn't a be—"

) Afraid to live!—Why, I can hardly go to bed, or get up, or lie down, or set down, Sister Ridgeway. But I said to myself, there were my two poor boys asleep, away upstairs in that lonesome room, and I declare to goodness I was so uneasy that I went up there and locked them in! I did. Because, you know, when you get scared that way, and it keeps running on, and getting worse and worse all the time, and your wits gets to addling, and you get to doing all sorts of wild things, and by and by you think to yourself, supposing I as a boy, and was away up there, and the door wasn't locked, and you—" She stopped, looking kind of wondering, and then she turned her head



around slowly, and when her eye lit on me—I got up and took a walk. asleep.

Said I to myself, I could explain better how we came to not be in that room this morning if I went out to one side and studied over it a little. So I did it. And when it was late in the day the people all went, and then I came in and told her the noise and shooting waked up me and “Sid,” and the door was locked, so we went down the lightning-rod, and both of us got hurt a little, and we didn't want to try that any more. So then she kissed me, and patted me on the head, and dropped into a kind of brown study; and pretty soon jumped up, and said:

) Why, it's almost night, and Sid hasn't come yet! What has become of that boy?,

I saw my chance; so I skipped up and said:

) I'll run right up to town and get him,”

) No you won't,” she said. “your uncle will go.” so right after supper uncle went.

He came back about ten a little bit uneasy; hadn't run across Tom's track. Aunt Sally was a good deal uneasy; And then when I went up to bed she came up with me and fetched her candle, and tucked me in, and she set down on the bed and talked with me a long time, and kept asking me every now and then if I reckoned he could get lost, or hurt, or maybe drowned, and so the tears dripped down silent, and I told her that Sid was all right, and would be home in the morning, sure; and she squeezed my hand, or maybe kissed me, and told me to say it again, and keep on saying it, because it did her good, and she was in so much trouble. And when she was going away she looked down in my eyes so steadily and gently, and said:

) The door isn't going to be locked, Tom, and there are the window and the rod; but you'll be good, won't you? And you won't go? For my sake.”

Laws knew I wanted to go bad enough to see about Tom, and was all intending to go; but after that I wouldn't go, not for kingdoms.

But she was on my mind and Tom was on my mind, so I slept very restless. And twice I went down the rod away in the night, and slipped around front, and saw her setting there by her candle in the window with her eyes towards the road and the tears in them; and I wished I could do something for her, but I couldn't, only to swear that I wouldn't do anything to grieve her any more. And the third time I waked up at dawn, and slid down, and she was there yet, and her candle was almost out, and her old gray head was resting on her hand, and she was

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Chapter 42

The old man was uptown again before breakfast, but couldn't get any track of Tom; and both of them set at the table thinking, their coffee getting cold, and not eating anything. And by and by the old man said:

-) Did I give you the letter?"
-) No, you didn't give me any letter."
-) Well, I must have forgotten it."

So he rummaged` his pockets, and then went off somewhere where he had laid it down, and fetched it, and gave it to her. She said:

-) Why, it's from St. Petersburg—it's from Sis."

I allowed another walk would do me good; but I couldn't stir. But before she could break it open she dropped it and ran—for she saw something. And so did I. It was Tom Sawyer on a mattress; and that old doctor; and Jim, in her calico dress, with his hands tied behind him; and a lot of people. I hid the letter behind the first thing that came handy, and rushed. She flung herself at Tom, crying, and said:

-) Oh, he's dead, he's dead, I know he's dead!"

And Tom turned his head a little, and muttered something or other, which showed he wasn't in his right mind; then she flung up her hands, and said:

) He's alive, thank God! And that's enough!" and she snatched a kiss of him, and flew for the house to get the bed ready, scattering orders right and left at the niggers and everybody else, as fast as her tongue could go, every jump of the way.

I followed the men to see what they were going to do with Jim; and the old doctor and Uncle Silas followed after Tom into the house. The men were very huffy, they cussed Jim considerably, though, and gave him a cuff or two side the head once in a while, but Jim never said anything, and he never let on to know me, and they took him to the same cabin, and said a couple of farmers with guns must stand and watch around about the cabin every night, and a bulldog tied to the door in the day-time; and about this time they were through with the job and tapering off with a kind of general good-bye cussing, and then the old doctor came and took a look, and said:

) Don't be rough on him, because he isn't a bad nigger. When I got to where I found the boy I saw I couldn't cut the

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bullet out without some help, and I saw I couldn't do anything at all with him; so I said, I got to have help somehow; and the minute I said it out crawled this nigger from somewhere and said he would help, and he did it, too, and did it very well. Of course I judged he must be a runaway nigger, and there I was! But I have never seen a nigger that was a better nurse or faithful, and yet he was risking his freedom to do it, and was all tired out, too, and I saw plain enough he'd been worked main hard lately. I liked the nigger for that; I had everything I needed, and the boy was doing as well there as he would do at home—better, maybe, because it was so quiet; but there I was, with both of them on my hands, and there I had to stick till about dawn this morning; then some men in a skiff came by, and as good luck would have it the nigger was setting by the pallet; so I motioned them in quiet, and they slipped up on him and grabbed him and tied him before he knew what he was about, and we had no trouble. And the boy was in a kind of a flighty sleep, too, we muffled the oars and hitched the raft on, and towed her over quietly, and the nigger never made the least row nor said a word from the start. He isn't bad nigger, gentlemen; that's what I think about him.”

Somebody said:

) Well, it sounds very good, doctor.”

Then the others softened up a little, too, and I was mighty thankful to that olddoctor for doing Jim that good turn; So every one of them promised, right out and heartily, that they wouldn't cuss him any more.

The next morning I heard Tom was a good deal better, and they said Aunt Sally was gone to get a nap. So I slipped to the sick-room, and if I found him awake I reckoned we could put up a yarn for the family that would wash. But he was sleeping, So I set down and laid for him to wake. In about half an hour Aunt Sally came gliding in, and there I was, up a stump again! She motioned me to be still, and set down by me, and began to whisper, and said we could all be joyful now, because all the symptoms were first-rate, and he'd been sleeping like that for ever so long, and looking better and peaceful all the time, and ten to one he'd wake up in his right mind.

So we set there watching, and by and by he stirred a bit, and opened his eyes very natural, and took a look, and said:

) Hello!—Why, I'm at home! How's that? Where's the raft?”

) It's all right,” I said.

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-) And Jim?"
 -) The same," I said, but couldn't say it pretty brash. But he never noticed, but said:
 -) Good! Splendid! Now we're all right and safe! Did you
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I'll go. I've known him all his life, and so has Tom, there. Old Miss Watson died two months ago, and she was ashamed she ever was going to sell him down the river, and said so; and she set him free in her will."

) Then what on earth did you want to set him free for, seeing he was already free?"

) Well, that is a question, I must say; and just like women! Why, I wanted the adventure of it; and I would wade neck-deep in blood to—goodness alive, AUNT POLLY!"

Aunt Sally looked back and jumped for her, and almost hugged the head off from her, and cried over her, and I found a good enough place for me under the bed, for it was getting pretty sultry for us, seemed to me. And I peeped out, and in a little while Tom's Aunt Polly shook herself loose and stood there looking across at Tom over her spectacles—kind of grinding him into the earth, you know. And then she said:

) Yes, you'd better turn your head away—I would if I were you, Tom."

) Oh, dear me!" said Aunt Sally; "is he changed so? Why, that isn't Tom, it's Sid; Tom's—Tom's—why, where is Tom? He was here a minute ago."

) You mean where's Huck Finn—that's what you mean! I reckon I haven't raised such a scamp as my Tom all these years not to know him when I see him. That would be a pretty howdy-do. Come out from under that bed, Huck Finn."

So I did it. But not feeling brash.

Aunt Sally was one of the mixed-upest-looking persons I had ever seen—except one, and that was Uncle Silas, when he came in and they told it all to him. It kind of made him drunk, as you may say, and he didn't know anything at all the rest of the day.

And his Aunt Polly said Tom was right about old Miss Watson setting Jim free in her will; and so, sure enough, Tom Sawyer had gone and took all that trouble and bother to set a free nigger free! And I couldn't ever understand before, until that minute and that talk, how he could help a body set a nigger free with his bringing-up.

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Chapter 43

The first time I caught Tom privately I asked him what was his idea, time of the evasion? What it was he'd planned to do if the evasion worked all right and he managed to set a nigger free that was already free before? And he said, what he had planned in his head from the start, if we got Jim out all safe, was for us to run him down the river on the raft, and have adventures plumb to the mouth of the river, and then tell him about his being free, and take him back up home on a steamboat, in style, and pay him for his lost time, and write word ahead and get out all the niggers around, and have them waltz him into town with a torchlight procession and a brass-band, and then he would be a hero, and so would we. But I reckoned it was about as well the way it was.

We had Jim out of the chains in no time, and when Aunt Polly and Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally found out how good he helped the doctor nurse Tom, they made a heap of fuss over him, and fixed him up prime, and gave him all he wanted to eat, and a good time, and nothing to do. And we had him up to the sick-room, and had a high talk; and Tom gave Jim forty dollars for being prisoner for us so patiently, and doing it up so well, and Jim was pleased almost to death. And then Tom talked along and talked along, and said, let's all three slide out of here one of these nights and get an outfit, and go for howling adventures amongst the Injuns, over in the Territory, for a couple of weeks or two; and I said, all right, that suited me, but I had got no money to buy the outfit, and I reckoned I could get none from home, because it's likely pap had been back before now, and got it all away from Judge Thatcher and drunk it up.) No, he hadn't," Tom said; "it's all there yet—six thousand dollars and more; and your pap hadn't ever been back since. Hadn't when I came away, anyhow." Jim said, kind of solemnly:) He isn't coming back any more, Huck." I said:

) Why, Jim?"

) Never mind why, Huck—but he is coming back no more."

But I kept at him; so at last he said:

) Don't you remember the house that was floating down the river, and there was a man in death, covered up, and I wen

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t in and uncovered him and didn't let you come in? Well, then, you can get your money when you want it, cause that was him.,

Tom's almost well now, and got his bullet around his neck on a watch-guard for a watch, and is always seeing what time it is, and so there isn't anything more to write about, and I am rotten glad of it, because if I'd known what a trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't tackle it. But I reckon I get to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally is going to adopt me and civilize me, and I can't stand it. I have been there before.

THE END