



Гекльберрі Фінн

Сцена: Час долини Міссісіпі:

сорок до п'ятдесяти років тому

Ви не знаєте про мене, без того, щоб ви прочитали книгу під назвою

Пригоди Тома Сойєра; Але це не миттєво. Цю книгу зробив пан

Марк Твен, і він сказав правду, головним чином. Були речі, які він розтягнувся, але в основному він сказав правду. Це нічого. Я ніколи не бачив нікого, крім того чи іншого, брехав, без цього була тітка Поллі, або вдова, а може, Мері. Тітка тітки Поллі Тітка Поллі, вона- і Мері, і вдова Дугласа розповідається про цю книгу, яка є в основному справжньою книгою, з деякими носилками, як я вже говорив.

Тепер так, як книга закінчується: Том і я знайшли гроші, які грабіжники ховали в печері, і це зробило нас багатими. Ми отримали шість тисяч доларів за все золото. Це було жахливе видовище грошей, коли його накопичили. Що ж, судити Тетчер, він взяв його і виклав зацікавлений, і це приносило нам долар на день за цілий рік, ніж тіло могло сказати, що робити. Вдова Дуглас, яку вона взяла

Я за її сина, і дозволила вона сівілізувати мене; Але це було грубо, що живе в будинку весь час, враховуючи, наскільки нестабільна регулярна та пристойна вдова була всіма її способами; І тому, коли я не витримав, це вже не я запалив. Я знову потрапив у свої старі ганчірочки та цукрову ходу, і був вільним і задоволеним. Але Том Соєр він полював на мене і сказав, що збирається створити групу розбійників, і я можу приєднатися, якщо повернусь до вдови і буду поважним. Сой повернувся назад.

Вдова, яку вона плакала над мною, і назвала мене бідним загубленим ягнятином, і вона теж називала мене багатьма іншими іменами, але вона ніколи не мала на увазі шкоди. Вона знову поклала мене в них новий одяг, і я не міг нічого не робити, а потіти і потіти, і відчувати себе тісною. Ну, тоді стара річ розпочалася знову. Вдова піднімає дзвін для вечері, і вам довелося прийти вчасно. Коли ви дісталися до столу, ви не могли піти правильно їсти, але вам довелося чекати, коли вдова підтягне її в голову і трохи бурчить над перемогами, хоча війна насправді нічого з ними, тобто, нічого не було приготовано сам по собі. У бочці шансів і закінчується, вона відрізняється; Речі змішуються, а сік вирівнює обмін навколо, і речі йдуть краще.

Після вечері вона дістала свою книгу і дізналася мене про Мойсея та «Булруші», і я був у поті, щоб дізнатися все про нього; Але і, і вона випустила, що Мойсей був мертвий довгий час; Тоді мені більше не було байдуже про нього, бо я не беру жодних запасів у мертвих людей.

Досить скоро я хотів палити, і попросив вдови дозволити мені. Але вона цього не зробила.

Вона сказала, що це підла практика і не була чистою, і я мушу більше не робити цього. Це просто шлях з деякими людьми. Вони спускаються на річ, коли вони

Не знаю нічого про це. Тут вона була бойовою про Мойсея, яка не була для неї спорідненою, і ніхто не користується нічим, не зникаючи, бачите, але знаходячи силу вини зі мною за те, що він зробив щось, що мала в ній. І вона теж зробила нюх; Звичайно, це було все в порядку, бо вона це зробила сама.

Її сестра, міс Уотсон, терпима струнка стара покоївка, з окулярами, щойно приїхала жити з нею, і взяла на мене набір зараз із орфографічною книжкою. Вона працювала мені важко близько години, а потім вдова зробила її полегшення. Я не міг це довше стояти. Потім протягом години це було смертоносним, і я був непохитним. Міс Уотсон сказала: "Не ставте там ноги, Гекльберрі;" і "Не вискакуйте так, Гекльберрі піднімається прямо;" І досить скоро вона скаже: "Не пробігуй і розтягуйся так, Гекльберрі-чому ти не намагаєшся поводитися?" Потім вона розповіла мені все про погане місце, і я сказав, що бажаю, щоб я був там. Тоді вона розлютилася, але я не мав на увазі ніякої шкоди. Все, що не хотіли, було щось піти; Все | Розшукувалась зміна, я не зокрема. Вона сказала, що злий сказати те, що я сказав; сказала, що вона не скаже цього для всього світу; Вона збиралася жити так, щоб поїхати до хорошого місця. Ну, я не міг не бачити переваги в ході туди, куди вона їде, тому я вирішив, що не намагаюся цього. Але я ніколи цього не говорив, бо це лише стане неприємностей, і не принесло б нічого доброго.

Тепер вона розпочала, і вона продовжила і розповіла мені все про гарне місце. Вона сказала, що все тіло доведеться робити там, щоб весь день ходити з арфою і співати назавжди і назавжди. Тож я не думав про це. Але я ніколи цього не говорив. Я запитав її, чи вона вважала, що Том Сойєр піде туди, і вона сказала не значним видовищем. Я був радий з цього приводу, бо хотів, щоб ми з ним були разом.

Міс Уотсон, вона продовжувала ключати від мене, і це стало стомлюючим і самотнім. І, і вони отримали нігерів і мали молитви, а потім усі лягали спати.

Я підійшов до своєї кімнати зі свічкою, і поклав її на стіл. Тоді я вставав у стілець біля вікна і намагався придумати щось веселе, але це війна не користується. Я відчував себе таким самотнім | Більшість бажали, щоб я був мертвий. Зірки голилися, а листя шелесті в лісі коли-небудь так жалобно; І я почув сови, далеко, хто-про когось, хто був мертвим, і куля, і собака, що плаче про когось, хто збирався померти; І вітер намагався щось мені шепотіти, і я не міг розібратися, що це було, і тому це змусило холодних тремтіння на мене. Потім у лісі я чув такий звук, який привид видає, коли він хоче розповісти про щось, що є на думці, і не може зрозуміти себе, і тому не може бути легким у своїй могилі, і доводиться йти про це щовечора. Я так подумав і Скареді хотів би, щоб у мене була якась компанія. Досить скоро павук підвів моє плече, і я перевернув його, і він запалив свічку; І перш ніж я зміг зруйнуватися, це все було вражено. Мені не потрібно, щоб хтось сказав мені, що це був жахливий поганий знак і принесе мені якусь невдачу, тож | злякався і найбільше потряс одягу від мене. Я тричі вставав і обернувся на своїх слідах і щоразу переходив груди; А потім я зав'язав лайк-замок волосся ниткою, щоб не відьмувати. Але я не мав впевненості. Ви робите це, коли ви втратили підкову, яку ви знайшли, замість того, щоб прибити її через двері, але я ніколи не чув, щоб хтось сказав, що це був спосіб утримати невдачу, коли ви вбили павука.

Я знову відступив, тягнувши по всьому, і вийшов з труби на дим; Бо будинок зараз все ще, як смерть, і тому вдова не знає. Ну, після довгого

Huc kle be rry fin n

Час, коли я піднімав годинник у місті Go Boom-Boom-Boom-Twelve Licks; І все ще знову-метулер, ніж будь-коли. Досить скоро я почув, як гілочка переходить у темряві серед дерев-щось, що було хвилюючим. Я встановив нерухомо і влаштував. Безпосередньо я ледве почув "я-ж! Мене!" там. Це було добре! Каже я: "Мене-! Мене!" Настільки ж м'який, а потім я виклав світло і вирізався з вікна до сараю. Потім я ковзав до землі і повзав серед дерев, і, звичайно, на мене чекав Том Сойєр.

## CHAPTER TWO

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**W**e 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 was passing by the kitchen I fell over a root and made a noise. We scrouched 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 says:

"Who dah?"

He listened some more; then he come tiptoeing down and stood right between us; we could a touched him, nearly. Well, likely it was minutes and minutes that there warn't a sound, and we all there so close together. There was a place on my ankle that got to itching, but I dasn't scratch it; and then my ear begun to itch; and next my back, right between my shoulders. Seemed like I'd die if I couldn't scratch. Well, I've noticed that thing plenty times since. If you are with the quality, or at a funeral, or trying to go to sleep when you ain't sleepy—if you are anywheres where it won't

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do for you to scratch, why you will itch all over in upwards of a thousand places. Pretty soon Jim says:

"Say, who is you? Whar is you? Dog my cats ef I didn' hear sum- f'n. Well, I know what I's gwyne to do: I's gwyne to set down here and listen tell I hears it agin."

So he set down on the ground betwixt me and Tom. He leaned his back up against a tree, and stretched his legs out till one of them most touched one of mine. My nose begun to itch. It itched till the tears come into my eyes. But I dasn't scratch. Then it begun to itch on the inside. Next I got to itching underneath. I didn't know how I was going to set still. This miserableness went on as much as six or seven minutes; but it seemed a sight longer than that. I was itching in eleven different places now. I reckoned I couldn't stand it more'n a minute longer, but I set my teeth hard and got ready to try. Just then Jim begun to breathe heavy; next he begun to snore-and then I was pretty soon comfortable again.

Tom he made a sign to me-kind of a little noise with his mouth—and we went creeping away on our hands and knees. When we was ten foot off Tom whispered to me, and wanted to tie Jim to the tree for fun. But I said no; he might wake and make a distur- bance, and then they'd find out I warn't in. Then Tom said he hadn't got candles enough, and he would slip in the kitchen and get some more. I didn't want him to try. I said Jim might wake up and come. But Tom wanted to resk it; so we slid in there and got three candles, and Tom laid five cents on the table for pay. Then we got out, and I was in a sweat to get away; but nothing would do Tom but he must crawl to where Jim was, on his hands and knees, and play something on him. I waited, and it seemed a good while, everything was so still and lonesome.

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As soon as Tom was back we cut along the path, around the garden fence, and by and by fetched up on the steep top of the hill the other side of the house. Tom said he slipped Jim's hat off of his head and hung it on a limb right over him, and Jim stirred a little, but he did- n't wake. Afterwards Jim said the witches bewitched him and put him in a trance, and rode him all over the State, and then set him under the trees again, and hung his hat on a limb to show who done it. And next time Jim told it he said they rode him down to New Orleans; and, after that, every time he told it he spread it more and more, till by and by he said they rode him all over the world, and tired him most to death, and his back was all over saddle-boils. Jim was mon- strous proud about it, and he got so he wouldn't hardly notice the other niggers. Niggers would come miles to hear Jim tell about it, and he was more looked up to than any nigger in that country.

Strange niggers would stand with their mouths open and look him all over, same as if he was a wonder. Niggers is always talking about witches in the dark by the kitchen fire; but whenever one was talking and letting on to know all about such things, Jim would happen in and say, "Hm! What you know 'bout witches?" and that nigger was corked up and had to take a back seat. Jim always kept that five- cen- ter piece round his neck with a string, and said it was a charm the devil give to him with his own hands, and told him he could cure anybody with it and fetch witches whenever he wanted to just by say- ing something to it; but he never told what it was he said to it. Niggers would come from all around there and give Jim anything they had, just for a sight of that five-center piece; but they wouldn't touch it, because the devil had had his hands on it. Jim was most ruined for a servant,



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because he got stuck up on account of having seen the devil and been rode by witches.

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 twin- kling, where there was sick folks, maybe; and the stars over us was sparkling ever so fine; and down by the village was the river, a whole mile broad, and awful still and grand. 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 mile and a half, to the big scar on 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. Tom poked about amongst the passages, and pretty soon ducked under a wall where you wouldn't a noticed that there was a hole. We went along a narrow place and got into a kind of room, all damp and sweaty and cold, and there we stopped. Tom says:

"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 wrote 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 done any- thing 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

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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 done 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 forgot forever.

Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it out of his own head. He said, some of it, but the rest was out of pirate- books and robber-books, and every gang that was high-toned had it.

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

"Here's Huck Finn, he hain't got no family; what you going to do 'bout him?"

"Well, hain't he got a father?" says Tom Sawyer.

"Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs in the tanyard, but he hain't been seen in these parts for a year or more."

They talked it over, and they was 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. Well, nobody could think of anything to do everybody was stumped, and set still. I was most 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:

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"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.

"Now," says Ben Rogers, "what's the line of business of this Gang?" "Nothing only robbery and murder," Tom said.

"But who are we going to rob?-houses, or cattle, or—" "Stuff! stealing cattle and such things ain't robbery; it's burglary," says Tom Sawyer. "We ain't burglars. That ain't no sort of style. We are highwaymen. We stop stages and carriages on the road, with masks on, and kill the people and take their watches and money." "Must we always kill the people?"

"Oh, certainly. It's best. Some authorities think different, but mostly it's considered best to kill them-except some that you bring to the cave here, and keep them till they're ransomed."

"Ransomed? What's that?"

"I don't know. But that's what they do. I've seen it in books; and so of course that's what we've got to do."

"But how can we do it if we don't know what it is?"

"Why, blame it all, we've got to do it. Don't I tell you it's in the books? Do you want to go to doing different from what's in the books, and get things all muddled up?"

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"Oh, that's all very fine to say, Tom Sawyer, but how in the nation are these fellows going to be ransomed if we don't know how to do it to them?-that's the thing I want to get at. Now, what do you reckon on it is?"

"Well, I don't know. But perhaps if we keep them till they're ransomed, it means that we keep them till they're dead. "

"Now, that's something like. That'll answer. Why couldn't you say that before? We'll keep them till they're ransomed to death; and a bothersome lot they'll be, too-eating up everything, and always trying to get loose."

"How you talk, Ben Rogers. How can they get loose when there's a guard over them, ready to shoot them down if they move a peg?"

"A guard! Well, that IS good. So somebody's got to set up all night and never get any sleep, just so as to watch them. I think that's foolishness. Why can't a body take a club and ransom them as soon as they get here?"

"Because it ain't in the books so-that's why. Now, Ben Rogers, do you want to do things regular, or don't you?-that's the idea. Don't you reckon that the people that made the books knows what's the correct thing to do? Do you reckon you can learn 'em anything? Not by a good deal. No, sir, we'll just go on and ransom them in the regular way."

"All right. I don't mind; but I say it's a fool way, anyhow. Say, do we kill the women, too?"

"Well, Ben Rogers, if I was as ignorant as you I wouldn't let on. Kill the women? No; nobody ever saw anything in the books like that. You fetch them to the cave, and

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you're always as polite as pie to them; and by and by they fall in love with you, and never want to go home any more."

"Well, if that's the way I'm agreed, but I don't take no stock in it. Mighty soon we'll have the cave so cluttered up with women, and fellows waiting to be ransomed, that there won't be no place for the robbers. But go ahead, I ain't got nothing to say."

Little Tommy Barnes was asleep now, and when they waked him up he was scared, and cried, and said he wanted to go home to his ma, and didn't want to be a robber any more.

So they all made fun of him, and called him cry-baby, and that made him mad, and he said he would go straight and tell all the secrets. But Tom give him five cents to keep quiet, and said we would all go home and meet next week, and rob somebody and kill some people.

Ben Rogers said he couldn't get out much, only Sundays, and so he wanted to begin next Sunday; but all the boys said it would be wicked to do it on Sunday, and that settled the thing. They agreed to get together and fix a day as soon as they could, and then we elected Tom Sawyer first captain and Jo Harper second captain of the Gang, and so started home.

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

### CHAPTER THREE

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**W**ell I got a good going-over in the morning from old Miss Watson on account of my clothes; but the widow she 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 she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn't any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn't make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn't make it out no way.

I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to my self, there ain't nothing in it. I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body could get by praying for it was "spiritual gifts." This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself. This was including

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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 no advantage about it-except for the other people; so at last I reckoned I wouldn't worry about it any more, but just let it go. Sometimes the widow would take me one side and talk about Providence in a way to make a body's mouth water; but maybe next day Miss Watson would take hold and knock it all down again. I judged I could see that there was two Providences, and a poor chap would stand considerable show with the widow's Providence, but if Miss Watson's got him there warn't no help for him any more. I thought it all out, and reckoned I would belong to the widow's if he wanted me, though I couldn't make out how he was agoing to be any better off then than what he was before, seeing I was so ignorant, and so kind of low-down and ornery.

Pap he hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no 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 mile above town, so people said. They judged it was him, anyway; said this drowned man was just his size, and was ragged, and had uncommon long hair, which was all like pap; but they couldn't make nothing out of the face, because it had been in the water so long it warn't much like a face at all. They said he was float- ing on his back in the water. They took him and buried him on the bank. But I warn't comfortable long, because I happened to think of something. I knowed mighty well that a drowned man don't float on his back, but on his face. So I knowed, then, that this warn't pap, but a woman dressed up in a man's clothes. So

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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, and then I resigned. All the boys did. We hadn't robbed nobody, hadn't killed any people, but only just pretended. We used to hop out of the woods and go charging down on hog-drivers and women in carts taking garden stuff to market, but we never hived any of them. Tom Sawyer called the hogs "ingots," and he called the turnips and stuff "julery," and we would go to the cave and powwow over what we had done, and how many people we had killed and marked. But I couldn't see no profit in it. One time Tom sent a boy to run about town with a blazing stick, which he called a slogan (which was the sign for the Gang to get together), and then he said he had got secret news by his spies that next day a whole parcel of Spanish merchants and rich A-rabs was going to camp in Cave Hollow with two hundred elephants, and six hundred camels, and over a thousand "sumter" mules, all loaded down with di'monds, and they didn't have only a guard of four hundred soldiers, and so we would lay in ambuscade, as he called it, and kill the lot and scoop the things. He said we must slick up our swords and guns, and get ready. He never could go after even a turnip-cart but he must have the swords and guns all scoured up for it, though they was only lath and broom-sticks, and you might scour at them till you rotted, and then they warn't worth a mouthful of ashes more than what they was before. I didn't believe we could li , so I was on hand next day, Saturday, in the ambuscade; and when we got the word we rushed out of the woods and down the hill. But there warn't no Spaniards and A-rabs, and there warn't no camels nor no elephants. It warn't



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anything but a Sunday-school picnic, and only a primer- class at that. We busted it up, and chased the children up the hol- low; but we never got anything but some doughnuts and jam, though Ben Rogers got a rag doll, and Jo Harper got a hymn- book and a tract; and then the teacher charged in, and made us drop everything and cut. I didn't see no di'monds, and I told Tom Sawyer so. He said there was loads of them there, anyway; and he said there was A-rabs there, too, and elephants and things. I said, why couldn't we see them, then? He said if I warn't so ignorant, but had read a book called Don Quixote, I would know without asking. He said it was all done by enchantment. He said there was hundreds of soldiers there, and elephants and treasure, and so on, but we had enemies which he called magicians; and they had turned the whole thing into an infant Sunday-school, just out of spite. I said, all right; then the thing for us to do was to go for the magicians. Tom Sawyer said I was a numskull.

"Why," said he, "a magician could call up a lot of genies, and they would hash you up like nothing before you could say Jack Robinson. They are as tall as a tree and as big around as a church."

"Well," I says, "s'pose we got some genies to help us can't we lick the other crowd then?"

"How you going to get them?"

"I don't know. How do they get them?"

"Why, they rub an old tin lamp or an iron ring, and then the genies come tearing in, with the thunder and lightning a-ripping around and the smoke a-rolling, and

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everything they're told to do they up and do it. They don't think nothing of pulling a shot-tower up by the roots, and belting a Sunday-school superintendent over the head with it—or any other man."

"Who makes them tear around so?"

"Why, whoever rubs the lamp or the ring. They belong to whoever rubs the lamp or the ring, and they've got to do whatever he says. If he tells them to build a palace forty miles long out of di'monds, and fill it full of chewing-gum, or whatever you want, and fetch an emperor's daughter from China for you to marry, they've got to do it-and they've got to do it before sun-up next morning, too. And more: they've got to waltz that palace around over the country wher- ever you want it, you understand."

"Well," says I, "I think they are a pack of flat-heads for not keeping the palace themselves 'stead of fooling them away like that. And what's more if I was one of them I would see a man in Jericho before I would drop my business and come to him for the rubbing of an old tin lamp."

"How you talk, Huck Finn. Why, you'd have to come when he rubbed it, whether you wanted to or not."

"What! and I as high as a tree and as big as a church? All right, then; I would come; but I lay I'd make that man climb the highest tree there was in the country."

"Shucks, it ain't no use to talk to you, Huck Finn. You don't seem to know anything, somehow-perfect saphead."

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I thought all this over for two or three days, and then I reckoned I would see if there was anything in it. I got an old tin lamp and an iron ring, and went out in the woods and rubbed and rubbed till I sweat like an Injun, calculating to build a palace and sell it; but it warn't no use, none of the genies come. So then I judged that all that

stuff was only just one of Tom Sawyer's lies. I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had

all the marks of a Sunday-school.

## CHAPTER FOUR

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**W**ell three or four months run along, and it was well into the winter now. I had been to school most all 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 don't reckon I could ever get any further than that if I was to live forever. I don't take no stock in mathematics, anyway.

At first I hated the school, but by and by I got so I could stand it. Whenever I got uncommon tired I played hookey, and the hiding I got next day done me good and cheered me up. So the longer I went to school the easier it got to be. I was getting sort of used to the widow's ways, too, and they warn't so raspy on me. Living in a house and sleeping in a bed pulled on me pretty tight mostly, but before the cold weather I used to slide out and sleep in the woods sometimes, and so that was a rest to me. I liked the old ways best, but I was get- ting so I liked the new ones, too, a little bit. The widow said I was coming along slow but sure, and doing very satisfactory. She said she warn't ashamed of me.

One morning I happened to turn over the salt-cellar at breakfast. I reached for some of it as quick as I could to throw over my left shoul- der and keep off the bad luck,

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but Miss Watson was in ahead of me, and crossed me off. She says, "Take your hands away, Huckleberry; what a mess you are always making!" The widow put in a good word for me, but that warn't going to keep off the bad luck, I knowed 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

"There; you see it says 'for a consideration.' That means I have bought it of 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 hair-ball as big as your fist, which had been took out of the fourth stomach of an ox, and he used to do magic with it. He said there was a spirit inside of it, and it knowed 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 hair-ball and said something over it, and then he held it up and dropped it on the floor. It fell pretty solid, and only rolled about an inch. Jim tried it again, and then another time, and it acted just the same. Jim got down on his knees, and put his ear against it and listened. But it warn't no use; he said it wouldn't talk. He said sometimes it wouldn't talk without money. I told him I had an old slick counterfeit quarter that warn't no good because the brass showed through the silver a little, and it wouldn't pass nohow, even if the brass didn't show, because it was so slick it felt greasy, and so that would tell on it every time. (I reckoned I wouldn't say nothing about the dollar I got from the judge.) I said it was pretty bad money, but maybe the hair-ball would take it, because maybe it wouldn't know the difference. Jim smelt it and bit

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it and rubbed it, and said he would manage so the hair-ball would think it was good. He said he would split open a raw Irish potato and stick the quarter in between and keep it there all night, and next morning you couldn't see no brass, and it wouldn't feel greasy no more, and so anybody in town would take it in a minute, let alone a hair-ball. Well, I knowed a potato would do that before, but I had forgot it.

Jim put the quarter under the hair-ball, and got down and listened again. This time he said the hair-ball was all right. He said it would tell my whole fortune if I wanted it to. I says, go on. So the hair-ball talked to Jim, and Jim told it to me. He says:

"Yo' ole father doan' know yit what he's a-gwyne to do. Sometimes he spec he'll go 'way, en den agin he spec he'll stay. De bes' way is to res' easy en let de ole man take his own way. Dey's two angels hov- going to be. There is ways to keep off some kinds of bad luck, but this wasn't one of them kind; so I never tried to do anything, but just poked along low-spirited and on the watch-out.

I went down to the front garden and clumb over the stile where you go through the high board fence. There was an inch of new snow on the ground, and I seen somebody's tracks. They had come up from the quarry and stood around the stile a while, and then went on around the garden fence. It was funny they hadn't come in, after standing around so. I couldn't make it out. It was very curious, some- how. 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.

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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 nobody. I was at Judge Thatcher's as quick as I could get there. He said:

"Why, my boy, you are all out of breath. Did you come for your interest?"

"No, sir," I says; "is there some for me?"

"Oh, yes, a half-yearly is in last night-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 says, "I don't want to spend it. I don't want it at all— nor the six thousand, nuther. I want you to take it; I want to give it to you the six thousand and all."

He looked surprised. He couldn't seem to make it out. He says: "Why, what can you mean, my boy?"

I says, "Don't you ask me no questions about it, please. You'll take it won't you?"

He says:

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

"Please take it," says I, "and don't ask me nothing-then I won't have to tell no lies."

He studied a while, and then he says:

"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 says:

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erin' roun' 'bout him. One uv 'em is white en shiny, en t'other one is black. De white one gits him to go right a little while, den de black one sail in en bust it all up. A body can't tell yit which one gwyne to fetch him at de las'. But you is all right. You gwyne to have concede- able trouble in yo' life, en considable joy. Sometimes you gwyne to git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick; but every time you's gwyne to git well agin. Dey's two gals flyin' 'bout you in yo' life. One uv 'em's light en t'other one is dark. One is rich en t'other is po'. You's gwyne to marry de po' one fust en de rich one by en by. You wants to keep 'way fum de water as much as you kin, en don't run no resk, 'kase it's down in de bills dat you's gwyne to git hung." When I lit my candle and went up to my room that night there sat pap his own self!



## CHAPTER FIVE

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I had shut the door to. Then I turned around, and there he was. I used to be scared of him all the time, he tanned me so much. I reckoned I was scared now, too; but in a minute I see I was mistak- en—that is, after the first jolt, as you may say, when my breath sort of hitched, he being so unexpected; but right away after I see I warn't scared of him worth bothering about.

He was most fifty, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through like he was behind vines. It was all black, no gray; so was his long, mixed-up whiskers. There warn't no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white; not like another man's white, but a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body's flesh crawl—a tree- toad white, a fish-belly white. As for his clothes—just rags, that was all. He had one ankle resting on t'other knee; the boot on that foot was busted, and two of his toes stuck through, and he worked them now and then. His hat was laying on the floor—an old black slouch with the top caved in, like a lid.

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

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

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"Maybe I am, maybe I ain't," I says.

"Don't you give me none o' your lip," says he. "You've put on con-