**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

**Context**

Samuel Clemens was born in Missouri in 1835. He grew up in the town of Hannibal, Missouri, which would become the model for St. Petersburg, the fictional town where Huckleberry Finn begins. Missouri was a "slave state" during this period, and Clemens' family owned a few slaves. In Missouri, most slaves worked as domestic servants, rather than on the large agricultural plantations that most slaves elsewhere in the United States experienced. This domestic slavery is what Twain generally describes in Huckleberry Finn, even when the action occurs in the deep South. The institution of slavery figures prominently in the novel and is important in developing both the theme and the two most important characters, Huck and Jim.

Twain received a brief formal education, before going to work as an apprentice in a print shop. He would later find work on a steamboat on the Mississippi River. Twain developed a lasting afiection for the Mississippi and life on a steamboat, and would immortalize both in Life on the Mississippi (1883), and in certain scenes of Tom Sawyer (1876), and Huckleberry Finn (1885). He took his pseudonym, "Mark Twain," from the call a steamboat worker would make when the ship reached a (safe) depth of two fathoms. Twain would go on to work as a journalist in San Francisco and Nevada in the 1860s. He soon discovered his talent as a humorist, and by 1865 his humorous stories were attracting national attention.

In 1870, Twain married Olivia Langdon of New York State. The family moved to Hartford, Connecticut, to a large, ornate house paid for with the royalties from Twain's successful literary adventures. At Hartford and during stays with Olivia's family in New York State, Twain wrote The Gilded Age, co-authored with Charles Dudley Warner in 1873 and The Prince and the Pauper (1882), as well as the two books already mentioned. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was finally published in 1885. Twain had begun the book years earlier, but the writing was done in spurts of inspiration interrupted by long periods during which the manuscript sat in the author's desk. Despite the economic crisis that plagued the United States then, the book became a huge popular and financial success. It would become a classic of American literature and receive acclaim around the world{today it has been published in at least twenty-seven languages.

Still, at the time of publication, the author was bothered by the many bad reviews it received in the national press. The book was principally attacked for its alleged indecency. After the 1950s, the chief attacks on the book would be against its alleged racism or racial bigotry. For various reasons, the book frequently has been banned from US schools and children's libraries, though it was never really intended as a children's book. Nonetheless, the book has been widely read ever since its first publication well over a century ago, an exception to Twain's definition of a classic as "a book which people praise and don't read."

Characters

Huckleberry Finn { The protagonist and narrator of the novel. Huck is the thirteen or fourteen year-old son of the local drunk in the town of St. Petersburg, Missouri, at the start of the novel. He is kidnapped by his father, Pap, from the "sivilizing" in uence of the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson, and then fakes his own death to escape. He meets Jim on Jackson's Island. The rest of the novel is largely motivated by two conflicts: the external con ict to achieve Jim's freedom, and the internal con ict within Huck between his own sense of right and wrong and society's. Huck has a series of "adventures," making many observations on human nature and the South as he does. He progressively rejects the values of the dominant society and matures morally as he does. Jim { A slave who escaped from Miss Watson after she considered selling him down river. He encounters Huck on Jackson's Island, and the two become friends and spend most of the rest of the novel together. Jim deeply grieves his separation from his wife and two children and dreams of getting them back. He is an intensely human character, perhaps the novel's most complex. Through his example, Huck learns to appreciate the humanity of black people, overcoming his society's bigotry and making a break with its moral code. Twain also uses him to demonstrate racial equality. But Jim himself remains somewhat enigmatic; he seems both comrade and father figure to Huck, though Huck, the youthful narrator, may not be able to thoroughly evaluate his friend, and so the reader has to suppose some of his qualities.

The Duke and Dauphin { These two criminals appear for much of the novel. Their real names are never given, but the younger man, about thirty years old, claims to be the Duke of Bridgewater, and is called both "the Duke" and "Bridgewater" in the novel, though for the sake of clarity, he is only called "the Duke" here. The much older man claims to be the son of Louis XVI, the executed French king. "Dauphin" was the title given to heirs to the French throne. He is mostly called "the king" in the novel (since his father is dead, he would be the rightful king), though he is called "the Dauphin" in this study guide since the name is more distinctive. The two show themselves to be truly bad when they separate a slave family at the Wilks household, and later sell Jim.

Tom Sawyer { Huck's friend, and the protagonist of Tom Sawyer, the novel for which Huckleberry Finn is ostensibly the sequel. He is in many ways Huck's foil, given to exotic plans and romantic adventure literature, while Huck is more down-to-earth. He also turns out to be profoundly selfish.

On the whole, Tom is identified with the "civilzation" from which Huck is alienated. Other characters, in order of appearance Widow Douglas and Miss Watson { Two wealthy sisters who live together in a large house in St. Petersburg. Miss Watson is the older sister, gaunt and severe-looking. She also adheres the strongest to the hypocritical religious and ethical values of the dominant society. Widow Douglas, meanwhile, is somewhat gentler in her beliefs and has more patience with the mischievous Huckleberry. She adopted Huck at the end of the last novel, Tom Sawyer, and he is in her care at the start of Huckleberry Finn. When Miss Watson considers selling Jim down to New Orleans, away from his wife and children and deep into the plantation system, Jim escapes. She eventually repents, making provision in her will for Jim to be freed, and dies two months before the novel ends.

Pap { Huckleberry's father and the town drunk and ne'er- do-well. When he appears at the beginning of the novel, he is a human wreck, his skin a disgusting ghost-like white, and his clothes hopelessly tattered. Like Huck, he is a member of the least privileged class of whites, and is illiterate. He is angry that his son is getting an education. He wants to get hold of Huck's money, presumably to spend it on alcohol. He kidnaps Huck and holds him deep in the woods. When Huck fakes his own murder, Pap is nearly lynched when suspicions turn his way. But he escapes, and Jim eventually finds his dead body on an abandoned houseboat.

Judge Thatcher { Judge Thatcher is in charge of safeguarding the money Huck and Tom won at the end of Tom Sawyer. When Huck discovers his father has come to town, he wisely signs his fortune over to the Judge. Judge Thatcher has a daughter, Becky, whom Huck calls "Bessie."

Aunt Polly { Tom Sawyer's aunt and guardian. She appears at the end of Huckleberry Finn and properly identifies Huck, who has pretended to be Tom; and Tom, who has pretended to be his brother, Sid (who never appears in this novel).

The Grangerfords { The master of the Grangerford clan is "Colonel"Grangerford, who has a wife. The children are Bob, the oldest, then Tom, then Charlotte, aged twenty- five, Sophia, twenty, and Buck, the youngest, about thirteen or fourteen. They also had a deceased daughter, Emme- line, who made unintentionally humorous, maudlin pictures and poems for the dead. Huckleberry thinks the Grangerfords are all physically beautiful. They live on a large estate worked by many slaves. Their house is decked out in humorously tacky finery that Huckleberry innocently admires. The Grangerfords are in a feud with the Shepardsons, though no one can remember the cause of the feud or see any real reason to continue it. When Sophia runs off with a Shepardson, the feud reignites, and Buck and another boy are shot. With the Grangerfords and the Shepardsons, Twain illustrates the bouts of irrational brutality to which the South was prone.

The Wilks Family { The deceased Peter Wilks has three daughters, Mary Jane, Susan, and Joanne (whom Huck calls "the Harelip"). Mary Jane, the oldest, takes charge of the sisters' afiairs. She is beautiful and kind- hearted, but easily swindled by the Duke and Dauphin. Susan is the next youngest. Joanna possess a cleft palate (a birth defect) and so Huck somewhat tastelessly refers to her as "the Hare Lip" (another name for cleft palate). She initially suspects Huck and the Duke and Dauphin, but eventually falls for the scheme like the others.

The Phelps family { The Phelps family includes Aunt Sally, Uncle Silas and their children. They also own several slaves. Sally and Silas are generally kind-hearted, and Silas in particular is a complete innocent. Tom and Huck are able to continue playing pranks on them for quite some time before they suspect anything is wrong. Sally, however, displays a chilling level of bigotry toward blacks, which many of her fellow Southerners likely share. The town

in which they live also cruelly kills the Duke and Dauphin. With the Phelps, Twain contrasts the good side of Southern civilization with its bad side.

Summary

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was finally published in 1885. Twain had begun the book years earlier, but the writing was done in spurts of inspiration interrupted by long periods during which the manuscript sat in the author's desk. Despite the economic crisis that plagued the United States then, the book became a huge popular and financial success. It would become a classic of American literature and receive acclaim around the world{today it has been published in at least twenty-seven languages.

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Chapter 1 Summary

The narrator (later identified as Huckleberry Finn) begins Chapter One by stating that the reader may know of him from another book, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by "Mr. Mark Twain," but it "ain't t no matter" if you have not. According to Huck, Twain mostly told the truth, with some "stretchers" thrown in, though everyone{except Tom's Aunt Polly, the widow, and maybe Mary{lies once in a while. The other book ended with Tom and Huckleberry finding the gold some robbers had hidden in a cave. They got six thousand dollars apiece, which Judge Thatcher put in trust, so that they each got a dollar a day from interest. The Widow Douglas adopted and tried to "civilise" Huck. But Huck couldn't stand it so he threw on his old rags and ran away. But he went back when Tom Sawyer told him he could join his new band of robbers if he would return to the Widow "and be respectable."

The Widow lamented over her failure with Huck, tried to stufi him into cramped clothing, and before every meal had to "grumble" over the food before they could eat it. She tried to teach him about Moses, until Huck found out he was dead and lost interest. Meanwhile, she would not let him smoke; typically, she disapproved of it because she had never tried it, but approved of snufi since she used it herself. Her slim sister who wears glasses, Miss Watson, tried to give him spelling lessons.

Meanwhile, Huck was going stir-crazy, made especially restless by the sisters' constant reminders to improve his behavior. When Miss Watson told him about the "bad place," Hell, he burst out that he would like to go there, as a change of scenery. Secretly, Huck really does not see the point in going to "the good place" and resolved then not to bother trying to get there.

When Huck asked, Miss Watson told him there was no chance Tom Sawyer would end up in Heaven. Huck was glad "because I wanted him and me to be together." One night, after Miss Watson's prayer session with him and the slaves, Huck goes to bed feeling "so lonesome I wished I was dead." He gets shivers hearing the sounds of nature through his window. Huck accidentally icks a spider into a candle, and is frightened by the bad omen. Just after midnight, Huck hears movement below the window, and a "me-yow" sound, that he responds to with another "me-yow." Climbing out the window onto the shed, Huck finds Tom Sawyer waiting for him.

Chapters 2-3 Summary

Huck and Tom tiptoe through the garden. Huck trips on a root as he passes the kitchen. Jim, a "big" slave, hears him from inside. Tom and Huck crouch down, trying to stay still. But Huck is struck by an uncontrollable itch, as always happens when he is in a situation, like when he's "with the quality," where it is bad to scratch. Jim says aloud that he will stay put until he discovers the source of the sound, but after several minutes falls asleep. Tom plays a trick on Jim{putting his hat on a tree branch over his head{and takes candles from the kitchen, over Huck's objections that they will risk getting caught. Later, Jim will say that some witches ew him around the state and put the hat above his head as a calling card. He expands the tale further, becoming a local celebrity among the slaves, who enjoy witch stories. He wears around his neck the five-cent piece Tom left for the candles, calling it a charm from the devil with the power to cure sickness. Jim nearly becomes so stuck-up from his newfound celebrity that he is unfit to be a servant.

Meanwhile, Tom and Huck meet up with a few other boys, and take a boat to a large cave. There, Tom declares his new band of robbers, "Tom Sawyer's Gang." All must sign in blood an oath vowing, among other things, to kill the family of any member who reveals the gang's secrets. The boys think it "a real beautiful oath." Tom admits he got part of it from books. The boys nearly disqualify Huck, who has no family but a drunken father who can never be found, until Huck offers Miss Watson. Tom says the gang must capture and ransom people, though nobody knows what "ransom" means.

Tom assumes it means to kill them. But anyway, it must be done since all the books say so. When one boy cries to go home and threatens to tell the group's secrets, Tom bribes him with five cents. They agree to meet again someday, just not Sunday, which would be blasphemous. Huckleberry makes it back into bed just before dawn.

Miss Watson tries to explain prayer to Huckleberry in Chapter Three. Huckleberry gives up on it after not getting what he prays for. Miss Watson calls him a fool, and explains prayer bestows spiritual gifts like sel essness to help others. Huck cannot see any advantage in this, except for the others one helps. So he resolves to forget it. Widow Douglas describes a wonderful God, while Miss Watson's is terrible. Huck concludes there are two Gods. He would like to belong to Widow Douglas's, if He would take him – unlikely because of Huck's bad qualities.

Meanwhile, a rumor circulates that Huck's Pap, who has not been seen in a year, is dead. A corpse was found in the river, thought to be Pap because of its "ragged" appearance, though the face is unrecognizable. At first Huck is relieved. His father had been a drunk who beat him when he was sober, though Huck stayed hidden from him most of the time. Soon, however, Huck doubts his father's death, and expects to see him again.

After a month in Tom's gang, Huck quit along with the rest of the boys. There was no point to it, without any robbery or killing, their activities being all pretend. Once, Tom pretended a caravan of Arabs and Spaniards were going to encamp nearby with hundreds of camels and elephants. It turned out to be a Sunday school picnic. Tom explained it really was a caravan of Arabs and Spaniards - only they were enchanted, like in Don Quixote. Huckleberry judged Tom's stories of genies to be lies, after rubbing old lamps and rings with no result.

Chapters 4-6 Summary

In Chapter Four, Huckleberry is gradually adjusting to his new life, and even making small progress in school. One winter morning, Huck notices boot tracks in the snow near the house. Within one heel print is the shape of two nails crossed to ward off the devil. Huck runs to Judge Thatcher, looking over his shoulder as he does. He sells his fortune to the surprised Judge for a dollar. That night Huck goes to Jim, who has a magical giant hairball from an ox's stomach. Huck tells Jim he found Pap's tracks in the snow and wants to know what his father wants. Jim says the hairball needs money to talk, and so Huck gives a counterfeit quarter. Jim puts his ear to the hairball, and relates that Huck's father has two angels, one black and one white, one bad, one good. It is uncertain which will win out. But Huck is safe for now. He will have much happiness and much sorrow in his life, will marry a poor and then a rich woman, and should stay clear of the water, since that is where he will die. That night, Huck finds Pap waiting in his bedroom!

Pap's long, greasy, black hair hangs over his face. The nearly fifty-year-old man's skin is a ghastly, disgusting white. Noticing Huck's "starchy" clothes, Pap wonders aloud if he thinks himself better than his father, promising to take him "down a peg." Pap promises to teach Widow Douglas not to "meddle" and make a boy "put on airs over his own father." Pap is outraged that Huck has become the first person in his family to learn to read. He threatens Huck not to go near the school again. He asks Huck if he is really rich, as he has heard, and calls him a liar when he says he has no more money.

He takes the dollar Huck got from Judge Thatcher. He leaves to get whiskey, and the next day, drunk, demands Huck's money from Judge Thatcher. The Judge and Widow Douglas try to get custody of Huck, but give up after the new judge in town refuses to separate a father from his son. Pap lands in jail after a drunken spree. The new judge takes Pap into his home and tries to reform him. Pap tearfully repents his ways but soon gets drunk again. The new judge decides Pap cannot be reformed except with a shotgun.

Pap sues Judge Thatcher for Huck's fortune. He also continues to threaten Huck about attending school, which Huck does partly to spite his father. Pap goes on one drunken binge after another. One day he kidnaps Huck and takes him deep into the woods, to a secluded cabin on the Illinois shore. He locks Huck inside all day while he goes out. Huck enjoys being away from civilization again, though he does not like his father's beatings and his drinking. Eventually, Huck finds an old saw hidden away. He slowly makes a hole in the wall while his father is away, resolved to escape from both Pap and the Widow Douglas. But Pap returns as Huck is about to finish. He complains about the "govment," saying Judge Thatcher has delayed the trial to prevent Pap from getting Huck's wealth. He has heard his chances are good, though he will probably lose the fight for custody of Huck. He further rails against a biracial black visitor to the town. The visitor is well dressed, university- educated, and not at all deferential. Pap is disgusted that the visitor can vote in his home state, and that legally he cannot be sold into slavery until he has been in the state six months. Later, Pap wakes from a drunken sleep and chases after Huck with a knife, calling him the "Angel of Death," stopping when he collapses in sleep. Huck holds the ri e against his sleeping father and waits.

Chapters 7-10 Summary

Huck falls asleep, to be awakened by Pap, who is unaware of the night's events. Pap sends Huck out to check for fish. Huck finds a canoe drifting in the river and hides it in the woods. When Pap leaves for the day, Huck finishes sawing his way out of the cabin. He puts food, cookware, everything of value in the cabin, into the canoe. He covers up the hole in the wall and then shoots a wild pig. He hacks down the cabin door, hacks the pig to bleed onto the cabin's dirt oor, and makes other preparations so that it seems robbers came and killed him. Huck goes to the canoe and waits for the moon to rise, resolving to canoe to Jackson's Island, but falls asleep. When he wakes he sees Pap row by. Once he has passed, Huck quietly sets out down river. He pulls into Jackson's Island, careful not to be seen.

The next morning in Chapter Eight, a boat passes by with Pap, Judge and Becky Thatcher, Tom Sawyer, his Aunt Polly, some of Huck's young friends, and "plenty more" on board, all discussing the murder. They shoot cannon over the water and oat loaves of bread with mercury inside, in hopes of locating Huck's corpse. Huck, careful not to be seen, catches a loaf and eats it.

Exploring the island, Huck is delighted to find Jim, who at first thinks Huck is a ghost. Now Huck won't be lonely anymore. Huck is shocked when Jim explains he ran away. Jim overheard Miss Watson discussing selling him for eight hundred dollars, to a slave trader who would take him to New Orleans. He left before she had a chance to decide. Jim displays a great knowledge of superstition. He tells Huck how he once "speculated" ten dollars in (live)stock, but lost most of it when the steer died. He then lost five dollars in a failed slave start-up bank. He gave his last ten cents to a slave, who gave it away after a preacher told him that charity repays itself one-hundred-fold. It didn't. But Jim still has his hairy arms and chest, a portent of future wealth. He also now owns all eight-hundred- dollars' worth of himself.

In Chapter Nine, Jim and Huck take the canoe and provisions into the large cavern in the middle of the island, to have a hiding place in case of visitors, and to protect their things. Jim predicted it would rain, and soon it downpours, with the two safely inside the cavern. The river oods severely.

A washed-out houseboat oats down the river past the island. Jim and Huck find a man's body inside, shot in the back. Jim prevents Huck from looking at the face; it's too "ghastly." They make off with some odds and ends. Huck has Jim hide in the bottom of the canoe so he won't be seen. They make it back safely to the cave.

In Chapter Ten, Huck wonders about the dead man, though Jim warns it's bad luck. Sure enough, bad luck comes: as a joke, Huck puts a dead rattlesnake near Jim's sleeping place, and its mate comes and bites Jim. Jim's leg swells, but after four days it goes down. A while later, Huck decides to go ashore and to find out what's new. Jim agrees, but has Huck disguise himself as a girl, with one of the dresses they took from the houseboat.

Huck practices his girl impersonation, then sets out for the Illinois shore. In a formerly abandoned shack, he finds a woman who looks forty, and also appears a newcomer. Huck is relieved she is a newcomer, since she will not be able to recognize him.

Chapters 11-13 Summary

The woman eyes Huckleberry somewhat suspiciously as she lets him in. Huck introduces himself as "Sarah Williams," from Hookerville. The woman "clatters on," eventually getting to Huck's murder. She reveals that Pap was suspected and nearly lynched, but people came to suspect Jim, since he ran away the same day Huck was killed. There is a three- hundred-dollar price on Jim's head. But soon, suspicions turned again to Pap, after he blew money the judge gave him to find Jim on drink. But he left town before he could be lynched, and now there is two hundred dollars on his head. The woman has noticed smoke over on Jackson's Island, and, suspecting that Jim might be hiding there, told her husband to look. He will go there tonight with another man and a gun. The woman looks at Huck suspiciously and asks his name.

He replies, "Mary Williams." When the woman asks about the change, he covers himself, saying his full name is "Sarah Mary Williams." She has him try to kill a rat by pitching a lump of lead at it, and he nearly hits. Finally, she asks him to reveal his (male) identity, saying she understands that he is a runaway apprentice and will not turn him in. He says his name is George Peters, and he was indeed apprenticed to a mean farmer. She lets him go after quizzing him on farm subjects, to make sure he's telling the truth. She tells him to send for her, Mrs. Judith Loftus, if he has trouble. Back at the island, Huck tells Jim they must shove off, and they hurriedly pack their things and slowly ride out on a raft they had found.

Huck and Jim build a wigwam on the raft in Chapter Twelve. They spend a number of days drifting down river, passing the great lights of St. Louis on the fifth night. They "lived pretty high," buying, "borrowing", or hunting food as they need it. One night they come upon a wreaked steamship. Over Jim's objections, Huck goes onto the wreck, to loot it and have an "adventure," the way Tom Sawyer would. On the wreck, Huck overhears two robbers threatening to kill a third so that he won't "talk."

One of the two manages to convince the other to let their victim be drowned with the wreck. They leave. Huck finds Jim and says they have to cut the robbers' boat loose so they can't escape. Jim says that their own raft has broken loose and oated away. Huck and Jim head for the robbers' boat in Chapter Thirteen. The robbers put some booty in the boat, but leave to get some more money off the man on the steamboat. Jim and Huck jump right into the boat and head off as quietly as possible. A few hundred yards safely away, Huck feels bad for the robbers left stranded on the wreck since, who knows, he may end up a robber himself someday. They find their raft just before they stop for Huck to go ashore for help. Ashore, Huck finds a ferry watchman, and tells him his family is stranded on the steamboat wreck. The watchman tell him the wreck is of the Walter Scott. Huck invents an elaborate story as to how his family got on the wreck, including the niece of a local big shot among them, so that the man is more than happy to take his ferry to help. Huck feels good about his good deed, and thinks Widow Douglas would have been proud of him. Jim and Huck turn into an island, and sink the robbers' boat before going to bed.

Chapters 14-16 Summary

Jim and Huck find a number of valuables among the robbers' booty in Chapter Fourteen, mostly trinkets and cigars. Jim says he doesn't enjoy Huck's "adventures," since they risk his getting caught. Huck recognizes that Jim is intelligent, at least for what Huck thinks of a black person. Huck astonishes Jim with his stories of kings. Jim had only heard of King Solomon, whom he considers a fool for wanting to chop a baby in half. Huck cannot convince Jim otherwise. Huck also tells Jim about the "dolphin," son of the executed King Louis XVI of France, rumored to be wandering America. Jim is incredulous when Huck explains that the French do not speak English, but another language. Huck tries to argue the point with Jim, but gives up in defeat.

Huck and Jim are nearing the Ohio River, their goal, in Chapter Fifteen. But one densely foggy night, Huck, in the canoe, gets separated from Jim and the raft. He tries to paddle back to it, but the fog is so thick he loses all sense of direction. After a lonely time adrift, Huck is reunited with Jim, who is asleep on the raft. Jim is thrilled to see Huck alive. But Huck tries to trick Jim, pretending he dreamed their entire separation. Jim tells Huck the story of his dream, making the fog and the troubles he faced on the raft into an allegory of their journey to the free states. But soon Jim notices all the debris, dirt and tree branches, that collected on the raft while it was adrift.

He gets mad at Huck for making a fool of him after he had worried about him so much. "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger," but Huck apologizes, and does not regret it. He feels bad about hurting Jim. Jim and Huck hope they don't miss Cairo, the town at the mouth of the Ohio River, which runs into the free states. Meanwhile, Huck's conscience troubles him deeply about helping Jim escape from his "rightful owner," Miss Watson, especially after her consideration for Huck. Jim can't stop talking about going to the free states, especially about his plan to earn money to buy his wife and children's freedom, or have some abolitionists kidnap them if their masters refuse. When they think they see Cairo, Jim goes out on the canoe to check, secretly resolved to give Jim up. But his heart softens when he hears Jim call out that he is his only friend, the only one to keep a promise to him. Huck comes upon some men in a boat who want to search his raft for escaped slaves. Huck pretends to be grateful, saying no one else would help them. He leads them to believe his family, on board the raft, has smallpox. The men back away, telling Huck to go further downstream and lie about his family's condition to get help. They leave forty dollars in gold out of pity. Huck feels bad for having done wrong by not giving Jim up.

But he realizes that he would have felt just as bad if he had given Jim up. Since good and bad seem to have the same results, Huck resolves to disregard morality in the future and do what's "handiest." Floating along, they pass several towns that are not Cairo, and worry that they passed it in the fog. They stop for the night, and resolve to take the canoe upriver, but in the morning it is gone{ more bad luck from the rattlesnake. Later, a steamboat drives right into the raft, breaking it apart. Jim and Huck dive off in time, but are separated. Huck makes it ashore, but is caught by a pack of dogs.

Chapters 17-19 Summary

A man finds Huck in Chapter Seventeen and calls off the dogs. Huck introduces himself as George Jackson. The man brings "George" home, where he is eyed cautiously as a possible member of the Sheperdson family. But they decide he is not. The lady of the house has Buck, a boy about Huck's age (thirteen or fourteen) get Huck some dry clothes. Buck says he would have killed a Shepardson if there had been any. Buck tells Huck a riddle, though Huck does not understand the concept of riddles. Buck says Huck must stay with him and they will have great fun. Huck invents an elaborate story of how he was orphaned. The family, the Grangerfords, offer to let him stay with them for as long as he likes. Huck innocently admires the house and its (humorously tacky) finery. He similarly admires the work of a deceased daughter, Emmeline, who created (unintentionally funny) maudlin pictures and poems about people who died. "Nothing couldn't be better" than life at the comfortable house.

Huck admires Colonel Grangerford, the master of the house, and his supposed gentility. He is a warm- hearted man, treated with great courtesy by everyone. He own a very large estate with over a hundred slaves. The family's children, besides Buck, are Bob, the oldest, then Tom, then Charlotte, aged twenty-five, and Sophia, twenty, all of them beautiful. Three sons have been killed. One day, Buck tries to shoot Harney Shepardson, but misses. Huck asks why he wanted to kill him. Buck explains the Grangerfords are in a feud with a neighboring clan of families, the Shepardsons, who are as grand as they are. No one can remember how the feud started, or name a purpose for it, but in the last year two people have been killed, including a fourteen-year-old Grangerford. Buck declares the Shepardson men all brave. The two families attend church together, their ri es between their knees as the minister preaches about brotherly love. After church one day, Sophia has Huck retrieve a bible from the pews. She is delighted to find inside a note with the words "two-thirty." Later, Huck's slave valet leads him deep into the swamp, telling him he wants to show him some water-moccasins. There he finds Jim! Jim had followed Huck to the shore the night they were wrecked, but did not dare call out for fear of being caught. In the last few days he has repaired the raft and bought supplies to replace what was lost. The next day Huck learns that Sophie has run off with a Shepardson boy. In the woods, Huck finds Buck and a nineteen-year-old Grangerford in a gun-fight with the Shepardsons. The two are later killed. Deeply disturbed, Huck heads for Jim and the raft, and the two shove off downstream. Huck notes, "You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft."

Huck and Jim are lazily drifting down the river in Chapter Nineteen. One day they come upon two men on shore eeing some trouble and begging to be let onto the raft. Huck takes them a mile downstream to safety. One man is about seventy, bald, with whiskers, the other, thirty. Both men's clothes are badly tattered. The men do not know each other but are in similar predicaments. The younger man had been selling a paste to remove tartar from teeth that takes much of the enamel off with it. He ran out to avoid the locals' ire. The other had run a temperance (sobriety) revival meeting, but had to ee after word got out that he drank. The two men, both professional scam-artists, decide to team up. The younger man declares himself an impoverished English duke, and gets Huck and Jim to wait on him and treat him like royalty. The old man then reveals his true identity as the Dauphin, Louis XVI's long lost son. Huck and Jim then wait on him as they had the "duke." Soon Huck realizes the two are liars, but to prevent "quarrels," does not let on that he knows.

Chapters 20-22 Summary

The Duke and Dauphin ask whether Jim is a runaway, and so Huckleberry concocts a tale of how he was orphaned, and he and Jim were forced to travel at night since so many people stopped his boat to ask whether Jim was a runaway. That night, the two royals take Jim and Huck's beds while they stand watch against a storm. The next morning, the Duke gets the Dauphin to agree to put on a performance of Shakespeare in the next town they cross. Everyone in the town has left for a revival meeting in the woods. The meeting is a lively afiair of several thousand people singing and shouting.

The Dauphin gets up and declares himself a former pirate, now reformed by the meeting, who will return to the Indian Ocean as a missionary. The crowd joyfully takes up a collection, netting the Dauphin eighty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents, and many kisses from pretty young women. Meanwhile, the Duke took over the deserted print offce and got nine and a half dollars selling advertisements in the local newspaper. The Duke also prints up a handbill offering a reward for Jim, so that they can travel freely by day and tell whoever asks about Jim that the slave is their captive. The Duke and Dauphin practice the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet and the sword fight from Richard III on the raft in Chapter Twenty-one.

The duke also works on his recitation of Hamlet's "To be or not to be," soliloquy, which he has butchered, throwing in lines from other parts of the play, and even Macbeth. But to Huck, the Duke seems to possess a great talent. They visit a one-horse town in Arkansas where lazy young men loiter in the streets, arguing over chewing tobacco. The Duke posts handbills for the performance. Huck witnesses the shooting of a rowdy drunk by a man, Sherburn, he insulted, in front of the victim's daughter. A crowd gathers around the dying man and then goes off to lynch Sherburn.

The mob charges through the streets in Chapter Twenty-two, sending women and children running away crying in its wake. They go to Sherburn's house, knock down the front fence, but back away as the man meets them on the roof of his front porch, ri e in hand. After a chilling silence, Sherburn delivers a haughty speech on human nature, saying the average person, and everyone in the mob, is a coward. Southern juries don't convict murderers because they rightly fear being shot in the back, in the dark, by the man's family. Mobs are the most pitiful of all, since no one in them is brave enough in his own right to commit the act without the mass behind him. Sherburn declares no one will lynch him: it is daylight and the Southern way is to wait until dark and come wearing masks. The mob disperses. Huck then goes to the circus, a "splendid" show, whose clown manages to come up with fantastic one-liners in a remarkably short amount of time. A performer, pretending to be a drunk, forces himself into the ring and tries to ride a horse, apparently hanging on for dear life. The crowd roars its amusement, except for Huck, who cannot bear to watch the poor man's danger. Only twelve people came to the Duke's performance, and they laughed all the way through. So the Duke prints another handbill, this time advertising a performance of "The King's Cameleopard [Girafie] or The Royal Nonesuch." Bold letters across the bottom read, "Women and Children Not Admitted."

Chapters 23-25 Summary

The new performance plays to a capacity audience. The Dauphin, naked except for body paint and some "wild" accouterments, has the audience howling with laughter. But the Duke and Dauphin are nearly attacked when the show is ended after this brief performance. To avoid losing face, the audience convinces the rest of the town the show is a smash, and a capacity crowd follows the second night. As the Duke anticipated, the third night's crowd consists of the two previous audiences coming to get their revenge. The Duke and Huck make a getaway to the raft before the show starts. From the three-night run, they took in four-hundred sixty-five dollars. Jim is shocked that the royals are such "rapscallions." Huck explains that history shows nobles to be rapscallions who constantly lie, steal, and decapitate{describing in the process how Henry VIII started the Boston Tea Party and wrote the Declaration of Independence. Huck doesn't see the point in telling Jim the two are fakes; besides, they really do seem like the real thing. Jim spends his night watches "moaning and mourning" for his wife and two children, Johnny and Lizabeth. Though "It don't seem natural," Huck concludes that Jim loves his family as much as whites love theirs. Jim is torn apart when he hears a thud in the distance, because it reminds him of the time he beat his Lizabeth for not doing what he said, not realizing she had been made deaf-mute by her bout with scarlet fever.

In Chapter Twenty-four, Jim complains about having to wait, frightened, in the boat, tied up (to avoid suspicion) while the others are gone. So the Duke dresses Jim in a calico stage robe and blue face paint, and posts a sign, "Sick Arab{but harmless when not out of his head." Ashore and dressed up in their newly bought clothes, the Dauphin decides to make a big entrance by steamboat into the next town. The Dauphin calls Huck "Adolphus," and encounters a talkative young man who tells him about the recently deceased Peter Wilks. Wilks sent for his two brothers from Shefield, England: Harvey, whom he had not seen since he was five, and William, who is deaf-mute. He has left all his property to his brothers, though it seems uncertain whether they will ever arrive. The Dauphin gets the young traveler, who is en route to Rio de Janeiro, to tell him everything about the Wilks. In Wilks' town, they ask after Peter Wilks, pretending anguish when told of his death. The Dauphin even makes strange hand signs to the Duke. "It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race," Huck thinks.

A crowd gathers before Wilks' house in Chapter Twenty-five, as the Duke and Dauphin share a tearful meeting with the three Wilks daughters. The entire town then joins in the "blubbering." "I never see anything so disgusting," Huck thinks. Wilks' letter (which he left instead of a will) leaves the house and three thousand dollars to his daughters, and to his brothers, three thousand dollars, plus a tan-yard and seven thousand dollars in real estate. The Duke and Dauphin privately count the money, adding four-hundred fifteen dollars of their own money when the stash comes up short of the letter's six-thousand, for appearances. They then give it all to the Wilks women in a great show before a crowd of townspeople. Doctor Abner Shackleford, an old friend of the deceased, interrupts to declare them frauds, their accents ridiculously phony. He asks Mary Jane, the oldest Wilks sister, to listen to him as a friend and turn the impostors out. In reply, she hands the Dauphin the six thousand dollars to invest however he sees fit.

Chapters 26-28 Summary

Huck has supper with Joanna, a Wilks sister he refers to as "the Harelip" ("Cleft lip," a birth defect she possesses). She cross-examines Huckleberry on his knowledge of England. He makes several slips, forgetting he is supposedly from Shefield, and that the Dauphin is supposed to be a Protestant minister.

Finally she asks whether he hasn't made the entire thing up. Mary Jane and Susan interrupt and instruct Joanna to be courteous to their guest. She graciously apologizes. Huck feels awful about letting such sweet women be swindled. He resolves to get them their money. He goes to the Duke and Dauphin's room to search for the money, but hides when they enter. The Duke wants to leave that very night, but the Dauphin convinces him to stay until they have stolen all the family's property. After they leave, Huckleberry takes the gold to his sleeping cubby, and then sneaks out late at night.

Huck hides the sack of money in Wilks' coffn in Chapter Twenty-seven, as Mary Jane, crying, enters the front room. Huck doesn't get another opportunity to safely remove the money, and feels dejected that the Duke and Dauphin will likely get it back. The funeral the next day is briefly interrupted by the racket the dog is making down cellar. The undertaker slips out, and after a "whack" is heard from downstairs, the undertaker returns, whispering loudly to the preacher, "He had a rat!" Huck remarks how the rightfully popular undertaker satisfied the people's natural curiosity.

Huck observes with horror as the undertaker seals the coffn without looking inside. Now he will never know whether the money was stolen from the coffn, or if he should write Mary Jane to dig up the coffn for it.

Saying he will take the Wilks' family to England, the Dauphin sells off the estate and the slaves. He sends a mother to New Orleans and her two sons to Memphis. The scene at the grief-stricken family's separation is heart-rending. But Huck comforts himself that they will be reunited in a week or so when the Duke and Dauphin are exposed. When questioned by the Duke and Dauphin, Huck blames the loss of the six thousand dollars on the slaves they just sold, making the two regret the deed.

Huck finds Mary Jane crying in her bedroom in Chapter Twenty-eight. All joy regarding the trip to England has been destroyed by the thought of the slave mother and children never seeing each other again. Touched, Huck unthinkingly blurts out that the family will be reunited in less than two weeks. Mary Jane, overjoyed, asks Huck to explain. Huck is uneasy, having little experience telling the truth while in a predicament. He tells Mary Jane the truth, but asks her to wait at a relative's house until eleven that night to give him time to get away, since the fate of another person hangs in the balance. He tells her about the Royal Nonesuch incident, saying that town will provide witnesses against the frauds. He instructs her to leave without seeing her "uncles," since her innocent face would give away their secret. He leaves her a note with the location of the money. She promises to remember him forever, and pray for him. Though Huck will never see her again, he will think of her often. Huck meets Susan and Joanna, and says Mary Jane has gone to see a sick relative. Joanna cross-examines him about this, but he manages to trick them into staying quiet about the whole thing{almost as well as Tom Sawyer would have. But later, the auction is interrupted by a mob{ bringing the real Harvey and William Wilks!

Chapters 29-31 Summary

The real Harvey, in an authentic English accent, explains the delay: their luggage has been misdirected, and his brother's arm has been broken, making him unable to sign. The doctor again declares The Duke and Dauphin frauds, and has the crowd bring both real and fraudulent Wilks brothers to a tavern for examination. The frauds draw suspicion when they are unable to produce the six thousand dollars. A lawyer friend of the deceased has the Duke, Dauphin, and the real Harvey sign a piece of paper, then compares the writing samples to letters he has from the real Harvey.

The frauds are disproved, but the Dauphin doesn't give up. So the real Harvey declares he knows of a tattoo on his brother's chest, asking the undertaker who dressed the body to back him up. But after the Dauphin and Harvey say what they think the tattoo is, the undertaker declares there wasn't one at all. The mob cries out for the blood of all four men, but the lawyer instead sends them out to exhume the body and check for the tattoo themselves. The mob carries the four and Huckleberry with them. The mob is shocked to discover the gold in the coffn. In the excitement, Huck escapes. Passing the Wilks's house, he notices a light in the upstairs window.

Huck steals a canoe and makes his way to the raft, and, exhausted, shoves off. Huck dances for joy on the raft, but his heart sinks as the Duke and Dauphin approach in a boat.

The Dauphin nearly strangles Huck in Chapter Thirty, out of anger at his desertion. But the Duke stops him. They explain that they escaped after the gold was found. The thieves start arguing about which one of the two hid the gold in the coffn, to come back for later. But they make up and go to sleep.

They take the raft downstream without stopping for several days. The Duke and Dauphin try several scams on various towns, without success. The two start to have secret discussions, worrying Jim and Huck, who resolve to ditch them at the first opportunity. Finally, the Duke, Dauphin, and Huck go ashore in one town to feel it out. The Duke and Dauphin get into a fight in a tavern, and Huck takes the chance to escape. But back at the raft, there is no sign of Jim. A boy explains that a man recognized Jim as a runaway from a handbill they had found, offering two hundred dollars for him in New Orleans{the handbill the Duke had printed earlier. But he said he had to leave suddenly, and so sold his interest for forty dollars. Huck is disgusted by the Dauphin's trick. He would like to write to Miss Watson to fetch Jim, so he could at least be home and not in New Orleans. But he realizes she would simply sell him downstream anyway, and he would get in trouble as well. The predicament is surely God's punishment for his helping Jim. Huck tries to pray for forgiveness, but cannot.

He writes the letter to Miss Watson giving Jim up. But thinking of the time he spent with Jim, of his kind heart and their friendship, Huck trembles. After a minute he decides, "All right then, I'll go to hell!" He resolves to "steal Jim out of slavery." He goes in his store-bought clothes to see Phelps, the man who is holding Jim. He finds the Duke putting up posters for the Royal Nonesuch. Huck concocts a story about how he wandered the town, but didn't find Jim or the raft. The Duke says he sold Jim to a man forty miles away, and sends Huck on the three day trip to get him.

Chapters 32-35 Summary

Huck goes back to the Phelps's house in Chapter Thirty-two. A bunch of hounds threaten him, but a slave woman calls them off. The white mistress of the house, Sally, comes out, delighted to see the boy she is certain is her nephew, Tom. Sally asks why he has been delayed the last several days. He explains that a cylinder- head on the steamboat blew out. She asks whether anyone got hurt, and he replies no, but it killed a black person. The woman is relieved that no one was hurt. Huck is nervous about not having any information on his identity, but when Sally's husband, Silas, returns, he shouts out for joy that Tom Sawyer has finally arrived! Hearing a steamboat go up the river, Huck heads out to the docks, supposedly to get his luggage, but really to head off Tom should he arrive.

Huck interrupts Tom's wagon coming down the road in Chapter Thirty-three. Tom is at first startled by the "ghost," but is eventually convinced that Huck is alive. He even agrees to help Huck free Jim. Huck is shocked by this: "Tom Sawyer fell, considerable, in my estimation." Tom follows Huck to the Phelps's a half hour later. The isolated family is thrilled to have another guest. Tom introduces himself as William Thompson from Ohio, stopping on his way to visit his uncle nearby. But Tom slips and kisses his aunt, who is outraged by such familiarity from a stranger. Taken aback for a few moments, Tom recovers by saying he is another relative, Sid Sawyer, and this has all been a joke. Later, walking through town, Huck sees the Duke and Dauphin taken by a mob, tarred and feathered on a rail. Jim had told on the pair. Tom feels bad for the two, and his ill feelings toward them melt away. "Human beings can be awful cruel to one another," Huck observes.

Huck concludes that a conscience is useless, since it makes you feel bad for everyone. Tom agrees. Huck is impressed by Tom's intelligence when he skillfully figures out that Jim is being held in a shed. Huck's plan to free Jim is to steal the key and make off with Jim by night. Tom belittles this plan for its simplicity and lack of showmanship. Tom's plan is fifteen times better than Huck's for its style{it might even get all three killed. Meanwhile, Huck is incredulous that respectable Tom is going to sacrifice his reputation by helping a slave escape.

Huck and Tom get Jim's keeper, a superstitious slave, to let them see him. When Jim cries out for joy, Tom tricks Jim's keeper into thinking the cry a trick some witches had played on him. Tom and Huck promise to dig Jim out.

Tom is upset in Chapter Thirty-five. Innocent uncle Phelps has taken so few precautions to guard Jim, they have to invent all the obstacles to his rescue. Tom says they must saw Jim's chain off instead of just lifting it off the bedstead, since that's how it's done in all the books. Similarly, Jim requires a rope ladder, a moat, and a shirt on which to keep a journal, presumably in his own blood. Sawing his leg off to escape would also be a nice touch. But since they're pressed for time, they will dig Jim out with case-knives (large kitchen knives).

Chapters 36-39 Summary

Out late at night, Huck and Tom give up digging with the case-knives after much fruitless efiort. They use pick-axes instead, but agree to "let on"{pretend{that they are using case-knives. The next day, Tom and Huck gather candlesticks, candles, spoons, and a tin plate. Jim can etch a declaration of his captivity on the tin plate using the other objects, then throw it out the window to be read by the world, like in the novels. That night, the two boys dig their way to Jim, who is delighted to see them. He tells them that Sally and Silas have been to visit and pray with him. He doesn't understand the boys' scheme but agrees to go along. Tom thinks the whole thing enormously fun and "intellectural." He tricks Jim's keeper, Nat, into bringing Jim a "witch pie" to help ward off the witches that have haunted Nat.

The missing shirt, candles, sheets, and other articles Huck and Tom stole to give Jim get Aunt Sally mad at everyone but the two boys in Chapter Thirty-seven. To make up, Huck and Tom secretly plug up the holes of the rats that have supposedly stolen everything, confounding Uncle Silas when he goes to do the job. By removing and then replacing sheets and spoons, the two boys so confuse Sally that she loses track of how many she has. It takes a great deal of trouble to put the rope ladder (made of sheets) in the witch's pie, but at last it is finished and they give it to Jim. Tom insists Jim scratch an inscription on the wall of the shed, with his coat of arms, the way the books say. Making the pens from the spoons and candlestick is a great deal of trouble, but they manage. Tom creates an unintentionally humorous coat of arms and set of mournful declarations for Jim to inscribe on the wall. When Tom disapproves of writing on a wooden, rather than a stone wall, they go steal a millstone. Tom then tries to get Jim to take a rattlesnake or rat into the shack to tame, and to grow a ower to water with his tears. Jim protests against the ridiculously unnecessary amount of trouble Tom wants to create. Tom replies that these are opportunities for greatness.

Huck and Tom capture rats and snakes in Chapter Thirty-nine, accidentally infesting the Phelps house with them. Aunt Sally becomes wildly upset when the snakes start to fall from the rafters onto her or her bed. Tom explains that that's just how women are. Jim, meanwhile, hardly has room to move with all the wildlife in his shed. Uncle Silas decides it is time to sell Jim, and starts sending out advertisements. So Tom writes letters, signed an "unknown friend," to the Phelps warning of trouble. The family is terrified. Tom finishes with a longer letter pretending to be from a member of a band of desperate gangsters out to steal Jim. The author has found religion and so is warning them to block the plan.

Chapters 40-43 Summary

Fifteen uneasy local men with guns are in the Phelps's front room. Huck goes to the shed to warn Tom and Jim. Tom is excited to hear about the fifteen armed men. A group of men rush into the shed. In the darkness Tom, Huck, and Jim escape through the hole. Tom makes a noise going over the fence, attracting the attention of the men, who shoot at them as they run. But they make it to the hidden raft, and set off downstream, delighted with their success{especially Tom, who has a bullet in the leg as a souvenir.

Huck and Jim are taken aback by Tom's wound. Jim says they should get a doctor{what Tom would do if the situation were reversed. Jim's reaction confirms Huck's belief that Jim is "white inside."

Huck finds a doctor in Chapter Forty-one and sends him to Tom. The next morning, Huck runs into Silas, who takes him home. The place is filled with farmers and their wives, all discussing the weird contents of Jim's shed, and the hole. They conclude a band of (probably black) robbers of amazing skill must have tricked not only the Phelps and their friends, but the original band of desperadoes. Sally will not let Huck out to find Tom, since she is so sad to have lost Tom and does not want to risk another boy. Huckleberry is touched by her concern and vows never to hurt her again.

Silas has been unable to find Tom in Chapter Forty- two. They have gotten a letter from Tom's Aunt Polly, Sally's sister. But Sally casts it aside when she sees Tom, semi-conscious, brought in on a mattress, accompanied by a crowd including Jim, in chains, and the doctor. Some of the local men would like to hang Jim, but are unwilling to risk having to compensate Jim's master. So they treat Jim roughly, and chain him hand and foot inside the shed. The doctor intervenes, saying Jim isn't bad, since he sacrificed his freedom to help nurse Tom. Sally, meanwhile, is at Tom's bedside, glad that his condition has improved. Tom wakes and gleefully details how they set Jim free. He is horrified to learn that Jim is now in chains. He explains that Jim was freed in Miss Watson's will when she died two months ago.

She regretted ever having considered selling Jim down the river. Just then, Aunt Polly walks into the room. She came after Sally mysteriously wrote her that Sid Sawyer was staying with her. After a tearful reunion with Sally, she identifies Tom and Huckleberry, yelling at both boys for their misadventures. When Huckleberry asks Tom in the last chapter what he planned to do once he had freed the already- freed Jim, Tom replies that he was going to repay Jim for his troubles and send him back a hero. When Aunt Polly and the Phelps hear how Jim helped the doctor, they treat him much better.

Tom gives Jim forty dollars for his troubles. Jim declares that the omen of his hairy chest has come true. Tom makes a full recovery, and has the bullet inserted into a watch he wears around his neck. He and Huck would like to go on another adventure, to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). But Huck worries Pap has taken all his money. Jim tells him that couldn't have happened: the dead body they found way back on the houseboat, that Jim would not let Huck see, belonged to Pap. Huck has nothing more to write about. He is "rotten glad," since writing a book turned out to be quite a task. He does not plan any future writings. Instead, he hopes to make the trip out to Indian Territory, since Aunt Sally is already trying to "sivilize" him, and he's had enough of that.