

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Chapter One The Beginning

You don't know about me, unless you've already read a book by the name of "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." That book was written by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There were things that he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. I don't know anyone who hasn't stretched the truth at least one time or another. Even Tom Sawyer's Aunt Polly and the Widow Douglas have. You can read all about it in "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer."

Now the way that book ends up is this: Tom and me found some money that robbers had hidden in a cave and it made us rich! We got six thousand dollars apiece – all in gold.

It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. And the Widow Douglas-- she took me in and treated me like I was her son. She wanted to civilize me. But it was rough living in a house all the time.

The Widow was a regular and decent woman. But when I couldn't stand it any longer, I ran off. I was feeling free and happy. But Tom Sawyer, he found me and said he was going to start a band of adventurers, and I could join if I'd go back to live with the Widow and be respectable. So I went back.

Pretty soon, though, all I wanted was to go somewhere. All I wanted was a change. Then way out in the woods I heard the sound a ghost makes when it wants to tell something that's on its mind. It gave me a chill right up and down my spine.

Chapter Five Pap

I turned around, and there he was. I used to be scared of him all the time. I guess I was scared now, too, but only at first. Then I took a closer look.

He was old, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy. You could see his eyes shining through like he was behind vines. There wasn't any color in his face. It was white. Not like another man's white, but a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white. As for his clothes – just rags, that was all.

I stood looking at him. He stood looking at me. I noticed the window was open. That's how he'd gotten in. He just kept looking me over. "You think you're a good deal of a big-bug don't you?"

"Maybe I am. Maybe I'm not," I said.

"Don't talk to me like that. You think you're better than your father? You're educated, too, they say. You can read and write. Who got you started on all this foolishness?" asked Pap in a mean voice.

"The widow," I told him.

I took up a book and started to read. Pap whacked the book out of my hands clear across the room. Then he told me he wanted that money I'd found. I told him Judge Thatcher had it, and I didn't have anything but a dollar in my pocket.

"Hand it over," Pap growled.

Pap took my dollar and crawled back out the window.

"I'm going to go see that Judge and get that money. Then I'll be back for you," he swore. Then Pap climbed out the window and was gone.

