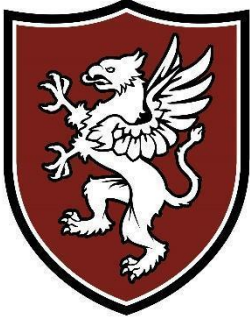


GreatHearts

Northern Oaks



Supplemental Resource Packet

May 18 - 22, 2020

6th grade

Mrs. Sharp

Mrs. Scholl

Mr. Lucero

Ms. Rogers

Mrs. Boyd

Student Name: _____ Section: ____.

Tom joined the new order of Cadets of Temperance, being attracted by the showy character of their 'regalia'. He promised to abstain from smoking, chewing, and profanity as long as he remained a member. Now he found out a new thing – namely, that to promise not to do a thing is the surest way in the world to make a body want to go and do that very thing. Tom soon found himself tormented with a desire to drink, and swear; the desire grew to be so intense that nothing but the hope of a chance to display himself in his red sash kept him from withdrawing from the order. Fourth of July was coming; but he soon gave that up – gave it up before he had worn his shackles over forty-eight hours, and fixed his hopes upon old Judge Frazer, justice of the peace, who was apparently on his death-bed, and would have a big public funeral, since he was so high an official. During three days Tom was deeply concerned about the Judge's condition, and hungry for news of it. Sometimes his hopes ran high, so high that he would venture to get out his regalia and practise before the

looking-glass. But the Judge had a most discouraging way of fluctuating. At last he was pronounced upon the mend, and then convalescent. Tom was disgusted; and felt a sense of injury, too. He handed in his resignation at once, and that night the Judge suffered a relapse and died. Tom resolved that he would never trust a man like that again. The funeral was a fine thing. The Cadets paraded in a style calculated to kill the late member with envy.

Tom was a free boy again, however; there was something in that. He could drink and swear now, but found to his surprise that he did not want to. The simple fact that he could took the desire away, and the charm of it.

Tom presently wondered to find that his coveted vacation was beginning to hang a little heavily on his hands.

He attempted a diary, but nothing happened during three days, and so he abandoned it.

The first of all the Negro minstrel shows came to town, and made a sensation. Tom and Joe Harper got up a band of performers, and were happy for two days.

Even the Glorious Fourth was in some sense a failure, for it rained hard; there was no procession in consequence, and the greatest man in the world (as Tom supposed), Mr Benton, an actual United States Senator, proved an overwhelming disappointment, for he was not twenty-five feet high, nor even anywhere in the neighbourhood of it.

A circus came. The boys played circus for three days afterwards in tents made of rag carpeting – admission,

three pins for boys, two for girls – and then circusing was abandoned.

A phrenologist and a mesmerizer came – and went again and left the village duller and drearier than ever.

There were some boys' and girls' parties, but they were so few and so delightful that they only made the aching voids between ache the harder.

Becky Thatcher was gone to her Constantinople home to stay with her parents during vacation – so there was no bright side to life anywhere.

The dreadful secret of the murder was a chronic misery. It was a very cancer for permanency and pain.

Then came the measles.

During two long weeks Tom lay a prisoner, dead to the world and its happenings. He was very ill, he was interested in nothing. When he got upon his feet at last and moved feebly down town, a melancholy change had come over everything and every creature. There had been a 'revival', and everybody had 'got religion'; not only the adults, but even the boys and girls. Tom went about, hoping against hope for the sight of one blessed sinful face, but disappointment crossed him everywhere. He found Joe Harper studying a Testament, and turned sadly away from the depressing spectacle. He sought Ben Rogers, and found him visiting the poor with a basket of tracts. He hunted up Jim Hollis, who called his attention to the precious blessing of his late measles as a warning.

Every boy he encountered added another ton to his depression; and when, in desperation, he flew for refuge at last to the bosom of Huckleberry Finn and was received with a scriptural quotation, his heart broke, and he crept home and to bed, realizing that he alone of all the town was lost, for ever and for ever.

And that night there came on a terrific storm, with driving rain, awful claps of thunder and blinding sheets of lightning. He covered his head with the bedclothes and waited in a horror of suspense for his doom; for he had not the shadow of a doubt that all this hubbub was about him. He believed he had taxed the forbearance of the powers above to the extremity of endurance, and that this was the result. It might have seemed to him a waste of pomp and ammunition to kill a bug with a battery of artillery, but there seemed nothing incongruous about the getting up of such an expensive thunderstorm as this to knock the turf from under an insect like himself.

By-and-by the tempest spent itself and died without accomplishing its object. The boy's first impulse was to be grateful and reform. His second was to wait – for there might not be any more storms.

The next day the doctors were back; Tom had relapsed. The three weeks he spent on his back this time seemed an entire age. When he got abroad at last he was hardly grateful that he had been spared, remembering how lonely was his estate, how companionless and forlorn he was. He

drifted listlessly down the street and found Jim Hollis acting as judge in a juvenile court that was trying a cat for murder, in the presence of her victim, a bird. He found Joe Harper and Huck Finn up an alley eating a stolen melon. Poor fellows, they, like Tom, had suffered a relapse.

At last the sleepy atmosphere was stirred, and vigorously. The murder trial came on in the court. It became the absorbing topic of village talk immediately. Tom could not get away from it. Every reference to the murder sent a shudder to his heart, for his troubled conscience and his fears almost persuaded him that these remarks were put forth in his hearing as 'feelers'; he did not see how he could be suspected of knowing anything about the murder, but still he could not be comfortable in the midst of this gossip. It kept him in a cold shiver all the time. He took Huck to a lonely place to have a talk with him. It would be some relief to unseal his tongue for a little while, to divide his burden of distress with another sufferer. Moreover, he wanted to assure himself that Huck had remained discreet.

'Huck, have you ever told anybody about that?'

"Bout what?"

'You know what.'

'Oh, 'course I haven't.'

'Never a word?'

'Never a solitary word, so help me. What makes you ask?'

'Well, I was afeard.'

'Why, Tom Sawyer, we wouldn't be alive two days if that got found out. *You* know that.'

Tom felt more comfortable. After a pause:

'Huck, they couldn't anybody get you to tell, could they?'

'Get me to tell? Why, if I wanted that half-breed devil to drownd me they could get me to tell. They ain't no different way.'

'Well, that's all right then. I reckon we're safe as long as we keep mum. But let's swear again, anyway. It's more surer!'

'I'm agreed.'

So they swore again with dread solemnities.

'What is the talk around, Huck? I've heard a power of it.'

'Talk? Well, it's just Muff Potter, Muff Potter, Muff Potter all the time. It keeps me in a sweat, constant, so's I want to hide som'ers.'

'That's just the same way they go on round me. I reckon he's a goner. Don't you feel sorry for him sometimes?'

'Most always – most always. He ain't no account; but then he ain't ever done anything to hurt anybody. Just fishes a little to get money to get drunk on – and loafes around considerable; but, Lord, we all do that – leastways most of us – preachers and such like. But he's kind of

good – he give me half a fish, once, when there wasn't enough for two; and lots of times he's kind of stood by me when I was out of luck.'

'Well, he's mended kites for me, Huck, and knitted hooks on to my line. I wish we could get him out of there.'

'My! we couldn't get him out, Tom. And besides, 'twouldn't do any good; they'd ketch him again.'

'Yes – so they would. But I hate to hear 'em abuse him so like the dickens when he never done – that.'

'I do too, Tom. Lord, I hear 'em say he's the bloodiest-looking villain in this country, and they wonder he wasn't ever hung before.'

'Yes; they talk like that all the time. I've heard 'em say that if he was to get free they'd lynch him.'

'And they'd do it, too.'

The boys had a long talk, but it brought them little comfort. As the twilight drew on, they found themselves hanging about the neighbourhood of the little isolated jail, perhaps with an undefined hope that something would happen that might clear away their difficulties. But nothing happened; there seemed to be no angels or fairies interested in this luckless captive.

The boys did as they had often done before – went to the cell grating and gave Potter some tobacco and matches. He was on the ground floor, and there were no guards.

His gratitude for their gifts had always smote their consciences before – it cut deeper than ever, this time.

They felt cowardly and treacherous to the last degree when Potter said:

‘You’ve been mighty good to me, boys – better’n anybody else in this town. And I don’t forget it, I don’t. Often I says to myself, says I, “I used to mend all the boys’ kites and things, and show ’em where the good fishin’ places was, and befriend ’em when I could, and now they’ve all forgot old Muff wen he’s in trouble, but Tom don’t, and Huck don’t – *they* don’t forget him,” says I, “and I don’t forget *them!*” Well, boys, I done an awful thing – drunk and crazy at the time, that’s the only way I account for it, and now I got to swing for it, and it’s right. Right, and *best*, too, I reckon; hope so, anyway. Well, we won’t talk about that. I don’t want to make *you* feel bad; you’ve befriended me. But what I want to say is, don’t *you* ever get drunk, then you won’t ever get here. Stand a little further west; so, that’s it; it’s a prime comfort to see faces that’s friendly when a body’s in such a muck of trouble, and there don’t none come here but yourn. Good friendly faces – good friendly faces. Get up on one another’s backs, and let me touch ’em. That’s it. Shake hands – yourn’ll come through the bars, but mine’s too big. Little hands, and weak – but they’ve helped Muff Potter a power, and they’d help him more if they could.’

Tom went home miserable, and his dreams that night were full of horrors. The next day and the day after, he hung about the court-room, drawn by an almost



irresistible impulse to go in, but forcing himself to stay out. Huck was having the same experience. They studiously avoided each other. Each wandered away from time to time, but the same dismal fascination always brought them back presently. Tom kept his ears open when idlers sauntered out of the court-room, but invariably heard distressing news; the toils were closing more and more relentlessly around poor Potter. At the end of the second day the village talk was to the effect that Injun Joe's evidence stood firm and unshaken, and that there was not the slightest question as to what the jury's verdict would be.

Tom was out late that night, and came to bed through the window. He was in a tremendous state of excitement. It was hours before he got to sleep. All the village flocked to the court-house the next morning, for this was to be the great day. Both sexes were about equally represented in the packed audience. After a long wait the jury filed in and took their places; shortly afterwards, Potter, pale and haggard, timid and hopeless, was brought in with chains upon him, and seated where all the curious eyes could stare at him; no less conspicuous was Injun Joe, stolid as ever. There was another pause, and then the judge arrived, and the sheriff proclaimed the opening of the court. The usual whisperings among the lawyers and gathering together of papers followed. These details and accompanying delays worked up an atmosphere of preparation that was as impressive as it was fascinating.

Now a witness was called who testified that he found Muff Potter washing in the brook at an early hour of the morning that the murder was discovered, and that he immediately sneaked away. After some further questioning, counsel for the prosecution said:

'Take the witness.'

The prisoner raised his eyes for a moment, but dropped them again when his own counsel said:

'I have no questions to ask him.'

The next witness proved the finding of the knife near the corpse. Counsel for the prosecution said:

'Take the witness.'

'I have no questions to ask him,' Potter's lawyer replied.

A third witness swore he had often seen the knife in Potter's possession.

'Take the witness.'

Counsel for Potter declined to question him.

The faces of the audience began to betray annoyance. Did this attorney mean to throw away his client's life without an effort?

Several witnesses deposed concerning Potter's guilty behaviour when brought to the scene of the murder. They were allowed to leave the stand without being cross-questioned.

Every detail of the damaging circumstances that occurred in the graveyard upon that morning which all present remembered so well was brought out by credible

witnesses, but none of them were cross-examined by Potter's lawyer. The perplexity and dissatisfaction of the house expressed itself in murmurs and provoked a reproof from the bench. Counsel for the prosecution now said:

'By the oaths of citizens whose simple word is above suspicion, we have fastened this awful crime beyond all possibility of question upon the unhappy prisoner at the bar. We rest our case here.'

A groan escaped from poor Potter, and he put his face in his hands, and rocked his body softly to and fro, while a painful silence reigned in the court-room. Many men were moved, and many women's compassion testified itself in tears. Counsel for the defence rose and said:

'Your Honour, in our remarks at the opening of this trial, we foreshadowed our purpose to prove that our client did this fearful deed while under the influence of a blind and irresponsible delirium produced by drink. We have changed our mind; we shall not offer that plea. [Then to the clerk.] Call Thomas Sawyer.'

A puzzled amazement awoke in every face in the house, not even excepting Potter's. Every eye fastened itself with wondering interest upon Tom as he rose and took his place upon the stand. The boy looked wild enough, for he was badly scared. The oath was administered.

'Thomas Sawyer, where were you on the seventeenth of June, about the hour of midnight?'

Tom glanced at Injun Joe's face, and his tongue failed

him. The audience listened breathless, but the words refused to come. After a few moments, however, the boy got a little of his strength back, and managed to put enough of it into his voice to make part of the house hear:

'In the graveyard!'

'A little bit louder, please. Don't be afraid. You were —'

'In the graveyard.'

A contemptuous smile flitted across Injun Joe's face.

'Were you anywhere near Horse Williams's grave?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Speak up just a trifle louder. How near were you?'

'Near as I am to you.'

'Were you hidden or not?'

'I was hid.'

'Where?'

'Behind the elms that's on the edge of the grave.'

Injun Joe gave a barely perceptible start.

'Anyone with you?'

'Yes, sir. I went there with —'

'Wait — wait a moment. Never mind mentioning your companion's name. We will produce him at the proper time. Did you carry anything there with you?'

Tom hesitated and looked confused.

'Speak out, my boy — don't be diffident. The truth is always respectable. What did you take there?'

'Only a — a — dead cat.'

There was a ripple of mirth, which the court checked.

‘We will produce the skeleton of that cat. Now my boy, tell us everything that occurred – tell it in your own way – don’t skip anything, and don’t be afraid.’

Tom began – hesitatingly at first, but, as he warmed to his subject, his words flowed more and more easily; in a little while every sound ceased but his own voice; every eye fixed itself upon him; with parted lips and bated breath the audience hung upon his words, taking no note of time, rapt in the ghastly fascinations of the tale. The strain upon pent emotion reached its climax when the boy said, ‘And as the doctor fetched the board around and Muff Potter fell, Injun Joe jumped with the knife and –’

Crash! Quick as lightning, the half-breed sprang for a window, tore his way through all opposers, and was gone!

Tom was a glittering hero once more – the pet of the old, the envy of the young. His name even went into immortal print, for the village paper magnified him. There were some that believed he would be President yet, if he escaped hanging.

As usual, the fickle unreasoning world took Muff Potter to its bosom, and fondled him as lavishly as it had abused him before. But that sort of conduct is to the world's credit; therefore it is not well to find fault with it.

Tom's days were days of splendour and exultation to him, but his nights were seasons of horror. Injun Joe infested all his dreams, and always with doom in his eye. Hardly any temptation could persuade the boy to stir abroad after nightfall. Poor Huck was in the same state of wretchedness and terror, for Tom had told the whole story to the lawyer the night before the great day of the trial, and Huck was sore afraid that his share in the business might leak out yet, notwithstanding Injun Joe's flight had saved him the suffering of testifying in court.

The poor fellow had got the attorney to promise secrecy, but what of that? Since Tom's harassed conscience had managed to drive him to the lawyer's house by night and wring a dread tale from lips that had been sealed with the dismalest and most formidable of oaths, Huck's confidence in the human race was well-nigh obliterated. Daily Muff Potter's gratitude made Tom glad he had spoken; but nightly he wished he had sealed up his tongue. Half the time Tom was afraid Injun Joe would never be captured; the other half he was afraid he would be. He felt sure he never could draw a safe breath again until that man was dead and he had seen the corpse.

Rewards had been offered, the country had been scoured, but no Injun Joe was found. One of those omniscient and awe-inspiring marvels, a detective, came up from St Louis, moused around, shook his head, looked wise, and made that sort of astounding success which members of that craft usually achieve. That is to say, 'he found a clue'. But you can't hang a 'clue' for murder, and so after that detective had got through and gone home, Tom felt just as insecure as he was before.

The slow days drifted on, and each left behind it a slightly lightened weight of apprehension.

There comes a time in every rightly constructed boy's life when he has a raging desire to go somewhere and dig for hidden treasure. This desire suddenly came upon Tom one day. He sallied out to find Joe Harper, but failed of success. Next he sought Ben Rogers; he had gone fishing. Presently he stumbled upon Huck Finn the Red-handed. Huck would answer. Tom took him to a private place, and opened the matter to him confidentially. Huck was willing. Huck was always willing to take a hand in any enterprise that offered entertainment and required no capital, for he had a troublesome superabundance of that sort of time which is *not* money.

'Where'll we dig?' said Huck.

'Oh, most anywhere.'

'Why, is it hid all around?'

'No, indeed it ain't. It's hid in mighty particular places, Huck – sometimes on islands, sometimes in rotten chests under the end of a limb of an old dead tree, just where

the shadow falls at midnight; but mostly under the floor in ha'nted houses.'

'Who hides it?'

'Why, robbers, of course – who'd you reckon? Sunday-school sup'rintendents?'

'I don't know. If it was mine I wouldn't hide it; I'd spend it and have a good time.'

'So would I; but robbers don't do that way, they always hide it and leave it there.'

'Don't they come after it any more?'

'No, they think they will, but they generally forget the marks, or else they die. Anyway it lays there a long time and gets rusty; and by-and-by somebody finds an old yellow paper that tells how to find the marks – a paper that's got to be ciphered over about a week because it's mostly signs and hy'roglyphics.'

'Hyro – which?'

'Hy'roglyphics – pictures and things, you know, that don't seem to mean anything.'

'Have you got one of them papers, Tom?'

'No.'

'Well, then, how you going to find out the marks?'

'I don't want any marks. They always bury it under a ha'nted house, or on an island, or under a dead tree that's got one limb sticking out. Well, we've tried Jackson's Island a little, and we can try it again sometime; and there's the old ha'nted house up the Still-House

branch, and there's lots of dead-limb trees – dead loads of 'em.'

'Is it under all of them?'

'How you talk! No!'

'Then how you going to know which one to go for?'

'Go for all of 'em.'

'Why, Tom, it'll take all summer.'

'Well, what of that? Suppose you find a brass pot with a hundred dollars in it, all rusty and gay, or a rotten chest full of di'monds. How's that?'

Huck's eyes glowed.

'That's bully, plenty bully enough for me. Just you gimme the hundred dollars, and I don't want no di'monds.'

'All right. But I bet you I ain't going to throw off on di'monds. Some of 'em's worth twenty dollars apiece. There ain't any, hardly, but's worth six bits or a dollar.'

'No! Is that so?'

'Cert'nly – anybody'll tell you so. Hain't you ever seen one, Huck?'

'Not as I remember.'

'Oh, kings have slathers of them.'

'Well, I don't know no kings, Tom.'

'I reckon you don't. But if you was to go to Europe you'd see a raft of 'em hopping around.'

'Do they hop?'

'Hop? – your granny! No!'

'Well, what did you say they did for?'

'Shucks! I only meant you'd see 'em – not hopping, of course – what do they want to hop for? But I mean you'd just see 'em – scattered around, you know, in a kind of a general way. Like that old hump-backed Richard.'

'Richard! What's his other name?'

'He didn't have any other name. Kings don't have any but a given name.'

'No?'

'But they don't.'

'Well, if they like it, Tom, all right; but I don't want to be a king and have only just a given name, like a nigger. But say – where you going to dig first?'

'Well, I don't know. S'pose we tackle that old dead-limb tree on the hill t'other side of Still-House branch?'

'I'm agreed.'

So they got a crippled pick and a shovel, and set out on their three-mile tramp. They arrived hot and panting, and threw themselves down in the shade of a neighbouring elm to rest and have a smoke.

'I like this,' said Tom.

'So do I.'

'Say, Huck, if we find a treasure here, what you going to do with your share?'

'Well, I'll have a pie and a glass of soda every day, and I'll go to every circus that comes along. I'll bet I'll have a gay time.'

'Well, ain't you going to save any of it?'

'Save it? What for?'

'Why, so as to have something to live on by-and-by.'
'Oh, that ain't any use. Pap would come back to thish yer town some day and get his claws on it if I didn't hurry up, and I tell you he'd clean it out pretty quick. What you going to do with yourn, Tom?'

'I'm going to buy a new drum, and a sure-'nough sword, and a red necktie, and a bull-pup, and get married.'

'Married!'

'That's it.'

'Tom, you – why, you ain't in your right mind.'

'Wait – you'll see.'

'Well, that's the foolishest thing you could do, Tom. Look at Pap and my mother. Fight! why they used to fight all the time. I remember, mighty well.'

'That ain't anything. The girl I'm going to marry won't fight.'

'Tom, I reckon they're all alike. They'll all comb a body. Now you better think about this a while. I tell you you better. What's the name of the gal?'

'It ain't a gal at all – it's a girl.'

'It's all the same, I reckon; some says gal, some says girl – both's right, like enough. Anyway, what's her name, Tom?'

'I'll tell you some time – not now.'

'All right – that'll do. Only if you get married I'll be more lonesomer than ever.'

'No, you won't, you'll come and live with me. Now stir out of this, and we'll go to digging.'

They worked and sweated for half an hour. No result. They toiled another half hour. Still no result. Huck said: 'Do they always bury it as deep as this?'

'Sometimes – not always. Not generally. I reckon we haven't got the right place.'

So they chose a new spot and began again. The labour dragged a little, but still they made progress. They pegged away in silence for some time. Finally Huck leaned on his shovel, swabbed the beaded drops from his brow with his sleeve, and said:

'Where you going to dig next, after we get this one?'

'I reckon maybe we'll tackle the old tree that's over yonder on Cardiff Hill, back on the widow's.'

'I reckon that'll be a good one. But won't the widow take it away from us, Tom? It's on her land.'

'She take it away! Maybe she'd like to try it once. Whoever finds one of these hid treasures, it belongs to him. It don't make any difference whose land it's on.'

That was satisfactory. The work went on. By-and-by Huck said:

'Blame it, we must be in the wrong place again. What do you think?'

'It is mighty curious, Huck. I don't understand it. Sometimes witches interfere. I reckon maybe that's what's the trouble now.'

'Shucks! witches ain't got no power in the daytime.' 'Well, that's so. I didn't think of that. Oh, I know what the matter is! What a blamed lot of fools we are! You got to find out where the shadow of the limb falls at midnight, and that's where you dig!'

'Then confound it, we've fooled away all this work for nothing. Now hang it all, we got to come back in the night. It's an awful long way. Can you get out?'

'I bet I will. We've got to do it tonight, too, because if somebody sees these holes they'll know in a minute what's here and they'll go for it.'

'Well, I'll come around and meow tonight.'

'All right. Let's hide the tools in the bushes.'

The boys were there that night about the appointed time. They sat in the shadow waiting. It was a lonely place, and an hour made solemn by old traditions. Spirits whispered in the rustling leaves, ghosts lurked in the murky nooks, the deep baying of a hound floated up out of the distance, an owl answered with his sepulchral note. The boys were subdued by these solemnities, and talked little. By-and-by they judged that twelve had come; they marked where the shadow fell and began to dig. Their hopes commenced to rise. Their interest grew stronger, and their industry kept pace with it. The hole deepened and still deepened, but every time their hearts jumped to hear the pick strike upon something, they only suffered a new disappointment. It was only a stone or a chunk. At last Tom said:

'It ain't any use, Huck, we're wrong again.'

'Well, but we can't be wrong. We spotted the shadder to a dot.'

'I know it, but then there's another thing.'

'What's that?'

'Why, we only guessed at the time. Like enough it was too late or too early.'

Huck dropped his shovel.

'That's it,' said he. 'That's the very trouble. We got to give this one up. We can't ever tell the right time, and besides, this kind of thing's too awful, here this time of night with witches and ghosts a fluttering around so. I feel as if something's behind me all the time; and I'm afeard to turn around, becuz maybe there's others in front a waiting for a chance. I been creeping all over ever since I got here.'

'Well, I've been pretty much so too, Huck. They 'most always put in a dead man when they bury a treasure under a tree, to look out for it.'

'Lordy!'

'Yes, they do. I've always heard that.'

'Tom, I don't like to fool around much where there's dead people. A boy's bound to get into trouble with 'em, sure.'

'I don't like to stir 'em up, either, Huck. S'pose this one here was to stick his skull out and say something!'

'Don't, Tom! It's awful.'

'Well, it just is, Huck. I don't feel comfortable a bit.'

'Say, Tom, let's give this place up, and try somewheres else.'

'All right, I reckon we better.'

'What'll it be?'

Tom considered awhile, and then said:

'The ha'nted house. That's it.'

'Blame it. I don't like ha'nted houses, Tom. Why, they're a dern sight worse'n dead people. Dead people might talk maybe, but they don't come sliding around in a shroud when you ain't noticing, and peep over your shoulder all of a sudden and grit their teeth the way a ghost does. I couldn't stand such a thing as that, Tom – nobody could.'

'Yes; but, Huck, ghosts don't travel around only at night – they won't hinder us from digging there in the daytime.'

'Well, that's so. But you know mighty well people don't go about that ha'nted house in the day nor the night.'

'Well, that's mostly because they don't like to go where a man's been murdered, anyway. But nothing's ever been seen around that house in the night – just some blue light slipping by the window – no regular ghosts.'

'Well, where you see one of them blue lights flickering around, Tom, you can bet there's a ghost mighty close behind it. It stands to reason. Becuz you know that they don't anybody but ghosts use 'em.'

'Yes, that's so. But anyway they don't come around in the daytime, so what's the use of our being afeard?'

‘Well, all right. We’ll tackle the ha’nted house if you say so; but I reckon it’s taking chances.’

They had started down the hill by this time. There in the middle of the moonlit valley below them stood the ‘haunted’ house, utterly isolated, its fences gone long ago, rank weeds smothering the very door-step, the chimney crumbled to ruin, the window-sashes vacant, a corner of the roof caved in. The boys gazed awhile, half expecting to see a blue light flit past a window; then talking in a low tone, as befitted the time and the circumstances, they struck far off to the right, to give the haunted house a wide berth, and took their way homeward through the woods that adorned the rearward side of Cardiff Hill.

About noon the next day the boys arrived at the dead tree; they had come for their tools. Tom was impatient to go to the haunted house; Huck was measurably so, also, but suddenly said:

‘Looky here, Tom, do you know what day it is?’

Tom mentally ran over the days of the week and then quickly lifted his eyes with a startled look in them:

‘My! I never once thought of it, Huck!’

‘Well, I didn’t, neither, but all at once it popped on to me that it was Friday.’

‘Blame it; a body can’t be too careful, Huck. We might a got into an awful scrape, tackling such a thing on a Friday.’

‘Might! Better say we would! There’s some lucky days, maybe, but Friday ain’t.’

‘Any fool knows that. I don’t reckon you was the first that found it out, Huck.’

‘Well, I never said I was, did I? And Friday ain’t all, neither. I had a rotten bad dream last night – dreamt about rats.’

'No! Sure sign of trouble. Did they fight?'

'No.'

'Well, that's good, Huck. When they don't fight, it's only a sign that there's trouble around, you know. All we got to do is to look mighty sharp and keep out of it. We'll drop this thing for today, and play. Do you know Robin Hood, Huck?'

'No. Who's Robin Hood?'

'Why, he was one of the greatest men that was ever in England – and the best. He was a robber.'

'Cracky, I wisht I was. Who did he rob?'

'Only sheriffs and bishops and rich people and kings, and such like. But he never bothered the poor. He loved 'em. He always divided up with 'em perfectly square.'

'Well, he must a been a brick.'

'I bet you he was, Huck. Oh, he was the noblest man that ever was. They ain't any such men now, I can tell you. He could lick any man in England with one hand tied behind him; and he could take his yew bow and plug a ten cent piece every time, a mile and a half.'

'What's a yew bow?'

'I don't know. It's some kind of a bow, of course. And if he hit that dime only on the edge he could set down and cry – and curse. But we'll play Robin Hood – it's noble fun. I'll learn you.'

'I'm agreed.'

So they played Robin Hood all the afternoon, now and

then casting a yearning eye down upon the haunted house and passing a remark about the morrow's prospects and possibilities there. As the sun began to sink into the west, they took their way homeward athwart the long shadows of the trees and soon were buried from sight in the forests of Cardiff Hill.

On Saturday, shortly after noon, the boys were at the dead tree again. They had a smoke and a chat in the shade, and then dug a little in their last hole, not with great hope, but merely because Tom said there were so many cases where people had given up a treasure after getting down within six inches of it, and then somebody else had come along and turned it up with a single thrust of a shovel. The thing failed this time, however, so the boys shouldered their tools and went away, feeling that they had not trifled with fortune, but had fulfilled all the requirements that belong to the business of treasure-hunting.

When they reached the haunted house, there was something so weird and grisly about the dead silence that reigned there under the baking sun, and something so depressing about the loneliness and desolation of the place, that they were afraid, for a moment, to venture in. Then they crept to the door and took a trembling peep. They saw a weed-grown, floorless room, unplastered, an ancient fire-place, vacant windows, a ruinous staircase; and here, there, and everywhere, hung ragged and abandoned cobwebs. They presently entered softly, with

quicken pulses, talking in whispers, ears alert to catch the slightest sound, and muscles tense and ready for instant retreat.

In a little while familiarity modified their fears, and they gave the place a critical and interested examination, rather admiring their own boldness, and wondering at it, too. Next they wanted to look upstairs. This was something like cutting off retreat, but they got to daring each other, and of course there could be but one result – they threw their tools into a corner and made the ascent. Up there were the same signs of decay. In one corner they found a closet that promised mystery, but the promise was a fraud – there was nothing in it. Their courage was up now, and well in hand. They were about to go down and begin work when –

'Sht!' said Tom.

'What is it?' whispered Huck, blanching with fright.

'Sh! There! Hear it?'

'Yes! Oh, my! Let's run!'

'Keep still! Don't you budge! They're coming right towards the door.'

The boys stretched themselves upon the floor with their eyes to knot-holes in the planking, and lay waiting in a misery of fear.

'They've stopped – No – coming – Here they are. Don't whisper another word, Huck. My goodness, I wish I was out of this!'

Two men entered. Each boy said to himself:

'There's the old deaf and dumb Spaniard that's been about town once or twice lately – never saw t'other man before.'

'T'other' was a ragged, unkempt creature, with nothing very pleasant in his face. The Spaniard was wrapped in a *serape*; he had bushy white whiskers, long white hair flowed from under his sombrero, and he wore green goggles. When they came in, 't'other' was talking in a low voice; they sat down on the ground, facing the door, with their backs to the wall, and the speaker continued his remarks. His manner became less guarded and his words more distinct as he proceeded.

'No,' said he, 'I've thought it all over, and I don't like it. It's dangerous.'

'Dangerous!' grunted the 'deaf and dumb' Spaniard, to the vast surprise of the boys. 'Milk-sop!'

This voice made the boys gasp and quake. It was Injun Joe's! There was silence for some time. Then Joe said:

'What's any more dangerous than the job up yonder – but nothing's come of it.'

'That's different. Away up the river so, and not another house about. 'Twon't ever be known that we tried, anyway, long as we didn't succeed.'

'Well, what's more dangerous than coming here in the daytime? – anybody would suspicion us that saw us.'

'I know that. But there wasn't any other place as handy after that fool of a job. I want to quit this shanty. I wanted

to yesterday, only it wasn't any use trying to stir out of here with those infernal boys playing over there on the hill right in full view.'

'Those infernal boys' quaked again under the inspiration of this remark, and thought how lucky it was that they had remembered it was Friday and concluded to wait a day. They wished in their hearts they had waited a year. The two men got out some food and made a luncheon. After a long and thoughtful silence Injun Joe said:

'Look here, lad, you go back up the river where you belong. Wait there till you hear from me. I'll take the chances on dropping into this town just once more, for a look. We'll do that "dangerous" job after I've spied around a little and think things look well for it. Then for Texas! We'll leg it together!'

This was satisfactory. Both men presently fell to yawning, and Injun Joe said:

'I'm dead for sleep! It's your turn to watch.'

He curled down in the weeds and soon began to snore. His comrade stirred him once or twice, and he became quiet. Presently the watcher began to nod; his head drooped lower and lower; both men began to snore now.

The boys drew a long grateful breath. Tom whispered: 'Now's our chance - come!'

Huck said: 'I can't - I'd die if they was to wake.'

Tom urged - Huck held back. At last Tom rose slowly

and softly, and started alone. But the first step he made wrung such a hideous creak from the crazy floor that he sank down almost dead with fright. He never made a second attempt. The boys lay there counting the dragging moments till it seemed to them that time must be done and eternity growing grey; and then they were grateful to note that at last the sun was setting.

Now one snore ceased. Injun Joe sat up, stared around - smiled grimly upon his comrade, whose head was drooping upon his knees - stirred him up with his foot and said:

'Here! You're a watchman, ain't you!'

'All right, though - nothing's happened.'

'My! Have I been asleep?'

'Oh, partly, partly. Nearly time for us to be moving, pard. What'll we do with what little swag we've got left?'

'I don't know - leave it here as we've always done, I reckon. No use to take it away till we start south. Six hundred and fifty in silver's something to carry.'

'Well - all right - it won't matter to come here again.'

'No - but I'd say come in the night as we used to do - it's better.'

'Yes, but look here; it may be a good while before I get the right chance at that job; accidents might happen, 'tain't in such a very good place; we'll just regularly bury it - and bury it deep.'

'Good idea,' said the comrade, who walked across the

room, knelt down, raised one of the rearward hearth-stones and took out a bag that jingled pleasantly. He subtracted from it twenty or thirty dollars for himself and as much for Injun Joe, and passed the bag to the latter, who was on his knees in the corner, now, digging with his bowie-knife.

The boys forgot all their fears, all their miseries in an instant. With gloating eyes they watched every movement. Luck! – the splendour of it was beyond all imagination! Six hundred dollars was money enough to make half a dozen boys rich! Here was treasure-hunting under the happiest auspices – there would not be any bothersome uncertainty as to where to dig. They nudged each other every moment – eloquent nudges and easily understood, for they simply meant, ‘Oh, but ain’t you glad now we’re here!’

Joe’s knife struck upon something.

‘Hello!’ said he.

‘What is it?’ said his comrade.

‘Half-rotten plank – no, it’s a box, I believe. Here bear a hand, and we’ll see what it’s here for. Never mind, I’ve broke a hole.’

He reached his hand in and drew it out.

‘Man, it’s money!’

The two men examined the handful of coins. They were gold. The boys above were as excited as themselves, and as delighted.

Joe’s comrade said:



'We'll make quick work of this. There's an old rusty pick over amongst the weeds in the corner, the other side of the fire-place – I saw it a minute ago.'

He ran and brought the boys' pick and shovel. Injun Joe took the pick, looked it over critically, shook his head, muttered something to himself, and then began to use it.

The box was soon unearthed. It was not very large; it was iron-bound and had been very strong before the slow years had injured it. The men contemplated the treasure awhile in blissful silence.

'Pard, there's thousands of dollars here,' said Injun Joe.

'Twas always said that Murrel's gang used around here one summer,' the stranger observed.

'I know it,' said Injun Joe; 'and this looks like it, I should say.'

'Now you won't need to do that job.'

The half-breed frowned. Said he:

'You don't know me. Least you don't know all about that thing. 'Tain't robbery altogether – it's revenge!' and a wicked light flamed in his eyes. 'I'll need your help in it. When it's finished – then Texas. Go home to your Nance and your kids, and stand by till you hear from me.'

'Well, if you say so. What'll we do with this – bury it again?'

'Yes. [Ravishing delight overhead.] No! by the great Sacham, no! [Profound distress overhead.] I'd nearly forgot. That pick had fresh earth on it! [The boys were

sick with terror in a moment.] What business has a pick and a shovel here? What business with fresh earth on them? Who brought them here – and where are they gone? Have you heard anybody? – seen anybody? What! bury it again and leave them to come and see the ground disturbed? Not exactly – not exactly. We'll take it to my den.'

'Why, of course! Might have thought of that before. You mean number one?'

'No – number two – under the cross. The other place is bad – too common.'

'All right. It's nearly dark enough to start.'

Injun Joe got up and went about from window to window, cautiously peeping out. Presently he said:

'Who could have brought those tools here? Do you reckon they can be upstairs?'

The boys' breath forsook them. Injun Joe put his hand on his knife, halted a moment, undecided, and then turned towards the stairway. The boys thought of the closet, but their strength was gone. The steps came creaking up the stairs – the intolerable distress of the situation woke the stricken resolution of the lads – they were about to spring for the closet, when there was a crash of rotten timbers and Injun Joe landed on the ground amid the debris of the ruined stairway. He gathered himself up cursing, and his comrade said:

'Now what's the use of all that? If it's anybody, and

they're up there, let them stay there – who cares? If they want to jump down, now, and get into trouble, who objects? It will be dark in fifteen minutes – and then let them follow us if they want to; I'm willing. In my opinion, whoever hove those things in here caught a sight of us, and took us for ghosts or devils or something. I'll bet they're running yet.'

Joe grumbled awhile; then he agreed with his friend that what daylight was left ought to be economized in getting things ready for leaving. Shortly afterwards they slipped out of the house in the deepening twilight, and moved towards the river with their precious box.

Tom and Huck rose up, weak but vastly relieved, and stared after them through the chinks between the logs of the house. Follow? Not they – they were content to reach the ground again without broken necks, and take the townward track over the hill. They did not talk much, they were too much absorbed in hating themselves – hating the ill-luck that made them take the spade and the pick there. But for that, Injun Joe never would have suspected. He would have hidden the silver with the gold to wait there till his 'revenge' was satisfied, and then he would have had the misfortune to find that money turn up missing. Bitter, bitter luck that the tools were ever brought there! They resolved to keep a lookout for that Spaniard when he should come to town spying out for chances to do his revengeful job, and follow him to

'number two', wherever that might be. Then a ghastly thought occurred to Tom:

'Revenge? What if he means *us*, Huck!'

'Oh, don't,' said Huck, nearly fainting.

They talked it all over, and as they entered town they agreed to believe that he might possibly mean somebody else – at least that he might at least mean nobody but Tom, since only Tom had testified.

Very, very small comfort it was to Tom to be alone in danger! Company would be a palpable improvement, he thought.

The adventure of the day mightily tormented Tom's dreams that night. Four times he had his hands on that rich treasure, and four times it wasted to nothingness in his fingers as sleep forsook him, and wakefulness brought back the hard reality of his misfortune. As he lay in the early morning recalling the incidents of his great adventure he noticed that they seemed curiously subdued and far away, somewhat as if they had happened in another world, or in a time long gone by. Then it occurred to him that the great adventure itself must be a dream! There was one very strong argument in favour of this idea, namely, that the quantity of coin he had seen was too vast to be real. He had never seen as much as fifty dollars in one mass before, and he was like all boys of his age and station in life, in that he imagined that all references to 'hundreds' and 'thousands' were mere fanciful forms of speech, and that no such sums existed in the world. He never had supposed for a moment that so large a sum as a hundred

dollars was to be found in actual money in anybody's possession. If his notions of hidden treasure had been analysed, they would have been found to consist of a handful of real dimes, and a bushel of vague, splendid, ungraspable ones.

But the incidents of his adventure grew sensibly sharper and clearer under the attrition of thinking them over, and so he presently found himself leaning to the impression that the thing might not have been a dream after all. This uncertainty must be swept away. He would snatch a hurried breakfast, and go and find Huck.

Huck was sitting on the gunwale of a flat boat, listlessly dangling his feet in the water, and looking very melancholy. Tom concluded to let Huck lead up to the subject. If he did not do it, then the adventure would be proved to have been only a dream.

'Hello, Huck!'

'Hello, yourself.'

Silence for a minute.

'Tom, if we'd a left the blame tools at the dead tree we'd a got the money. Oh, ain't it awful!'

'Tain't a dream, then, 'tain't a dream! Somehow I 'most wish it was. Dog'd if I don't.'

'What ain't a dream?'

'Oh, that thing yesterday. I been half thinking it was.'

'Dream! If them stairs hadn't broke down you'd a seen

how much dream it was! I've had dreams enough all night, with that patch-eyed Spanish devil going for me all through 'em, rot him!

'No, not rot him. Find him! Track the money!'

'Tom, we'll never find him. A feller don't only have one chance for such a pile, and that one's lost. I'd feel mighty shaky if I was to see him, anyway.'

'Well, so'd I; but I'd like to see him anyway, and track him out – to his number two.'

'Number two; yes, that's it. I been thinking 'bout that. But I can't make nothing out of it. What do you reckon it is?'

'I dono. It's too deep. Say, Huck – maybe it's the number of a house!'

'Goody! – No, Tom, that ain't it. If it is, it ain't in this one-horse town. They ain't no numbers here.'

'Well, that's so. Lemme think a minute. Here – it's the number of a room – in a tavern, you know!'

'Oh, that's the trick! They ain't only two taverns. We can find out quick.'

'You stay here, Huck, till I come.'

Tom was off at once. He did not care to have Huck's company in public places. He was gone half an hour. He found that in the best tavern number two had long been occupied by a young lawyer, and was still so occupied. In the less ostentatious house number two was a mystery. The tavern-keeper's young son said it was kept locked all

the time, and he never saw anybody go into it or come out of it except at night; he did not know any particular reason for this state of things; had had some little curiosity, but it was rather feeble; had made the most of the mystery by entertaining himself with the idea that that room was 'ha'nted'; had noticed that there was a light in there the night before.

'That's what I've found out, Huck. I reckon that's the very number two we're after.'

'I reckon it is, Tom. Now what you going to do?'

'Lemme think.'

Tom thought a long time. Then he said:

'I'll tell you. The back door of that number two is the door that comes out into that little close alley between the tavern and the old rattle-trap of a brick-store. Now you get hold of all the door keys you can find and I'll nip all of Auntie's, and the first dark night we'll go there and try 'em. And mind you keep a lookout for Injun Joe, because he said he was going to drop into town and spy around once more for a chance to get his revenge. If you see him, you just follow him; and if he don't go to that number two, that ain't the place.'

'Lordy, I don't want to foller him by myself!'

'Why, it'll be night, sure. He mightn't ever see you – and if he did, maybe he'd never think anything.'

'Well, if it's pretty dark I reckon I'll track him. I dono – I dono. I'll try.'

'You bet I'll follow him if it's dark, Huck! Why, he might a found out he couldn't get his revenge, and be going right after that money.'

'It's so, Tom, it's so. I'll foller him; I will, by jingoes.'

'Now you're talking! Don't you ever weaken, Huck, and I won't.'

That night Tom and Huck were ready for their adventure. They hung about the neighbourhood of the tavern until after nine, one watching the alley at a distance and the other the tavern door. Nobody entered the alley or left it; nobody resembling the Spaniard entered or left the tavern door. The night promised to be a fair one; so Tom went home with the understanding that if a considerable degree of darkness came on, Huck was to come and 'meow', whereupon he would slip out and try the keys. But the night remained clear, and Huck closed his watch and retired to bed in an empty sugar hogshead about twelve.

Tuesday the boys had the same ill-luck. Also Wednesday. But Thursday night promised better. Tom slipped out in good season with his aunt's old tin lantern, and a large towel to blindfold it with. He hid the lantern in Huck's sugar hogshead and the watch began. An hour before midnight the tavern closed up, and its lights (the only one thereabouts) were put out. No Spaniard had been seen. Nobody had entered or left the alley. Everything was

auspicious. The blackness of darkness reigned, the perfect stillness was interrupted only by occasional mutterings of distant thunder.

Tom got his lantern, lit it in the hogshead, wrapped it closely in the towel, and the two adventurers crept in the gloom towards the tavern. Huck stood sentry and Tom felt his way into the alley. Then there was a season of waiting anxiety that weighed upon Huck's spirits like a mountain. He began to wish he could see a flash from the lantern – it would frighten him, but it would at least tell him that Tom was alive yet.

It seemed hours since Tom had disappeared. Surely he must have fainted; maybe he was dead; maybe his heart had burst under terror and excitement. In his uneasiness Huck found himself drawing closer and closer to the alley, fearing all sorts of dreadful things, and momentarily expecting some catastrophe to happen that would take away his breath. There was not much to take away, for he seemed only able to inhale it by thimblefuls, and his heart would soon wear itself out, the way it was beating. Suddenly there was a flash of light, and Tom came tearing by him:

'Run!' said he; 'run for your life!'

He needn't have repeated it; once was enough; Huck was making thirty or forty miles an hour before the repetition was uttered. The boys never stopped till they reached the shed of a deserted slaughter-house at the

lower end of the village. Just as they got within its shelter the storm burst and the rain poured down. As soon as Tom got his breath he said:

'Huck, it was awful! I tried two of the keys just as soft as I could; but they seemed to make such a power of racket that I couldn't hardly get my breath, I was so scared. They wouldn't turn in the lock either. Well, without noticing what I was doing, I took hold of the knob, and open comes the door! It wasn't locked! I hopped in and shook off the towel, and, *great Caesar's ghost!*'

'What! – what'd you see, Tom?'

'Huck, I most stepped on to Injun Joe's hand!'

'No!'

'Yes. He was laying there, sound asleep on the floor, with his old patch on his eye and his arms spread out.'

'Lordy, what did you do? Did he wake up?'

'No, never budged. Drunk, I reckon. I just grabbed that towel and started!'

'I'd never a thought of the towel, I bet!'

'Well, I would. My aunt would make me mighty sick if I lost it.'

'Say, Tom, did you see that box?'

'Huck, I didn't wait to look around. I didn't see the box, I didn't see the cross. I didn't see anything but a bottle and a tin cup on the floor by Injun Joe! Yes, and I saw two barrels and lots more bottles in the room. Don't you see, now, what's the matter with that ha'nted room?'

'How?'

'Why, it's ha'nted with whisky! Maybe all the Temperance Taverns have got a ha'nted room, hey, Huck?'

'Well, I reckon maybe that's so. Who'd a thought such a thing? But say, Tom, now's a mighty good time to get that box, if Injun Joe's drunk.'

'It is that! You try it!'

Huck shuddered.

'Well, no – I reckon not.'

'And I reckon not, Huck. Only one bottle alongside of Injun Joe ain't enough. If there'd been three he'd be drunk enough and I'd do it.'

There was a long pause for reflection, and then Tom said:

'Looky here, Huck, less not try that thing any more till we know Injun Joe's not in there. It's too scary. Now if we watch every night, we'll be dead sure to see him go out some time or other, then we'll snatch that box quicker'n lightning.'

'Well, I'm agreed. I'll watch the whole night long, and I'll do it every night, too, if you'll do the other part of the job.'

'All right, I will. All you got to do is to trot up Hooper Street a block and meow – and if I'm asleep, you throw some gravel at the window and that'll fetch me.'

'Agreed, and good as wheat!'

'Now, Huck, the storm's over, and I'll go home. It'll

begin to be daylight in a couple of hours. You go back and watch that long, will you?'

'I said I would, Tom, and I will. I'll ha'nt that tavern every night for a year. I'll sleep all day and I'll stand watch all night.'

'That's all right. Now where are you going to sleep?'

'In Ben Roger's hay-loft. He lets me, and so does his pap's nigger man, Uncle Jake. I tote water for Uncle Jake whenever he wants me to, and any time I ask him he gives me a little something to eat if he can spare it. That's a mighty good nigger, Tom. He likes me, becuz I don't ever act as if I was above him. Sometimes I've set right down and eat with him. But you needn't tell that. A body's got to do things when he's awful hungry he wouldn't want to do as a steady thing.'

'Well, if I don't want you in the daytime, Huck, I'll let you sleep. I won't come bothering around. Any time you see something's up in the night, just skip right around and meow.'

The first thing Tom heard on Friday morning was a glad piece of news – Judge Thatcher’s family had come back to town the night before. Both Injun Joe and the treasure sank into secondary importance for a moment, and Becky took the chief place in the boy’s interest. He saw her, and they had an exhausting good time playing ‘hi-spy’ and ‘gully-keeper’ with a crowd of their schoolmates. The day was completed and crowned in a peculiarly satisfactory way: Becky teased her mother to appoint the next day for the long-promised and long-delayed picnic, and she consented. The child’s delight was boundless, and Tom’s not more moderate. The invitations were sent out before sunset, and straightway the young folks of the village were thrown into a fever of preparation and pleasurable anticipation. Tom’s excitement enabled him to keep awake until a pretty late hour, and he had good hopes of hearing Huck’s ‘meow’ and of having his treasure to astonish Becky and the picnickers with, next day; but he was disappointed. No signal came that night.

Morning came eventually, and by ten or eleven o’clock a giddy and rollicking company were gathered at Judge Thatcher’s, and everything was ready for a start. It was not the custom for elderly people to mar picnics with their presence. The children were considered safe enough under the wings of a few young ladies of eighteen and a few young gentlemen of twenty-three or thereabouts. The old steam ferry-boat was chartered for the occasion: presently the gay throng filed up the main street laden with provision baskets. Sid was sick and had to miss the fun; Mary remained at home to entertain him. The last thing Mrs Thatcher said to Becky was:

‘You’ll not get back till late. Perhaps you’d better stay all night with some of the girls that live near the ferry landing, child!’

‘Then I’ll stay with Susy Harper, mamma.’

‘Very well. And mind and behave yourself, and don’t be any trouble.’

Presently, as they tripped along, Tom said to Becky:

‘Say – I’ll tell you what we’ll do. ’Stead of going to Joe Harper’s, we’ll climb right up the hill and stop at Widow Douglas’s. She’ll have ice-cream! She has it ’most every day – dead loads of it. And she’ll be awful glad to have us.’

‘Oh, that will be fun!’

Then Becky reflected a moment, and said:

‘But what will mamma say?’

'How'll she ever know?'

The girl turned the idea over in her mind, and said reluctantly:

'I reckon it's wrong – but –'

'But – shucks! Your mother won't know, and so what's the harm? All she wants is that you'll be safe; and I bet you she'd a said go there if she'd a thought of it. I know she would!

The Widow Douglas's splendid hospitality was a tempting bait. It and Tom's persuasions presently carried the day. So it was decided to say nothing to anybody about the night's programme.

Presently it occurred to Tom that maybe Huck might come this very night and give the signal. The thought took a deal of the spirit out of his anticipations. Still he could not bear to give up the fun at Widow Douglas's. And why should he give it up, he reasoned – the signal did not come the night before, so why should it be any more likely to come tonight? The sure fun of the evening outweighed the uncertain treasure; and, boy-like, he determined to yield to the stronger inclination and not allow himself to think of the box of money another time that day.

Three miles below town the ferry-boat stopped at the mouth of a woody hollow and tied up. The crowd swarmed ashore, and soon the forest distances and craggy heights echoed far and near with shoutings and laughter. All the different ways of getting hot and tired were gone

through with, and by-and-by the rovers straggled back to camp fortified with responsible appetites, and then the destruction of the good things began. After the feast there was a refreshing season of rest and chat in the shade of spreading oaks. By-and-by somebody shouted:

'Who's ready for the cave?'

Everybody was. Bundles of candles were produced, and straightway there was a general scamper up the hill. The mouth of the cave was high up the hill-side, an opening shaped like the letter A. Its massive oaken door stood unbarred. Within was a small chamber, chilly as an ice-house, and walled by Nature with solid lime-stone that was dewy with a cold sweat. It was romantic and mysterious to stand here in the deep gloom and look out upon the green valley shining in the sun. But the impressiveness of the situation quickly wore off, and the romping began again. The moment a candle was lighted, there was a general rush upon the owner of it; a struggle and a gallant defence followed, but the candle was soon knocked down or blown out, and then there was a glad clamour of laughter and a new chase. But all things have an end. By-and-by the procession went filing down the steep descent of the main avenue, the flickering rank of lights dimly revealing the lofty walls of rock almost to their point of junction sixty feet overhead. This main avenue was not more than eight or ten feet wide. Every few steps other lofty and still narrower crevices branched

from it on either hand, for McDougal's cave was but a vast labyrinth of crooked aisles that ran into each other and out again and led nowhere. It was said that one might wander days and nights together through its intricate tangle of rifts and chasms, and never find the end of the cave; and that he might go down and down, and still down into the earth, and it was just the same – labyrinth underneath labyrinth, and no end to any of them. No man 'knew' the cave. That was an impossible thing. Most of the young men knew a portion of it, and it was not customary to venture much beyond this known portion. Tom Sawyer knew as much of the cave as anyone.

The procession moved along the main avenue some three-quarters of a mile, and then groups and couples began to slip aside into branch avenues, fly along the dismal corridors, and take each other by surprise at points where the corridors joined again. Parties were able to elude each other for the space of half an hour without going beyond the 'known' ground.

By-and-by, one group after another came straggling back to the mouth of the cave, panting, hilarious, smeared from head to foot with tallow drippings, daubed with clay, and entirely delighted with the success of the day. Then they were astonished to find that they had been taking no note of time, and that night was about at hand. The clanging bell had been calling for half an hour. However, this sort of close to the day's adventures was romantic

and therefore satisfactory. When the ferry-boat with her wild freight pushed into the stream, nobody cared sixpence for the wasted time but the captain of the craft.

Huck was already upon his watch when the ferry-boat's lights went glinting past the wharf. He heard no noise on board, for the young people were as subdued and still as people usually are who are nearly tired to death. He wondered what boat it was, and why she did not stop at the wharf – and then he dropped her out of his mind and put his attention upon his business. The night was growing cloudy and dark. Ten o'clock came, and the noise of vehicles ceased, scattered lights began to wink out, all straggling foot-passengers disappeared, the village betook itself to its slumbers and left the small watcher alone with the silence and the ghosts. Eleven o'clock came, and the tavern lights were put out; darkness everywhere, now. Huck waited what seemed a weary long time, but nothing happened. His faith was weakening. Was there any use? Was there really any use? Why not give it up and turn in?

A noise fell upon his ear. He was all attention in an instant. The alley door closed softly. He sprang to the corner of the brick-store. The next moment two men brushed by him, and one seemed to have something under his arm. It must be that box! So they were going to remove the treasure. Why call Tom now? It would be absurd – the men would get away with the box and never be found

again. No, he would stick to their wake and follow them; he would trust to the darkness for security from discovery. So communing with himself, Huck stepped out and glided along behind the men, cat-like, with bare feet, allowing them to keep just far enough ahead not to be invisible.

They moved up the river street three blocks, then turned to the left up a cross street. They went straight ahead, then, until they came to the path that led up Cardiff Hill; this they took. They passed by the old Welshman's house, half way up the hill, without hesitating, and still climbed upward. Good, thought Huck, they will bury it in the old quarry. But they never stopped at the quarry. They passed on, up the summit. They plunged into the narrow path between the tall sumach bushes, and were at once hidden in the gloom. Huck closed up and shortened his distance, now, for they would never be able to see him. He trotted along a while; then slackened his pace, fearing he was gaining too fast; moved on a piece, then stopped altogether; listened; no sound; none, save that he seemed to hear the beating of his own heart. The hooting of an owl came from over the hill – ominous sound! But no footsteps. Heaven, was everything lost? He was about to spring with winged feet, when a man cleared his throat not four feet from him! Huck's heart shot into his throat, but he swallowed it again; and then he stood there shaking as if a dozen agues had taken charge of him at once, and so weak that he thought he must surely fall to the ground. He knew where he was.

He knew he was within five steps of the stile leading into Widow Douglas's grounds. 'Very well,' he thought, 'let them bury it there; it won't be hard to find.'

Now there was a low voice – a very low voice – Injun Joe's:

'Damn her, maybe she's got company – there's lights, late as it is.'

'I can't see any.'

This was that stranger's voice – the stranger of the haunted house. A deadly chill went to Huck's heart – this, then, was the 'revenge' job! His thought was to fly. Then he remembered that the Widow Douglas had been kind to him more than once, and maybe these men were going to murder her. He wished he dared venture to warn her; but he knew he didn't dare – they might come and catch him. He thought all this and more in the moment that elapsed between the stranger's remark and Injun Joe's next – which was:

'Because the bush is in your way. Now – this way – now you see, don't you?'

'Yes. Well, there is company there, I reckon. Better give it up.'

'Give it up, and I just leaving this country for ever! Give it up, and maybe never have another chance. I tell you again, as I've told you before, I don't care for her swag – you may have it. But her husband was rough on me – many times he was rough on me – and mainly he was the

justice of the peace that jugged me for a vagrant. And that ain't all! It ain't the millionth part of it! He had me horsewhipped! – horsewhipped in front of the jail, like a nigger! – with all the town looking on! Horsewhipped! – do you understand? He took advantage of me and died. But I'll take it out of her!

'Oh, don't kill her! Don't do that!'

'Kill? Who said anything about killing? I would kill him if he was here; but not her. When you want to get revenge on a woman you don't kill her – bosh! you go for her looks. You slit her nostrils – you notch her ears like a sow's!'

'By God, that's –'

'Keep your opinion to yourself! It will be safest for you. I'll tie her to the bed. If she bleeds to death, is that my fault? I'll not cry if she does. My friend, you'll help me in this thing – for my sake – that's why you're here – I mightn't be able alone. If you flinch, I'll kill you! Do you understand that? And if I have to kill you, I'll kill her – and then I reckon nobody'll ever know much about who done this business.'

'Well, if it's got to be done, let's get at it. The quicker the better – I'm all in a shiver.'

'Do it now? – and company there? Look here – I'll get suspicious of you, first thing, you know. No – we'll wait till the lights are out – there's no hurry.'

Huck felt that a silence was going to ensue – a thing

still more awful than any amount of murderous talk; so he held his breath and stepped gingerly back; planted his foot carefully and firmly, after balancing, one-legged, in a precarious way and almost toppling over, first on one side and then on the other. He took another step back with the same elaboration and the same risks; then another and another, and a twig snapped under his foot! His breath stopped and he listened. There was no sound – the stillness was perfect. His gratitude was measureless. Now he turned in his tracks between the walls of sumach bushes – turned himself as carefully as if he were a ship – and then stepped quickly but cautiously along. When he emerged at the quarry he felt secure, so he picked up his nimble heels and flew. Down, down he sped till he reached the Welshman's. He banged at the door, and presently the heads of the old man and his two stalwart sons were thrust from windows.

'What's the row there? Who's banging? What do you want?'

'Let me in – quick! I'll tell everything.'

'Why, who are you?'

'Huckleberry Finn – quick, let me in!'

'Huckleberry Finn, indeed! It ain't a name to open many doors, I judge! But let him in, lads, and let's see what's the trouble?'

'Please don't ever tell I told you,' were Huck's first words when he got in. 'Please don't – I'd be killed sure – but the

widow's been good friend to me sometimes, and I want to tell – I will tell if you'll promise you won't ever say it was me.'

'By George, he has got something to tell, or he wouldn't act so!' exclaimed the old man. 'Out with it, and nobody here'll ever tell, lad.'

Three minutes later the old man and his sons, well armed, were up the hill, and just entering the sumach path on tiptoe, their weapons in their hands. Huck accompanied them no farther. He hid behind a great boulder and fell to listening. There was a lagging, anxious silence, and then all of a sudden there was an explosion of firearms and a cry. Huck waited for no particulars. He sprang away and sped down the hill as fast as his legs could carry him.

As the earliest suspicion of dawn appeared on Sunday morning, Huck came groping up the hill and rapped gently at the old Welshman's door. The inmates were asleep, but it was a sleep that was set on a hair-trigger, on account of the exciting episode of the night. A call came from a window:

'Who's there?'

Huck's scared voice answered in a low tone:

'Do please let me in! It's only Huck Finn!'

'It's a name that can open this door night or day, lad! – and welcome!'

These were strange words to the vagabond boy's ears, and the pleasantest he had ever heard. He could not recollect that the closing word had ever been applied in his case before.

The door was quickly unlocked and he entered. Huck was given a seat, and the old man and his brace of tall sons speedily dressed themselves.

'Now, my boy, I hope you're good and hungry, because

breakfast will be ready as soon as the sun's up, and we'll have a piping hot one, too – make yourself easy about that. I and the boys hoped you'd turn up and stop here last night.'

'I was awful scared,' said Huck, 'and I run. I took out when the pistols went off, and I didn't stop for three mile. I've come now becuz I wanted to know about it, you know; and I come before daylight becuz I didn't want to run across them devils, even if they was dead.'

'Well, poor chap, you do look as if you'd had a hard night of it – but there's a bed here for you when you've had your breakfast. No, they ain't dead, lad – we are sorry enough for that. You see, we knew right where to put our hands on them, by your description; so we crept along on tip-toe till we got within fifteen feet of them – dark as a cellar that sumach path was – and just then I found I was going to sneeze. It was the meanest kind of luck! I tried to keep it back, but no use – 'twas bound to come, and it did come! I was in the lead, with my pistol raised, and when the sneeze started those scoundrels a rustling to get out of the path, I sang out "Fire, boys!" and blazed away at the place where the rustling was. So did the boys. But they were off in a jiffy, those villains, and we after them, down through the woods. I judge we never touched them. They fired a shot apiece as they started, but their bullets whizzed by and didn't do us any harm. As soon as we lost the sound of their feet we quit chasing, and went down and stirred up the constables. They got a posse together,

and went off to guard the river bank and as soon as it is light the sheriff and a gang are going to beat up the woods. My boys will be with them presently. I wish we had some sort of a description of those rascals – 'twould help a good deal. But you couldn't see what they were like in the dark, lad, I suppose?'

'Oh, yes, I saw them down town, and follered them.'

'Splendid! Describe them – describe them, my boy!'

'One's the old deaf and dumb Spaniard that's been around here once or twice, and t'other's a mean-looking, ragged –'

'That's enough, lad, we know the men! Happened on them in the woods back of the widow's one day, and they slunk away. Off with you, boys, and tell the sheriff – get your breakfast tomorrow morning!'

The Welshman's sons departed at once. As they were leaving the room Huck sprang up and exclaimed:

'Oh, please don't tell anybody it was me that blowed on them! Oh, please!'

'All right if you say it, Huck, but you ought to have the credit of what you did.'

'Oh, no, no! Please don't tell!'

When the young men were gone, the old Welshman said:

'They won't tell – and I won't. But why don't you want it known?'

Huck would not explain further than to say that he already knew too much about one of those men, and

would not have the man know that he knew anything against him for the whole world – he would be killed for knowing it, sure.

The old man promised secrecy once more, and said:

‘How did you come to follow these fellows, lad? Were they looking suspicious?’

Huck was silent, while he framed a duly cautious reply. Then he said:

‘Well, you see, I’m a kind of a hard lot – least everybody says so, and I don’t see nothing agin it – and sometimes I can’t sleep much, on accounts of thinking about it, and sort of trying to strike out a new way of doing. That was the way of it last night. I couldn’t sleep, and so I came along up street ’bout midnight a turning it all over, and when I got to that old shackly brick-store by the Temperance Tavern, I backed up agin the wall to have another think. Well, just then along comes these two chaps slipping along close by me, with something under their arm, and I reckoned they’d stole it. One was a smoking, and t’other one wanted a light; so they stopped right before me, and the cigars lit up their faces, and I see that the big one was the deaf and dumb Spaniard, by his white whiskers and the patch on his eye, and t’other one was a rusty, ragged-looking devil.’

‘Could you see the rags by the light of the cigars?’

This staggered Huck for a moment. Then he said:

‘Well, I don’t know, but somehow it seems as if I did.’

‘Then they went on, and you –’
‘Followed ’em – yes. That was it. I wanted to see what was up – they sneaked along so. I dogged ’em to the widder’s stile, and stood in the dark, and heard the ragged one beg for the widder, and the Spaniard swear he’d spile her looks, just as I told you and your two –’

‘What! the deaf and dumb man said all that?’
Huck had made another terrible mistake! He was trying his best to keep the old man from getting the faintest hint of who the Spaniard might be, and yet his tongue seemed determined to get him into trouble in spite of all he could do. He made several efforts to creep out of his scrape, but the old man’s eye was upon him, and he made blunder after blunder. Presently the Welshman said:

‘My boy, don’t be afraid of me, I wouldn’t hurt a hair of your head for all the world. No – I’d protect you – I’d protect you. This Spaniard is not deaf and dumb; you’ve let that slip without intending it; you can’t cover that up now. You know something about that Spaniard that you want to keep dark. Now trust me – tell me what it is, and trust me – I won’t betray you.’

Huck looked into the old man’s honest eyes a moment, then bent over and whispered in his ear:

‘Tain’t a Spaniard – it’s Injun Joe!’

The Welshman almost jumped out of his chair. In a moment he said:

'It's all plain enough now. When you talked about notching ears and slitting noses, I judged that that was your own embellishment, because white men don't take that sort of revenge. But an Injun! That's a different matter, altogether.'

During breakfast the talk went on, and in the course of it the old man said that the last thing which he and his sons had done, before going to bed, was to get a lantern and examine the stile and its vicinity for marks of blood. They found none, but captured a bulky bundle of –

'Of WHAT?'

If the words had been lightning, they could not have leaped with a more stunning suddenness from Huck's blanched lips. His eyes were staring wide, now, and his breath suspended – waiting for the answer. The Welshman started – started in return – three seconds – five seconds – ten – then replied:

'Of burglar's tools. Why, what's the matter with you?'

Huck sank back, panting gently, but deeply, unutterably grateful. The Welshman eyed him gravely, curiously – and presently said:

'Yes, burglar's tools. That appears to relieve you a good deal. But what did give you that turn? What were you expecting we'd found?'

Huck was in a close place; the inquiring eye was upon him – he would have given anything for material for a plausible answer. Nothing suggested itself; the inquiring

eye was boring deeper and deeper – a senseless reply offered – there was no time to weigh it, so at a venture he uttered it, feebly:

'Sunday-school books, maybe.'

Poor Huck was too distressed to smile, but the old man laughed loud and joyously, shook up the details of his anatomy from head to foot, and ended by saying that such a laugh was money in a man's pocket, because it cut down the doctor's bills like everything. Then he added:

'Poor old chap, you're white and jaded; you ain't well a bit. No wonder you're a little flightly and off your balance. But you'll come out of it. Rest and sleep will fetch you all right, I hope.'

Huck was irritated to think he had been such a goose and betrayed such a suspicious excitement, for he had dropped the idea that the parcel brought from the tavern was the treasure as soon as he had heard the talk at the widow's stile. He had only thought it was not the treasure, however; he had not known that it wasn't; and so the suggestion of a captured bundle was too much for his self-possession. But on the whole he felt glad the little episode had happened, for now he knew beyond all question that the bundle was not *the* bundle, and so his mind was at rest and exceedingly comfortable. In fact everything seemed to be drifting just in the right direction, now; the treasure must be still in number two, the men would be captured and jailed that day, and he and Tom

could seize the gold that night without any trouble or any fear of interruption.

Just as breakfast was completed there was a knock at the door. Huck jumped for a hiding-place, for he had no mind to be connected even remotely with the late event. The Welshman admitted several ladies and gentlemen, among them the Widow Douglas, and noticed that groups of citizens were climbing the hill to stare at the stile. So the news had spread.

The Welshman had to tell the story of the night to the visitors. The widow's gratitude for her preservation was outspoken.

'Don't say a word about it, madam. There's another that you're more beholden to than you are to me and my boys maybe, but he don't allow me to tell his name. We wouldn't ever have been there but for him.'

Of course this excited a curiosity so vast that it almost belittled the main matter; but the Welshman allowed it to eat into the vitals of his visitors, and through them he transmitted it to the whole town, for he refused to part with his secret. When all else had been learned the widow said:

'I went to sleep reading in bed, and slept straight through all that noise. Why didn't you come and wake me?'

'We judged it wasn't worth while. Those fellows weren't likely to come again; they hadn't any tools left to work with, and what was the use of waking you up and scaring you to death? My three Negro men stood guard at your

house all the rest of the night. They've just come back.' More visitors came, and the story had to be told and retold for a couple of hours more.

There was no Sabbath-school during day-school vacation, but everybody was early at church. The stirring event was well canvassed. News came that not a sign of the villains had been yet discovered. When the sermon was finished Judge Thatcher's wife dropped alongside of Mrs Harper as she moved down the aisle with the crowd, and said:

'Is my Becky going to sleep all day? I just expected she would be tired to death.'

'Your Becky?'

'Yes,' with a startled look. 'Didn't she stay with you last night?'

'Why, no.'

Mrs Thatcher turned pale, and sank into a pew just as Aunt Polly, talking briskly with a friend, passed by. Aunt Polly said:

'Good morning, Mrs Thatcher. Good morning, Mrs Harper. I've got a boy that's turned up missing. I reckon my Tom stayed at your house last night – one of you. And now he's afraid to come to church. I've got to settle with him.'

Mrs Thatcher shook her head feebly and turned paler than ever.

'He didn't stay with us,' said Mrs Harper, beginning to look uneasy. A marked anxiety came into Aunt Polly's face.



'Joe Harper, have you seen my Tom this morning?'
'No'm.'

'When did you see him last?'
Joe tried to remember, but was not sure he could say. The people had stopped moving out of church. Whispers passed along, and a brooding uneasiness took possession of every countenance. Children were anxiously questioned, and young teachers. They all said they had not noticed whether Tom and Becky were on board the ferry-boat on the homeward trip; it was dark; no one thought of inquiring if anyone was missing. One young man finally blurted out his fear that they were still in the cave! Mrs Thatcher swooned away; Aunt Polly fell to crying and wringing her hands.

The alarm swept from lip to lip, from group to group, from street to street; and within five minutes the bells were wildly clanging, and the whole town was up! The Cardiff Hill episode sank into instant insignificance, the burglars were forgotten, horses were saddled, skiffs were manned, the ferry-boat ordered out, and before the horror was half an hour old two hundred men were pouring down high-road and river towards the cave.

All the long afternoon the village seemed empty and dead. Many women visited Aunt Polly and Mrs Thatcher, and tried to comfort them. They cried with them, too, and that was still better than words.

All the tedious night the town waited for news; but

when the morning dawned at last, all the word that came was 'Send more candles, and send food.' Mrs Thatcher was almost crazed, and Aunt Polly also. Judge Thatcher sent messages of hope and encouragement from the cave, but they conveyed no real cheer.

The old Welshman came home towards daylight, spattered with candle-grease, smeared with clay, and almost worn out. He found Huck still in the bed that had been provided for him, and delirious with fever. The physicians were all at the cave, so the Widow Douglas came and took charge of the patient. She said she would do her best by him, because, whether he was good, bad, or indifferent, he was the Lord's and nothing that was the Lord's was a thing to be neglected. The Welshman said Huck had good spots in him, and the widow said:

'You can depend on it. That's the Lord's mark. He don't leave it off. He never does. Puts it somewhere on every creature that comes from His hands.'

Early in the forenoon parties of jaded men began to straggle into the village, but the strongest of the citizens continued searching. All the news that could be gained was that remotenesses of the cavern were being ransacked that had never been visited before; that every corner and crevice was going to be thoroughly searched; that wherever one wandered through the maze of passages, lights were to be seen flitting hither and thither in the distance, and shoutings and pistol-shots sent their hollow

reverberations to the ear down the sombre aisles. In one place, far from the section usually traversed by tourists, the names 'БЕСКУ' and 'ТОМ' had been found traced upon the rocky wall with candle smoke, and near at hand a grease-soiled bit of ribbon. Mrs Thatcher recognized the ribbon and cried over it. She said it was the last relic she should ever have of her child; and that no other memorial of her could ever be so precious, because this one parted latest from the living body before the awful death came. Some said that now and then in the cave a far-away speck of light would glimmer, and then a glorious shout would burst forth and a score of men go trooping down the echoing aisle – and then a sickening disappointment always followed; the children were not there; it was only a searcher's light.

Three dreadful days and nights dragged their tedious hours along, and the village sank into a hopeless stupor. No one had heart for anything. The accidental discovery, just made, that the proprietor of the Temperance Tavern kept liquor on his premises, scarcely fluttered the public pulse, tremendous as the fact was. In a lucid interval, Huck feebly led up to the subject of taverns and finally asked, dimly dreading the worst, if anything had been discovered at the Temperance Tavern since he had been ill.

'Yes,' said the widow.

Huck started up in bed, wild-eyed:

'What! What was it?'

‘Liquor! – and the place has been shut up. Lie down, child – what a turn you did give me!’

‘Only tell me one thing – only just one – please! Was it Tom Sawyer that found it?’

The widow burst into tears.

‘Hush, hush, child, hush! I’ve told you before, you must *not* talk. You are very, very sick!’

Then nothing but liquor had been found; there would have been a great pow-pow if it had been the gold. So the treasure was gone for ever – gone for ever. But what could she be crying about? Curious that she should cry.

These thoughts worked their dim way through Huck’s mind, and under the weariness they gave him he fell asleep. The widow said to herself:

‘There – he’s asleep, poor wreck. Tom Sawyer find it! Pity but somebody could find Tom Sawyer! Ah, there ain’t many left, now, that’s got hope enough, or strength enough either, to go on searching.’

Now to return to Tom and Becky's share in the picnic. They tripped along the murky aisles with the rest of the company, visiting the familiar wonders of the cave – wonders dubbed with rather over-descriptive names, such as 'The Drawing-room', 'The Cathedral', 'Aladdin's Palace', and so on. Presently the hide-and-seek frolicking began, and Tom and Becky engaged in it with zeal until the exertion began to grow a trifle wearisome; then they wandered down a sinuous avenue, holding their candles aloft and reading the tangled web-work of names, dates, post-office addresses, and mottoes with which the rocky walls had been frescoed (in candle smoke). Still drifting along and talking, they scarcely noticed that they were now in a part of the cave whose walls were not frescoed. They smoked their own names under an overhanging shelf and moved on. Presently they came to a place where a little stream of water, trickling over a ledge and carrying a limestone sediment with it, had, in the slow-dragging ages, formed a laced and ruffled Niagara in gleaming and

imperishable stone. Tom squeezed his small body behind it in order to illuminate it for Becky's gratification. He found that it curtained a sort of steep natural stair-way which was enclosed between narrow walls, and at once the ambition to be a discoverer seized him. Becky responded to his call, and they made a smoke mark for future guidance and started upon their quest. They wound this way and that, far down into the secret depths of the cave, made another mark, and branched off in search of novelties to tell the upper world about. In one place they found a spacious cavern, from whose ceiling depended a multitude of shining stalactites of the length and circumference of a man's leg; they walked all about it, wondering and admiring, and presently left it by one of the numerous passages that opened into it. This shortly brought them to a bewitching spring, whose basin was encrusted with a frost-work of glittering crystals; it was in the midst of a cavern whose walls were supported by many fantastic pillars which had been formed by the joining of great stalactites and stalagmites together, the result of the ceaseless water-drip of centuries. Under the roof vast knots of bats had packed themselves together, thousands in a bunch; the lights disturbed the creatures, and they came flocking down by hundreds, squeaking and darting furiously at the candles. Tom knew their ways, and the danger of this sort of conduct. He seized Becky's hand and hurried her into the first corridor that offered; and none too soon, for a bat

struck Becky's light out with its wing while she was passing out of the cavern. The bats chased the children a good distance; but the fugitives plunged into every new passage that offered, and at last got rid of the perilous things. Tom found a subterranean lake, shortly, which stretched its dim length away until its shape was lost in the shadows. He wanted to explore its borders, but concluded that it would be best to sit down and rest a while first. Now for the first time the deep stillness of the place laid a clammy hand upon the spirits of the children. Becky said:

'Why, I didn't notice, but it seems ever so long since I heard any of the others.'

'Come to think, Becky, we are away down below them, and I don't know how far away north, or south, or east, or whichever it is. We couldn't hear them here.'

Becky grew apprehensive.

'I wonder how long we've been down here, Tom. We better start back.'

'Yes, I reckon we better. P'raps we better.'

'Can you find the way, Tom? It's all a mixed-up crookedness to me.'

'I reckon I could find it, but then the bats. If they put both our candles out it will be an awful fix. Let's try some other way, so as not to go through there.'

'Well, but I hope we won't get lost. It would be so awful!' and the child shuddered at the thought of the dreadful possibilities.

They started through a corridor, and traversed it in silence a long way, glancing at each new opening, to see if there was anything familiar about the look of it; but they were all strange. Every time Tom made an examination, Becky would watch his face for an encouraging sign, and he would say cheerily:

'Oh, it's all right. This ain't the one, but we'll come to it right away!' But he felt less and less hopeful with each failure, and presently began to turn off into diverging avenues at sheer random, in the desperate hope of finding the one that was wanted. He still said it was 'All right', but there was such a leaden dread at his heart, that the words had lost their ring, and sounded as if he had said, 'All is lost!' Becky clung to his side in an anguish of fear, and tried hard to keep back the tears, but they would come. At last she said:

'Oh, Tom, never mind the bats; let's go back that way! We seem to get worse and worse off all the time.'

Tom stopped.

'Listen!' said he.

Profound silence; silence so deep that even their breathings were conspicuous in the hush. Tom shouted. The call went echoing down the empty aisles, and died out in the distance in a faint sound that resembled a ripple of mocking laughter.

'Oh, don't do it again, Tom, it is too horrid,' said Becky.

'It is horrid, but I better, Becky; they *might* hear us, you know,' and he shouted again.

The 'might' was even a chillier horror than the ghostly laughter, it so confessed a perishing hope. The children stood still and listened; but there was no result. Tom turned upon the back track at once, and hurried his steps. It was but a little while before a certain indecision in his manner revealed another fearful fact to Becky; he could not find his way back!

'Oh, Tom, you didn't make any marks!'

'Becky, I was such a fool! such a fool! I never thought we might want to come back! No, I can't find the way. It's all mixed up.'

'Tom, Tom, we're lost! we're lost! We never, never can get out of this awful place! Oh, why did we ever leave the others?'

She sank to the ground, and burst into such a frenzy of crying that Tom was appalled with the idea that she might die, or lose her reason. He sat down by her and put his arms around her; she buried her face in his bosom, she clung to him, she poured out her terrors, her unavailing regrets, and the far echoes turned them all to jeering laughter. Tom begged her to pluck up hope again, and she said she could not. He fell to blaming and abusing himself for getting her into this miserable situation; this had a better effect. She said she would try to hope again, she would get up and follow wherever he might lead, if only he would not talk like that any more. For he was no more to blame than she, she said.

So they moved on again – aimlessly – simply at random – all they could do was to move, keep moving. For a little

while hope made a show of reviving – not with any reason to back it, but only because it is its nature to revive when the spring has not been taken out of it by age and familiarity with failure.

By-and-by Tom took Becky's candle and blew it out. This economy meant so much. Words were not needed. Becky understood, and her hope died again. She knew that Tom had a whole candle and three or four pieces in his pocket – yet he must economize.

By-and-by fatigue began to assert its claims; the children tried to pay no attention, for it was dreadful to think of sitting down when time was grown to be so precious; moving, in some direction, in any direction, was at least progress and might bear fruit; but to sit down was to invite death and shorten its pursuit.

At last Becky's frail limbs refused to carry her farther. She sat down. Tom rested with her, and they talked of home, and the friends there, and the comfortable beds, and above all, the light! Becky cried, and Tom tried to think of some way of comforting her, but all his encouragements were grown threadbare with use, and sounded like sarcasms. Fatigue bore so heavily upon Becky that she drowsed off to sleep. Tom was grateful. He sat looking into her drawn face and saw it grow smooth and natural under the influence of pleasant dreams; and by-and-by a smile dawned and rested there. The peaceful face reflected somewhat of peace and healing into his own

spirit, and his thoughts wandered away to bygone times and dreamy memories. While he was deep in his musings, Becky woke up with a breezy little laugh: but it was stricken dead upon her lips, and a groan followed it.

'Oh, how *could* I sleep! I wish I never, never had waked! No, no, I don't, Tom! Don't look so! I won't say it again.'

'I'm glad you slept, Becky; you'll feel rested, now, and we'll find the way out.'

'We can try, Tom; but I've seen such a beautiful country in my dream. I reckon we are going there.'

'Maybe not, maybe not. Cheer up, Becky, and let's go on trying.'

They rose up and wandered along, hand in hand and hopeless. They tried to estimate how long they had been in the cave, but all they knew was that it seemed days and weeks, and yet it was plain that this could not be, for their candles were not gone yet.

A long time after this – they could not tell how long – Tom said they must go softly and listen for dripping water – they must find a spring. They found one presently, and Tom said it was time to rest again. Both were cruelly tired, yet Becky said she thought she could go a little farther. She was surprised to hear Tom dissent. She could not understand it. They sat down, and Tom fastened his candle to the wall in front of them with some clay. Thought was soon busy; nothing was said for some time. Then Becky broke the silence:

'Tom, I am so hungry!'

Tom took something out of his pocket.

'Do you remember this?' said he.

Becky almost smiled.

'It's our wedding-cake, Tom.'

'Yes – I wish it was as big as a barrel, for it's all we've got.'

'I saved it from the picnic for us to dream on, Tom, the way grown-up people do with wedding-cake – but it'll be our –'

She dropped the sentence where it was. Tom divided the cake, and Becky ate with good appetite, while Tom nibbled at his moiety. There was abundance of cold water to finish the feast with. By-and-by Becky suggested that they move on again. Tom was silent a moment. Then he said:

'Becky, can you bear it if I tell you something?'

Becky's face paled, but she said she thought she could.

'Well, then, Becky, we must stay here, where there's water to drink. That little piece is our last candle!'

Becky gave loose to tears and wailings. Tom did what he could to comfort her, but with little effect. At length Becky said:

'Tom!'

'Well, Becky?'

'They'll miss us and hunt for us!'

'Yes, they will! Certainly they will!'

'Maybe they're hunting for us now, Tom?'

'Why, I reckon maybe they are! I hope they are.'

'When would they miss us, Tom?'

'When they get back to the boat, I reckon.'

'Tom, it might be dark, then – would they notice we hadn't come?'

'I don't know. But anyway, your mother would miss you as soon as they got home.'

A frightened look in Becky's face brought Tom to his senses, and he saw that he had made a blunder. Becky was not to have gone home that night! The children became silent and thoughtful. In a moment a new burst of grief from Becky showed Tom that the thing in his mind had struck hers also – that the Sabbath morning might be half spent before Mrs Thatcher discovered that Becky was not at Mrs Harper's. The children fastened their eyes upon their bit of candle and watched it melt slowly and pitilessly away; saw the half inch of wick stand alone at last: saw the feeble flame rise and fall, rise and fall, climb the thin column of smoke, linger at its top a moment, and then – the horror of utter darkness reigned.

How long afterwards it was that Becky came to a slow consciousness that she was crying in Tom's arms, neither could tell. All that they knew was that after what seemed a mighty stretch of time, both awoke out of a dead stupor of sleep, and resumed their miseries once more. Tom said it might be Sunday now – maybe Monday. He tried to get

Becky to talk, but her sorrows were too oppressive, all her hopes were gone. Tom said that they must have been missed long ago, and no doubt the search was going on. He would shout, and maybe someone would come. He tried it; but in the darkness the distant echoes sounded so hideously that he tried it no more.

The hours wasted away, and hunger came to torment the captives again. A portion of Tom's half of the cake was left; they divided and ate it. But they seemed hungrier than before. The poor morsel of food only whetted desire.

By-and-by Tom said:

'*Sh!* Did you hear that?'

Both held their breath and listened. There was a sound like the faintest far-off shout. Instantly Tom answered it, and leading Becky by the hand, started groping down the corridor in its direction. Presently he listened again; again the sound was heard, and apparently a little nearer.

'It's them!' said Tom; 'they're coming! Come along, Becky - we're all right now!'

The joy of the prisoners was almost overwhelming. Their speed was slow, however, because pitfalls were somewhat common, and had to be guarded against. They shortly came to one, and had to stop. It might be three feet deep, it might be a hundred - there was no passing it, at any rate. Tom got down on his breast, and reached as far down as he could. No bottom. They must stay there and wait until the searchers came. They listened; evidently

the distant shoutings were growing more distant! A moment or two more, and they had gone altogether. The heart-sinking misery of it! Tom whooped until he was hoarse, but it was of no use. He talked hopefully to Becky; but an age of anxious waiting passed and no sound came again.

The children groped their way back to the spring. The weary time dragged on; they slept again, and awoke famished and woe-stricken. Tom believed it must be Tuesday by this time.

Now an idea struck him. There were some side-passages near at hand. It would be better to explore some of these than bear the weight of the heavy time in idleness. He took a kite-line from his pocket, tied it to a projection, and he and Becky started, Tom in the lead, unwinding the line as he groped along. At the end of twenty steps the corridor ended in a 'jumping-off place'. Tom got down on his knees and felt below, and then as far around the corner as he could reach with his hands conveniently; he made an effort to stretch yet a little further to the right, and at the moment, not twenty yards away, a human hand, holding a candle, appeared from behind a rock! Tom lifted up a glorious shout, and instantly that hand was followed by the body it belonged to - Injun Joe's! Tom was paralysed; he could not move. He was vastly gratified the next moment to see the 'Spaniard' take to his heels and get himself out of sight. Tom wondered that Joe had not

recognized his voice and come over and killed him for testifying in court. But the echoes must have disguised the voice. Without doubt that was it, he reasoned. Tom's fright weakened every muscle in his body. He said to himself that if he had strength enough to get back to the spring he would stay there, and nothing should tempt him to run the risk of meeting Injun Joe again. He was careful to keep from Becky what it was he had seen. He told her he had only shouted 'for luck'.

But hunger and wretchedness rise superior to fears in the long run. Another tedious wait at the spring, and another long sleep brought changes. The children awoke, tortured with a raging hunger. Tom believed it must be Wednesday or Thursday, or even Friday or Saturday, now, and that the search had been given over. He proposed to explore another passage. He felt willing to risk Injun Joe and all other terrors. But Becky was very weak. She had sunk into a dreary apathy, and would not be roused. She said she would wait, now, where she was, and die – it would not be long. She told Tom to go with the kite-line and explore if he chose; but she implored him to come back every little while and speak to her; and she made him promise that when the awful time came, he would stay by her and hold her hand until all was over. Tom kissed her, with a choking sensation in his throat, and made a show of being confident of finding the searchers or an escape from the

cave; then he took the kite-line in his hand and went groping down one of the passages on his hands and knees, distressed with hunger and sick with bodings of coming doom.

Tuesday afternoon came, and waned to the twilight. The village of St Petersburg still mourned. The lost children had not been found. Public prayers had been offered up for them, and many and many a private prayer that had the petitioner's whole heart in it; but still no good news came from the cave. The majority of the searchers had given up the quest and gone back to their daily avocations, saying that it was plain the children could never be found. Mrs Thatcher was very ill, and a great part of the time delirious. People said it was heart-breaking to hear her call her child, and raise her head and listen a whole minute at a time, then lay it wearily down again with a moan. Aunt Polly had drooped into a settled melancholy, and her grey hair had grown almost white. The village went to its rest on Tuesday night, sad and forlorn.

Away in the middle of the night a wild peal burst from the village bells, and in a moment the streets were swarming with frantic half-clad people, who shouted, 'Turn out! turn out! they're found! they're found!' Tin pans

and horns were added to the din, the population massed itself and moved towards the river, met the children coming in an open carriage drawn by shouting citizens, thronged around it, joined its homeward march, and swept magnificently up the main street roaring huzza after huzza!

The village was illuminated; nobody went to bed again; it was the greatest night the little town had ever seen. During the first half-hour a procession of villagers filed through Judge Thatcher's house, seized the saved ones and kissed them, squeezed Mrs Thatcher's hand, tried to speak but couldn't, and drifted out raining tears all over the place.

Aunt Polly's happiness was complete, and Mrs Thatcher's nearly so. It would be complete, however, as soon as the messenger despatched with the great news to the cave should get the word to her husband.

Tom lay upon a sofa with an eager auditory about him, and told the history of the wonderful adventure, putting in many striking additions to adorn it withal; and closed with a description of how he left Becky and went on an exploring expedition; how he followed two avenues as far as his kite-line would reach; how he followed a third to the fullest stretch of the kite-line, and was about to turn back when he glimpsed a far-off speck that looked like daylight; dropped the line and groped towards it, pushed his head and shoulders through a small hole and saw the broad Mississippi rolling by! And if it had only happened to be night he would not have seen that speck of daylight,

and would not have explored that passage any more! He told how he went back for Becky and broke the good news, and she told him not to fret her with such stuff, for she was tired, and knew she was going to die, and wanted to. He described how he laboured with her and convinced her, and how she almost died for joy when she had groped to where she actually saw the blue speck of daylight; how he pushed his way out of the hole and then helped her out; how they sat there and cried for gladness; how some men came along in a skiff, and Tom hailed them and told them their situation and their famished condition; how the men didn't believe the wild tale at first, 'because,' said they, 'you are five miles down the river below the valley the cave is in'; then took them aboard, rowed to a house, gave them supper, made them rest till two or three hours after dark, and then brought them home.

Before day-dawn Judge Thatcher and the handful of searchers with him were tracked out in the cave by the twine clues they had strung behind them, and informed of the great news.

Three days and nights of toil and hunger in the cave were not to be shaken off at once, as Tom and Becky soon discovered. They were bedridden all of Wednesday and Thursday, and seemed to grow more and more tired and worn all the time. Tom got about a little on Thursday, was down town Friday, and nearly as whole as ever Saturday; but Becky did not leave her room until Sunday,

and then she looked as if she had passed through a wasting illness.

Tom learned of Huck's sickness, and went to see him on Friday, but could not be admitted to the bedroom; neither could he on Saturday or Sunday. He was admitted daily after that, but was warned to keep still about his adventure and introduce no exciting topic. The Widow Douglas stayed by to see that he obeyed. At home Tom learned of the Cardiff Hill event; also that the ragged man's body had eventually been found in the river near the ferry landing; he had been drowned while trying to escape perhaps.

About a fortnight after Tom's rescue from the cave he started off to visit Huck, who had grown plenty strong enough, now, to hear exciting talk, and Tom had some that would interest him, he thought. Judge Thatcher's house was on Tom's way, and he stopped to see Becky. The judge and some friends set Tom to talking, and someone asked him ironically if he wouldn't like to go to the cave again. Tom said yes, he thought he wouldn't mind it.

The Judge said:

'Well, there are others just like you, Tom, I've not the least doubt. But we have taken care of that. Nobody will get lost in that cave any more.'

'Why?'

'Because I had its big door sheathed with boiler iron two weeks ago, and triple locked; and I've got the keys.'

Tom turned as white as a sheet.

‘What’s the matter, boy? Here, run, somebody! Fetch a glass of water!’

The water was brought and thrown into Tom’s face.

‘Ah, now you’re all right. What was the matter with you, Tom?’

‘Oh, Judge, Injun Joe’s in the cave!’

Within a few minutes the news had spread, and a dozen skiff-loads of men were on their way to McDougal's cave, and the ferry-boat, well filled with passengers, soon followed. Tom Sawyer was in the skiff that bore Judge Thatcher. When the cave door was unlocked, a sorrowful sight presented itself in the dim twilight of the place. Injun Joe lay stretched upon the ground, dead, with his face close to the crack of the door, as if his longing eyes had been fixed to the latest moment upon the light and the cheer of the free world outside. Tom was touched, for he knew by his own experience how this wretch had suffered. His pity was moved, but nevertheless he felt an abounding sense of relief and security, now, which revealed to him in a degree which he had not fully appreciated before, how vast a weight of dread had been lying upon him since the day he lifted his voice against this bloody-minded outcast.

Injun Joe's bowie-knife lay close by, its blade broken in two. The great foundation-beam of the door had been

chipped and hacked through with tedious labour; useless labour, too, it was, for the native rock formed a sill outside it, and upon that stubborn material the knife had wrought no effect; the only damage done was to the knife itself. But if there had been no stony obstruction there, labour would have been useless still, for if the beam had been wholly cut away Injun Joe could not have squeezed his body under the door, and he knew it. So he had only hacked that place in order to be doing something – in order to pass the weary time – in order to employ his tortured faculties. Ordinarily one could find half a dozen bits of candle stuck around in the crevices of this vestibule, left by tourists; but there were none, now. The prisoner had searched them out and eaten them. He had also contrived to catch a few bats, and these, also, he had eaten, leaving only their claws. The poor unfortunate had starved to death. In one place near at hand, a stalagmite had been slowly growing up from the ground for ages, builded by the water-drip from a stalactite overhead. The captive had broken off the stalagmite, and upon the stump had placed a stone wherein he had scooped a shallow hollow to catch the precious drop that fell once in every twenty minutes with the dreary regularity of a clock-tick – a dessert-spoonful once in four-and-twenty hours. That drop was falling when the Pyramids were new; when Troy fell; when the foundations of Rome were laid; when Christ was

crucified; when William the Conqueror created the British Empire; when Columbus sailed; when the massacre at Lexington was 'news'. It is falling now; it will still be falling when all these things shall have sunk down the afternoon of history and the twilight of tradition, and been swallowed up in the thick night of oblivion. Has everything a purpose and a mission? Did this drop fall patiently during five thousand years to be ready for this flitting human insect's need, and has it another important object to accomplish ten thousand years to come? No matter. It is many and many a year since the hapless half-breed scooped out the stone to catch the priceless drops, but to this day the tourist stares longest at that pathetic stone and that slow-dropping water when he comes to see the wonders of McDougal's cave. Injun Joe's cup stands first in the list of the cavern's marvels; even 'Aladdin's Palace' cannot rival it.

Injun Joe was buried near the mouth of the cave; and people flocked there in boats and wagons from the town and from all the farms and hamlets for seven miles around; they brought their children, and all sorts of provisions, and confessed that they had had almost as satisfactory a time at the funeral as they could have had at the hanging.

This funeral stopped the further growth of one thing – the petition to the Governor for Injun Joe's pardon. The petition had been largely signed; many tearful and

eloquent meetings had been held, and a committee of sappy women appointed to go in deep mourning and wail around the Governor, and implore him to be a merciful ass, and trample his duty underfoot. Injun Joe was believed to have killed five citizens of the village, but what of that? If he had been Satan himself, there would have been plenty of weaklings ready to scribble their names to a pardon-petition, and drip a tear on it from their permanently impaired and leaky waterworks.

The morning after the funeral Tom took Huck to a private place to have an important talk. Huck had learned all about Tom's adventure from the Welshman and the Widow Douglas by this time, but Tom said he reckoned there was one thing they had not told him; that thing was what he wanted to talk about now. Huck's face saddened. He said:

'I know what it is. You got into number two, and never found anything but whisky. Nobody told me it was you, but I just knowed it must a ben you, soon as I heard 'bout that whisky business; and I knowed you hadn't got the money becuz you'd a got at me some way or other, and told me, even if you was mum to everybody else. Tom, something's always told me we'd never get hold of that swag.'

'Why, Huck, I never told on that tavern-keeper. You know his tavern was all right the Saturday I went to the picnic. Don't you remember you was to watch there that night?'

'Oh, yes! Why, it seems 'bout a year ago. It was that very night that I follered Injun Joe to the widder's.'

'You followed him?'

'Yes – but you keep mum. I reckon Injun Joe's left friends behind him. I don't want 'em souring on me, and doing me mean tricks. If it hadn't been for me he'd be down in Texas now, all right.'

Then Huck told his entire adventure in confidence to Tom, who had only heard of the Welshman's part of it before.

'Well,' said Huck, presently, coming back to the main question, 'whoever nipped the whisky in number two nipped the money too, I reckon – anyways it's a goner for us, Tom.'

'Huck, that money wasn't ever in number two!'

'What!' Huck searched his comrade's face keenly. 'Tom, have you got on the track of that money again?'

'Huck, it's in the cave!'

Huck's eyes blazed.

'Say it again, Tom!'

'The money's in the cave!'

'Tom – honest injun, now – is it fun or earnest?'

'Earnest, Huck – just as earnest as ever I was in my life. Will you go in there with me and help get it out?'

'I bet I will! I will if it's where we can blaze our way to it and not get lost.'

'Huck, we can do that without the least little bit of trouble in the world.'

'Good as wheat! What makes you think the money's –'

'Huck, you just wait till we get in there. If we don't find it, I'll agree to give you my drum and everything I've got in the world. I will, by jings.'

'All right – it's a whiz. When do you say?'

'Right now, if you say it. Are you strong enough?'

'Is it far in the cave? I ben on my pins a little three or four days, now, but I can't walk more'n a mile, Tom – least I don't think I could.'

'It's about five miles into there the way anybody but me would go, Huck, but there's a mighty short cut that they don't anybody but me know about. Huck, I'll take you right to it in a skiff. I'll float the skiff down there, and I'll pull it back again, all by myself. You needn't ever turn your hand over.'

'Less start right off, Tom.'

'All right. We want some bread and meat, and our pipes, and a little bag or two, and two or three kite-strings, and some of those new-fangled things they call lucifer-matches. I tell you many's the time I wished I had some when I was in there before.'

A trifle after noon the boys borrowed a small skiff from a citizen who was absent, and got under way at once. When they were several miles below 'Cave Hollow', Tom said:

'Now you see this bluff here looks all alike all the way down from the cave hollow – no houses, no woodyards, bushes all alike. But do you see that white place up yonder

where there's been a land-slide? Well, that's one of my marks. We'll get ashore now.'

They landed.

'Now, Huck, where we're a standing you could touch that hole I got out of with a fishing-pole. See if you can find it.'

Huck searched all the place about, and found nothing. Tom proudly marched into a thick clump of sumach bushes and said:

'Here you are! Look at it, Huck; it's the snuggest hole in this country. You just keep mum about it. All along I've been wanting to be a robber, but I knew I'd got to have a thing like this, and where to run across it was the bother. We've got it now, and we'll keep it quiet, only we'll let Joe Harper and Ben Rogers in – because of course there's got to be a gang, or else there wouldn't be any style about it. Tom Sawyer's Gang – it sounds splendid, don't it, Huck?'

'Well, it just does, Tom. And who'll we rob?'

'Oh, 'most anybody. Waylay people – that's mostly the way.'

'And kill them.'

'No – not always. Hive them in the cave till they raise a ransom!'

'What's a ransom?'

'Money. You make them raise all they can off'n their friends, and after you've kept them a year, if it ain't raised then you kill them. That's the general way. Only you don't

kill the women. You shut up the women, but you don't kill them. They're always beautiful and rich, and awfully scared. You take their watches and things, but you always take your hat off and talk polite. They ain't anybody as polite as robbers – you'll see that in any book. Well, the women get to loving you, and after they've been in the cave a week or two weeks they stop crying, and after that you couldn't get them to leave. If you drove them out, they'd turn right around and come back. It's so in all the books.'

'Why, it's real bully, Tom. I b'lieve it's better to be a pirate.'

'Yes, it's better in some ways, because it's close to home, and circuses, and all that.'

By this time everything was ready and the boys entered the hole, Tom in the lead. They toiled their way to the farther end of the tunnel, then made their spliced kite-strings fast and moved on. A few steps brought them to the spring, and Tom felt a shudder quiver all through him. He showed Huck the fragment of candle-wick perched on a lump of clay against the wall, and described how he and Becky had watched the flame struggle and expire.

The boys began to quiet down to whispers, now, for the stillness and gloom of the place oppressed their spirits. They went on, and presently entered and followed Tom's other corridor until they reached the 'jumping-off place'. The candles revealed the fact that it was not really a

precipice, but only a steep clay hill, twenty or thirty feet high. Tom whispered:

'Now I'll show you something, Huck.'

He held his candle aloft and said:

'Look as far around the corner as you can. Do you see that? There – on the big rock over yonder – done with candle smoke.'

'Tom, it's a *cross*!'

'Now where's your number two? "*Under the cross*", hey? Right yonder's where I saw Injun Joe poke up his candle, Huck!'

Huck stared at the mystic sign a while, and then said with a shaky voice:

'Tom, less git out of here!'

'What! and leave the treasure?'

'Yes – leave it. Injun Joe's ghost is round about there, certain.'

'No it ain't, Huck, no it ain't. It would ha'nt the place where he died – away out at the mouth of the cave – five mile from here.'

'No, Tom, it wouldn't. It would hang round the money. I know the ways of ghosts, and so do you.'

Tom began to fear that Huck was right. Misgivings gathered in his mind. But presently an idea occurred to him.

'Looky here, Huck, what fools we're making of ourselves! Injun Joe's ghost ain't a going to come around where there's a cross!'

The point was well taken. It had its effect.

'Tom, I didn't think of that. But that's so. It's luck for us, that cross is. I reckon we'll climb down there and have a hunt for that box.'

Tom went first, cutting rude steps in the clay hill as he descended. Huck followed. Four avenues opened out of the small cavern which the great rock stood in. The boys examined three of them with no result. They found a small recess in the one nearest the base of the rock, with a pallet of blankets spread down in it; also an old suspender, some bacon rind, and the well-gnawed bones of two or three fowls. But there was no money-box. The lads searched and re-searched this place, but in vain. Tom said:

'He said *under* the cross. Well, this comes nearest to being under the cross. It can't be under the rock itself, because that sets solid on the ground.'

They searched everywhere once more, and then sat down discouraged. Huck could suggest nothing. By-and-by Tom said:

'Looky here, Huck; there's foot-prints and some candle-grease on the clay about one side of this rock, but not on the other sides. Now what's that for? I bet you the money is under the rock. I'm going to dig in the clay.'

'That ain't no bad notion, Tom!' said Huck, with animation.

Tom's 'real Barlow' was out at once, and he had not dug four inches before he struck wood.

'Hey, Huck! you hear that?'

Huck began to dig and scratch now. Some boards were soon uncovered and removed. They had concealed a natural chasm which led under the rock. Tom got into this and held his candle as far under the rock as he could, but said he could not see to the end of the rift. He proposed to explore. He stooped and passed under; the narrow way descended gradually. He followed its winding course, first to the right, then to the left, Huck at his heels. Tom turned a short curve by-and-by, and exclaimed:

'My goodness, Huck, looky here!'

It was the treasure-box, sure enough, occupying a snug little cavern, along with an empty powder-keg, a couple of guns in leather cases, two or three pairs of old moccasins, a leather belt, and some other rubbish well soaked with the water drip.

'Got it at last!' said Huck, ploughing among the tarnished coins with his hands. 'My, but we're rich, Tom!'

'Huck, I always reckoned we'd get it. It's just too good to believe, but we *have* got it, sure! Say, let's not fool around here, let's snake it out. Lemme see if I can lift the box.'

It weighed about fifty pounds. Tom could lift it after an awkward fashion, but could not carry it conveniently.

'I thought so,' he said; 'they carried it like it was heavy that day at the ha'nted house – I noticed that. I reckon I was right to think of fetching the little bags along.'



The money was soon in the bags, and the boys took it up to the cross rock.

'Now let's fetch the guns and things,' said Huck.

'No, Huck, leave them there. They're just the tricks to have when we go to robbing. We'll keep them there all the time, and we'll hold our orgies there, too. It's an awful snug place for orgies.'

'What's orgies?'

'I dunno. But robbers always have orgies, and of course we've got to have them too. Come along, Huck, we've been in here a long time. It's getting late, I reckon. I'm hungry, too. We'll eat and smoke when we get to the skiff.'

They presently emerged into the clump of sumach bushes, looked warily out, found the coast clear, and were soon lunching and smoking in the skiff. As the sun dipped towards the horizon they pushed out and got under way. Tom skimmed up the shore through the long twilight, chatting cheerily with Huck, and landed shortly after dark.

'Now, Huck,' said Tom, 'we'll hide the money in the loft of the widow's wood-shed, and I'll come up in the morning and we'll count and divide, and then we'll hunt up a place out in the woods for it where it will be safe. Just you lay quiet here and watch the stuff till I run and hook Benny Taylor's little wagon. I won't be gone a minute.'

He disappeared, and presently returned with the wagon, put the two small sacks into it, threw some old

rag on top of them, and started off, dragging his cargo behind him. When the boys reached the Welshman's house they stopped to rest. Just as they were about to move on the Welshman stepped out and said:

'Hello, who's that?'

'Huck and Tom Sawyer.'

'Good! Come along with me, boys, you are keeping everybody waiting. Here, hurry up, trot ahead; I'll haul the wagon for you. Why, it's not as light as it might be. Got bricks in it, or old metal?'

'Old metal,' said Tom.

'I judged so; the boys in this town will take more trouble and fool way more time hunting up six bits' worth of old iron to sell to the foundry, than they would to make twice the money at regular work. But that's human nature. Hurry along, hurry along!'

The boys wanted to know what the hurry was about.

'Never mind; you'll see when we get to the Widow Douglas's.'

Huck said with some apprehension, for he was long used to being falsely accused:

'Mr Jones, we haven't been doing nothing.'

The Welshman laughed.

'Well, I don't know, Huck, my boy. I don't know about that. Ain't you and the widow good friends?'

'Yes. Well, she's ben a good friend to me, anyways.'

'All right, then. What do you want to be afraid for?'

This question was not entirely answered in Huck's slow mind before he found himself pushed, along with Tom, into Mrs Douglas's drawing-room. Mr Jones left the wagon near the door and followed.

The place was grandly lighted, and everybody that was of any consequence in the village was there. The Thatchers were there, the Harpers, the Rogerses, Aunt Polly, Sid, Mary, the minister, the editor, and a great many more, and all dressed in their best. The widow received the boys as heartily as anyone could well receive two such looking beings. They were covered with clay and candle-grease. Aunt Polly blushed crimson with humiliation, and frowned and shook her head at Tom. Nobody suffered half as much as the two boys did, however. Mr Jones said:

'Tom wasn't at home, yet, so I gave him up; but I stumbled on him and Huck right at my door, and so I just brought them along in a hurry.'

'And you did just right,' said the widow. 'Come with me, boys.'

She took them to a bedchamber and said:

'Now wash and dress yourselves. Here are two new suits of clothes – shirts, socks, everything complete. They're Huck's – no, no thanks, Huck – Mr Jones bought one and I the other. But they'll fit both of you. Get into them. We'll wait – come down when you are slicked up enough.'

Then she left.

Huck said:

'Tom, we can slope if we can find a rope. The window ain't high from the ground.'

'Shucks! what do you want to slope for?'

'Well, I ain't used to that kind of a crowd. I can't stand it. I ain't going down there, Tom.'

'Oh, bother! It ain't anything. I don't mind it a bit. I'll take care of you.'

Sid appeared.

'Tom,' said he, 'Auntie has been waiting for you all the afternoon. Mary got your Sunday clothes ready, and everybody's been fretting about you. Say, ain't this grease and clay on your clothes?'

'Now, Mr Sid, you just 'tend to your own business. What's all this blow-out about, anyway?'

'It's one of the widow's parties that she's always having. This time it's for the Welshman and his sons, on account of that scrape they helped her out of the other night. And say – I can tell you something, if you want to know.'

'Well, what?'

'Why, old Mr Jones is going to try to spring something on the people here tonight, but I overheard him tell Auntie today about it, as a secret, but I reckon it's not much of a secret now. Everybody knows – the widow, too, for all she tries to let on she don't. Oh, Mr Jones was bound Huck should be here – couldn't get along with his grand secret without Huck, you know!'

'Secret about what, Sid?'

'About Huck tracking the robbers to the widow's. I reckon Mr Jones was going to make a grand time over his surprise, but I bet you it will drop pretty flat.'

Sid chuckled in a very contented and satisfied way.

'Sid, was it you that told?'

'Oh, never mind who it was. Somebody told, that's enough.'

'Sid, there's only one person in this town mean enough to do that, and that's you. If you had been in Huck's place you'd a sneaked down the hill and never told anybody on the robbers. You can't do any but mean things, and you can't bear to see anybody praised for doing good ones. There – no thanks, as the widow says.' And Tom cuffed Sid's ears and helped him to the door with several kicks. 'Now go and tell Auntie if you dare, and tomorrow you'll catch it!'

Some minutes later the widow's guests were at the supper table, and a dozen children were propped up at little side tables in the same room, after the fashion of

that country and day. At the proper time Mr Jones made his little speech, in which he thanked the widow for the honour she was doing himself and his sons, but said that there was another person whose modesty –

And so forth and so on. He sprang his secret about Huck's share in the adventure in the finest dramatic manner he was master of, but the surprise it occasioned was largely counterfeit, and not as clamorous and effusive as it might have been under happier circumstances. However, the widow made a pretty fair show of astonishment, and heaped so many compliments and so much gratitude upon Huck, that he almost forgot the nearly intolerable discomfort of his new clothes in the entirely intolerable discomfort of being set up as a target for everybody's gaze and everybody's laudations.

The widow said she meant to give Huck a home under her roof and have him educated; and that when she could spare the money she would start him in business in a modest way. Tom's chance was come. He said:

'Huck don't need it. Huck's rich!'

Nothing but a heavy strain upon the good manners of the company kept back the due and proper complimentary laugh at this pleasant joke. But the silence was a little awkward. Tom broke it.

'Huck's got money. Maybe you don't believe it, but he's got lots of it. Oh, you needn't smile; I reckon I can show you. You just wait a minute.'

Tom ran out of doors. The company looked at each other with a perplexed interest, and inquiringly at Huck, who was tongue-tied.

'Sid, what ails Tom?' said Aunt Polly. 'He – well, there ain't ever any making of that boy out. I never –'

Tom entered, struggling with the weight of his sacks, and Aunt Polly did not finish her sentence. Tom poured the mass of yellow coin upon the table and said:

'There – what did I tell you? Half of it's Huck's, and half of it's mine!'

The spectacle took the general breath away. All gazed, nobody spoke for a moment. Then there was a unanimous call for an explanation. Tom said he could furnish it, and he did. The tale was long, but brimful of interest. There was scarcely an interruption from anyone to break the charm of its flow. When he had finished, Mr Jones said:

'I thought I had fixed up a little surprise for this occasion, but it don't amount to anything now. This one makes it sing mighty small, I'm willing to allow.'

The money was counted. The sum amounted to a little over twelve thousand dollars. It was more than anyone present had ever seen at one time before, though several persons were there who were worth considerably more than that in property.

The reader may rest satisfied that Tom's and Huck's wind-fall made a mighty stir in the poor little village of St Petersburg. So vast a sum, all in actual cash, seemed next to incredible. It was talked about, gloated over, glorified, until the reason of many of the citizens tottered under the strain of the unhealthy excitement. Every 'haunted' house in St Petersburg and the neighbouring villages was dissected, plank by plank, and its foundations dug up and ransacked for hidden treasures – and not by boys, but men – pretty grave, unromantic men, too, some of them. Wherever Tom and Huck appeared they were courted, admired, stared at. The boys were not able to remember that their remarks had possessed weight before; but now their sayings were treasured and repeated; everything they did seemed somehow to be regarded as remarkable; they had evidently lost the power of doing and saying commonplace things; moreover, their past history was raked up and discovered to bear marks of conspicuous originality. The village paper published biographical sketches of the boys.

The Widow Douglas put Huck's money out at six per cent and Judge Thatcher did the same with Tom's at Aunt Polly's request. Each lad had an income now that was simply prodigious – a dollar for every weekday in the year and half of the Sundays. It was just what the minister got – no, it was what he was promised – he generally couldn't collect it. A dollar and a quarter a week would board, lodge, and school a boy in those old simple days – and clothe him and wash him, too, for that matter.

Judge Thatcher had conceived a great opinion of Tom. He said that no commonplace boy would ever have got his daughter out of the cave. When Becky told her father, in strict confidence, how Tom had taken her whipping at school, the Judge was visibly moved; and when she pleaded grace for the mighty lie which Tom had told in order to shift that whipping from her shoulders to his own, the Judge said with a fine outburst that it was a noble, a generous, a magnanimous lie – a lie that was worthy to hold up its head and march down through history breast to breast with George Washington's lauded Truth about the hatchet! Becky thought her father had never looked so tall and so superb as when he walked the floor and stamped his foot and said that. She went straight off and told Tom about it.

Judge Thatcher hoped to see Tom a great lawyer or a great soldier some day. He said he meant to look to it that Tom should be admitted to the National Military Academy, and afterwards trained in the best law-school

in the country, in order that he might be ready for either career, or both.

Huck Finn's wealth, and the fact that he was under the Widow Douglas's protection, introduced him into society – no, dragged him into it, hurled him into it – and his sufferings were almost more than he could bear. The widow's servants kept him clean and neat, combed and brushed, and they bedded him nightly in unsympathetic sheets that had not one little spot or stain which he could press to his heart and know for a friend. He had to eat with knife and fork; he had to use napkin, cup, and plate; he had to learn his book; he had to go to church; he had to talk so properly that speech was become insipid in his mouth; whithersoever he turned, the bars and shackles of civilization shut him in and bound him hand and foot.

He bravely bore his miseries three weeks, and then one day turned up missing. For forty-eight hours the widow hunted for him everywhere in great distress. The public were profoundly concerned; they searched high and low, they dragged the river for his body. Early the third morning Tom Sawyer wisely went poking among some old empty hogsheads down behind the abandoned slaughterhouse, and in one of them he found the refugee. Huck had slept there; he had just breakfasted upon some stolen odds and ends of food, and was lying off, now, in comfort with his pipe. He was unkempt, uncombed, and clad in the same old ruin of rags that had made him

picturesque in the days when he was free and happy. Tom routed him out, told him the trouble he had been causing, and urged him to go home. Huck's face lost its tranquil content and took a melancholy cast. He said:

'Don't talk about it, Tom. I've tried it, and it don't work; it don't work, Tom. It ain't for me; I ain't used to it. The widder's good to me, and friendly; but I can't stand them ways. She makes me git up just at the same time every morning; she makes me wash, they comb me all to thunder; she won't let me sleep in the woodshed; I got to wear them blamed clothes that just smothers me, Tom; they don't seem to any air git through 'em, somehow; and they're so rotten nice that I can't set down, or lay down, nor roll around anywheres; I ain't slid on a cellar door for – well, it 'pears to be years; I got to go to church, and sweat and sweat – I hate them ornery sermons! I can't ketch a fly in there, I can't chaw, I got to wear shoes all Sunday. The widder eats by a bell; she goes to bed by a bell; she gits up by a bell – everything's so awful reg'lar a body can't stand it.'

'Well, everybody does that way, Huck.'

'Tom, it don't make no difference. I ain't everybody and I can't stand it. It's awful to be tied up so. And grub comes too easy – I don't take no interest in vittles that way. I got to ask to go a fishing; I got to ask to go in a swimming – dern'd if I hain't got to ask to do everything. Well, I'd got to talk so nice it wasn't no comfort; I'd got

to go up in the attic and rip out a while every day to git a taste in my mouth, or I'd a died, Tom. The widder wouldn't let me smoke, she wouldn't let me yell, she wouldn't let me gape, nor stretch, nor scratch before folks.' Then with a spasm of special irritation and injury: 'And dad fetch it, she prayed all the time! I never see such a woman! I had to shove, Tom, I just had to. And besides, that school's going to open, and I'd a had to go to it; well, I wouldn't stand that, Tom. Looky here, Tom, being rich ain't what it's cracked up to be. It's just worry and worry, and sweat and sweat, and a wishing you was dead all the time. Now these clothes suits me and this bar'l suits me, and I ain't ever going to shake 'em any more. Tom, I wouldn't ever got into all this trouble if it hadn't a ben for that money; now you just take my sheer of it along with yourn, and gimme a tencenter sometimes – not many times, becuz I don't give a dern for a thing 'thout it's tollable hard to git – and you go and beg off for me with the widder.'

'Oh, Huck, you know I can't do that. 'Tain't fair; and besides, if you'll try this thing just a while longer you'll come to like it.'

'Like it! Yes – the way I'd like a hot stove if I was to set on it long enough. No, Tom, I won't be rich, and I won't live in them cussed smothery houses. I like the woods, and the river, and hogsheads, and I'll stick to 'em too. Blame it all! just as we'd got guns, and a cave, and all just

fixed to rob, here this dern foolishness has got to come up and spile it all!'

Tom saw his opportunity:

'Looky here, Huck, being rich ain't going to keep me back from turning robber.'

'No! Oh, good licks, are you in real dead-wood earnest, Tom?'

'Just as dead earnest as I'm a sitting here. But, Huck, we can't let you into the gang if you ain't respectable, you know.'

Huck's joy was quenched.

'Can't let me in, Tom? Didn't you let me go for a pirate?'

'Yes, but that's different. A robber is more high-toned than what a pirate is – as a general thing. In most countries they're awful high up in the nobility – dukes and such.'

'Now, Tom, hain't you always ben friendly to me? You wouldn't shet me out, would you, Tom? You wouldn't do that, now, would you, Tom?'

'Huck, I wouldn't want to and I don't want to, but what would people say? Why, they'd say, "Mph! Tom Sawyer's Gang! pretty low characters in it!" They'd mean you, Huck. You wouldn't like that, and I wouldn't.'

Huck was silent for some time, engaged in a mental struggle. Finally he said:

'Well, I'll go back to the widder for a month and tackle it and see if I come to stand it, if you'll let me b'long to the gang, Tom.'

'All right, Huck, it's a whiz! Come along, old chap, and I'll ask the widow to let up on you a little, Huck.'

'Will you, Tom, now will you? That's good. If she'll let up on some of the roughest things, I'll smoke private and cuss private, and crowd through or bust. When you going to start the gang and turn robbers?'

'Oh, right off. We'll get the boys together and have the initiation tonight, maybe.'

'Have the which?'

'Have the initiation.'

'What's that?'

'It's to swear to stand by one another, and never tell the gang's secrets, even if you're chopped all to flinders, and kill anybody and all his family that hurts one of the gang.'

'That's gay – that's mighty gay, Tom, I tell you.'

'Well, I bet it is. And all that swearing's got to be done at midnight, in the lonesomest, awfulest place you can find – a ha'nted house is the best, but they're all ripped up, now.'

'Well, midnight's good, anyway, Tom.'

'Yes, so it is. And you've got to swear on a coffin, and sign it with blood.'

'Now that's something like! Why, it's a million times bullier than pirating. I'll stick to the widder till I rot, Tom; and if I git to be a reg'lar ripper of a robber, and everybody talking 'bout it, I reckon she'll be proud she snaked me in out of the wet.'

Conclusion

So endeth this chronicle. It being strictly a history of a boy, it must stop here; the story could not go much further without becoming the history of a man. When one writes a novel about grown people, he knows exactly where to stop – that is, with a marriage; but when he writes of juveniles, he must stop where he best can.

Most of the characters that perform in this book still live, and are prosperous and happy. Some day it may seem worth while to take up the story of the younger ones again, and see what sort of men and women they turned out to be; therefore it will be wisest not to reveal any of that part of their lives at present.