**Summary: Chapter 32**

With only trust in providence to help him free his friend, Huck finds the Phelps’s house, where Jim is supposedly being held. A pack of hounds threatens Huck, but a slave woman calls them off. The white mistress of the house, Sally, comes outside, delighted to see Huck because she is certain he is her nephew, Tom. Sally asks why he has been delayed the last several days. Taking the opportunity to conceal his identity by pretending to be her nephew, Huck explains that a cylinder head on the steamboat blew out. When Sally asks whether anyone was hurt in the explosion, Huck says no, a “slave” was killed. Sally expresses relief that the explosion was so “lucky.”

Huck is not sure he will be able to keep up the charade as Tom. When Sally’s husband, Silas, returns, however his enthusiastic greeting reveals to Huck that Sally and Silas are the aunt and uncle of none other than Tom Sawyer, Huck’s best friend. Hearing a steamboat go up the river, Huck heads out to the docks, supposedly to get his luggage but really to inform Tom of the situation should he arrive.

**Summary: Chapter 33**

Huck meets Tom’s wagon coming down the road. Tom is at first startled by the “ghost,” believing that Huck was murdered back in St. Petersburg, but is eventually convinced that Huck is actually alive. Tom even agrees to help Huck free Jim. Huck is shocked by Tom’s willingness to do something so wrong by society’s standards: “Tom Sawyer fell considerable in my estimation,” he tells us.

Tom follows Huck to the Phelps house a half-hour later. The isolated family is thrilled to have another guest. Tom introduces himself as William Thompson from Ohio, stopping on his way to visit his uncle nearby. The lively Tom leans over and kisses his aunt in the middle of dinner, and she nearly slaps the boy she thinks is an impolite stranger. Laughing, Tom pretends that he is his own half-brother, Sid. The two boys wait for Sally and Silas to mention the runaway slave supposedly being held on their property, but the adults say nothing. However, when one of Sally and Silas’s boys asks to see the show that is passing through town—the duke and the dauphin’s—Silas says that “the runaway” alerted him to the fact that the show was a con.

That night, Huck and Tom sneak out of the house. As they walk on the road, they see a mob of townspeople running the duke and the dauphin, tarred and feathered, out of town on a rail. Huck feels bad for the two, and his ill feelings toward them melt away. “Human beings can be awful cruel to one another,” he observes. Huck concludes that a conscience is useless because it makes you feel bad no matter what you do. Tom agrees.

**Summary: Chapter 34**

Tom told me what his plan was, and I see in a minute it was worth fifteen of mine for style, and would make Jim just as free a man as mine would, and maybe get us all killed besides.

Tom remembers seeing a black man delivering food to a shed on the Phelps property earlier that evening and deduces that the shed is where Jim is being held. His perceptive observation impresses Huck, who hatches a plan to free Jim by stealing the key to the shed and making off with Jim by night. Tom belittles this plan for its simplicity and lack of showmanship. Tom then comes up with a wild plan that Huck admits is fifteen times more stylish than his own—it might even get all three of them killed. Meanwhile, Huck finds it hard to believe that respectable Tom is going to sacrifice his reputation by helping a slave escape.

Huck and Tom get Jim’s keeper, a superstitious slave, to let them see Jim. When Jim cries out in recognition, Tom protects their secret by tricking Jim’s keeper into thinking the cry was the work of witches. Tom and Huck promise to dig Jim out and begin to make preparations.

**CHAPTER 35**

IT would be most an hour yet till breakfast, so we left and struck down into the woods; because Tom said we got to have *some* light to see how to dig by, and a lantern makes too much, and might get us into trouble; what we must have was a lot of them rotten chunks that's called fox-fire, and just makes a soft kind of a glow when you lay them in a dark place.  We fetched an armful and hid it in the weeds, and set down to rest, and Tom says, kind of dissatisfied:

"Blame it, this whole thing is just as easy and awkward as it can be. And so it makes it so rotten difficult to get up a difficult plan.  There ain't no watchman to be drugged—now there *ought* to be a watchman.  There ain't even a dog to give a sleeping-mixture to.  And there's Jim chained by one leg, with a ten-foot chain, to the leg of his bed:  why, all you got to do is to lift up the bedstead and slip off the chain.  And Uncle Silas he trusts everybody; sends the key to the punkin-headed slave, and don't send nobody to watch the slave.  Jim could a got out of that window-hole before this, only there wouldn't be no use trying to travel with a ten-foot chain on his leg.  Why, drat it, Huck, it's the stupidest arrangement I ever see. You got to invent *all* the difficulties.  Well, we can't help it; we got to do the best we can with the materials we've got. Anyhow, there's one thing—there's more honor in getting him out through a lot of difficulties and dangers, where there warn't one of them furnished to you by the people who it was their duty to furnish them, and you had to contrive them all out of your own head.  Now look at just that one thing of the lantern.  When you come down to the cold facts, we simply got to *let on* that a lantern's resky.  Why, we could work with a torchlight procession if we wanted to, I believe.  Now, whilst I think of it, we got to hunt up something to make a saw out of the first chance we get."

"What do we want of a saw?"

"What do we *want* of it?  Hain't we got to saw the leg of Jim's bed off, so as to get the chain loose?"

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

"Well, if that ain't just like you, Huck Finn.  You *can* get up the infant-schooliest ways of going at a thing.  Why, hain't you ever read any books at all?—Baron Trenck, nor Casanova, nor Benvenuto Chelleeny, nor Henri IV., nor none of them heroes?  Who ever heard of getting a prisoner loose in such an old-maidy way as that?  No; the way all the best authorities does is to saw the bed-leg in two, and leave it just so, and swallow the sawdust, so it can't be found, and put some dirt and grease around the sawed place so the very keenest seneskal can't see no sign of it's being sawed, and thinks the bed-leg is perfectly sound. Then, the night you're ready, fetch the leg a kick, down she goes; slip off your chain, and there you are.  Nothing to do but hitch your rope ladder to the battlements, shin down it, break your leg in the moat—because a rope ladder is nineteen foot too short, you know—and there's your horses and your trusty vassles, and they scoop you up and fling you across a saddle, and away you go to your native Langudoc, or Navarre, or wherever it is. It's gaudy, Huck.  I wish there was a moat to this cabin. If we get time, the night of the escape, we'll dig one."

I says:

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

But he never heard me.  He had forgot me and everything else.  He had his chin in his hand, thinking.  Pretty soon he sighs and shakes his head; then sighs again, and says:

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

"For what?"  I says.

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

"Good land!"  I says; "why, there ain't *no* necessity for it.  And what would you want to saw his leg off for, anyway?"

"Well, some of the best authorities has done it.  They couldn't get the chain off, so they just cut their hand off and shoved.  And a leg would be better still.  But we got to let that go.  There ain't necessity enough in this case; and, besides, Jim's a slave, and wouldn't understand the reasons for it, and how it's the custom in Europe; so we'll let it go.  But there's one thing—he can have a rope ladder; we can tear up our sheets and make him a rope ladder easy enough.  And we can send it to him in a pie; it's mostly done that way.  And I've et worse pies."

"Why, Tom Sawyer, how you talk," I says; "Jim ain't got no use for a rope ladder."

"He *has* got use for it.  How *you* talk, you better say; you don't know nothing about it.  He's *got* to have a rope ladder; they all do."

"What in the nation can he *do* with it?"

"*Do* with it?  He can hide it in his bed, can't he?"  That's what they all do; and *he's* got to, too.  Huck, you don't ever seem to want to do anything that's regular; you want to be starting something fresh all the time. S'pose he *don't* do nothing with it? ain't it there in his bed, for a clew, after he's gone? and don't you reckon they'll want clews?  Of course they will.  And you wouldn't leave them any?  That would be a *pretty* howdy-do, *wouldn't* it!  I never heard of such a thing."

"Well," I says, "if it's in the regulations, and he's got to have it, all right, let him have it; because I don't wish to go back on no regulations; but there's one thing, Tom Sawyer—if we go to tearing up our sheets to make Jim a rope ladder, we're going to get into trouble with Aunt Sally, just as sure as you're born.  Now, the way I look at it, a hickry-bark ladder don't cost nothing, and don't waste nothing, and is just as good to load up a pie with, and hide in a straw tick, as any rag ladder you can start; and as for Jim, he ain't had no experience, and so he don't care what kind of a—"

"Oh, shucks, Huck Finn, if I was as ignorant as you I'd keep still—that's what I'D do.  Who ever heard of a state prisoner escaping by a hickry-bark ladder?  Why, it's perfectly ridiculous."

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

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

"Borrow a shirt, too."

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

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

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

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

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

"*Prisoners* don't have geese running around the donjon-keep to pull pens out of, you muggins.  They *always* make their pens out of the hardest, toughest, troublesomest piece of old brass candlestick or something like that they can get their hands on; and it takes them weeks and weeks and months and months to file it out, too, because they've got to do it by rubbing it on the wall.  *They* wouldn't use a goose-quill if they had it. It ain't regular."

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

"Many makes it out of iron-rust and tears; but that's the common sort and women; the best authorities uses their own blood.  Jim can do that; and when he wants to send any little common ordinary mysterious message to let the world know where he's captivated, he can write it on the bottom of a tin plate with a fork and throw it out of the window.  The Iron Mask always done that, and it's a blame' good way, too."

"Jim ain't got no tin plates.  They feed him in a pan."

"That ain't nothing; we can get him some."

"Can't nobody *read* his plates."

"That ain't got anything to *do* with it, Huck Finn.  All *he's* got to do is to write on the plate and throw it out.  You don't *have* to be able to read it. Why, half the time you can't read anything a prisoner writes on a tin plate, or anywhere else."

"Well, then, what's the sense in wasting the plates?"

"Why, blame it all, it ain't the *prisoner's* plates."

"But it's *somebody's* plates, ain't it?"

"Well, spos'n it is?  What does the *prisoner* care whose—"

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

Along during the morning I borrowed a sheet and a white shirt off of the clothes-line; and I found an old sack and put them in it, and we went down and got the fox-fire, and put that in too.  I called it borrowing, because that was what pap always called it; but Tom said it warn't borrowing, it was stealing.  He said we was representing prisoners; and prisoners don't care how they get a thing so they get it, and nobody don't blame them for it, either.  It ain't no crime in a prisoner to steal the thing he needs to get away with, Tom said; it's his right; and so, as long as we was representing a prisoner, we had a perfect right to steal anything on this place we had the least use for to get ourselves out of prison with.  He said if we warn't prisoners it would be a very different thing, and nobody but a mean, ornery person would steal when he warn't a prisoner.  So we allowed we would steal everything there was that come handy.  And yet he made a mighty fuss, one day, after that, when I stole a watermelon out of the slave-patch and eat it; and he made me go and give the slaves a dime without telling them what it was for. Tom said that what he meant was, we could steal anything we *needed*. Well, I says, I needed the watermelon.  But he said I didn't need it to get out of prison with; there's where the difference was.  He said if I'd a wanted it to hide a knife in, and smuggle it to Jim to kill the seneskal with, it would a been all right.  So I let it go at that, though I couldn't see no advantage in my representing a prisoner if I got to set down and chaw over a lot of gold-leaf distinctions like that every time I see a chance to hog a watermelon.

Well, as I was saying, we waited that morning till everybody was settled down to business, and nobody in sight around the yard; then Tom he carried the sack into the lean-to whilst I stood off a piece to keep watch.  By and by he come out, and we went and set down on the woodpile to talk.  He says:

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

"Tools?"  I says.

"Yes."

"Tools for what?"

"Why, to dig with.  We ain't a-going to *gnaw* him out, are we?"

"Ain't them old crippled picks and things in there good enough to dig a slave out with?"  I says.

He turns on me, looking pitying enough to make a body cry, and says:

"Huck Finn, did you *ever* hear of a prisoner having picks and shovels, and all the modern conveniences in his wardrobe to dig himself out with?  Now I want to ask you—if you got any reasonableness in you at all—what kind of a show would *that* give him to be a hero?  Why, they might as well lend him the key and done with it.  Picks and shovels—why, they wouldn't furnish 'em to a king."

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

"A couple of case-knives."

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

"Yes."

"Confound it, it's foolish, Tom."

"It don't make no difference how foolish it is, it's the *right* way—and it's the regular way.  And there ain't no *other* way, that ever I heard of, and I've read all the books that gives any information about these things. They always dig out with a case-knife—and not through dirt, mind you; generly it's through solid rock.  And it takes them weeks and weeks and weeks, and for ever and ever.  Why, look at one of them prisoners in the bottom dungeon of the Castle Deef, in the harbor of Marseilles, that dug himself out that way; how long was *he* at it, you reckon?"

"I don't know."

"Well, guess."

"I don't know.  A month and a half."

"*Thirty-seven year*—and he come out in China.  *That's* the kind.  I wish the bottom of *this* fortress was solid rock."

"*Jim* don't know nobody in China."

"What's *that* got to do with it?  Neither did that other fellow.  But you're always a-wandering off on a side issue.  Why can't you stick to the main point?"

"All right—I don't care where he comes out, so he *comes* out; and Jim don't, either, I reckon.  But there's one thing, anyway—Jim's too old to be dug out with a case-knife.  He won't last."

"Yes he will *last*, too.  You don't reckon it's going to take thirty-seven years to dig out through a *dirt* foundation, do you?"

"How long will it take, Tom?"

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

"Now, there's *sense* in that," I says.  "Letting on don't cost nothing; letting on ain't no trouble; and if it's any object, I don't mind letting on we was at it a hundred and fifty year.  It wouldn't strain me none, after I got my hand in.  So I'll mosey along now, and smouch a couple of case-knives."

"Smouch three," he says; "we want one to make a saw out of."

"Tom, if it ain't unregular and irreligious to sejest it," I says, "there's an old rusty saw-blade around yonder sticking under the weather-boarding behind the smoke-house."

He looked kind of weary and discouraged-like, and says:

"It ain't no use to try to learn you nothing, Huck.  Run along and smouch the knives—three of them."  So I done it.

**CHAPTER 36**

AS soon as we reckoned everybody was asleep that night we went down the lightning-rod, and shut ourselves up in the lean-to, and got out our pile of fox-fire, and went to work.  We cleared everything out of the way, about four or five foot along the middle of the bottom log.  Tom said he was right behind Jim's bed now, and we'd dig in under it, and when we got through there couldn't nobody in the cabin ever know there was any hole there, because Jim's counter-pin hung down most to the ground, and you'd have to raise it up and look under to see the hole.  So we dug and dug with the case-knives till most midnight; and then we was dog-tired, and our hands was blistered, and yet you couldn't see we'd done anything hardly.  At last I says:

"This ain't no thirty-seven year job; this is a thirty-eight year job, Tom Sawyer."

He never said nothing.  But he sighed, and pretty soon he stopped digging, and then for a good little while I knowed that he was thinking. Then he says:

"It ain't no use, Huck, it ain't a-going to work.  If we was prisoners it would, because then we'd have as many years as we wanted, and no hurry; and we wouldn't get but a few minutes to dig, every day, while they was changing watches, and so our hands wouldn't get blistered, and we could keep it up right along, year in and year out, and do it right, and the way it ought to be done.  But *we* can't fool along; we got to rush; we ain't got no time to spare.  If we was to put in another night this way we'd have to knock off for a week to let our hands get well—couldn't touch a case-knife with them sooner."

"Well, then, what we going to do, Tom?"

"I'll tell you.  It ain't right, and it ain't moral, and I wouldn't like it to get out; but there ain't only just the one way:  we got to dig him out with the picks, and *let on* it's case-knives."

"*Now* you're *talking*!"  I says; "your head gets leveler and leveler all the time, Tom Sawyer," I says.  "Picks is the thing, moral or no moral; and as for me, I don't care shucks for the morality of it, nohow.  When I start in to steal a slave, or a watermelon, or a Sunday-school book, I ain't no ways particular how it's done so it's done.  What I want is my slave; or what I want is my watermelon; or what I want is my Sunday-school book; and if a pick's the handiest thing, that's the thing I'm a-going to dig that slave or that watermelon or that Sunday-school book out with; and I don't give a dead rat what the authorities thinks about it nuther."

"Well," he says, "there's excuse for picks and letting-on in a case like this; if it warn't so, I wouldn't approve of it, nor I wouldn't stand by and see the rules broke—because right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a body ain't got no business doing wrong when he ain't ignorant and knows better.  It might answer for *you* to dig Jim out with a pick, *without* any letting on, because you don't know no better; but it wouldn't for me, because I do know better.  Gimme a case-knife."

He had his own by him, but I handed him mine.  He flung it down, and says:

"Gimme a *case-knife*."

I didn't know just what to do—but then I thought.  I scratched around amongst the old tools, and got a pickaxe and give it to him, and he took it and went to work, and never said a word.

He was always just that particular.  Full of principle.

So then I got a shovel, and then we picked and shoveled, turn about, and made the fur fly.  We stuck to it about a half an hour, which was as long as we could stand up; but we had a good deal of a hole to show for it. When I got up stairs I looked out at the window and see Tom doing his level best with the lightning-rod, but he couldn't come it, his hands was so sore.  At last he says:

"It ain't no use, it can't be done.  What you reckon I better do?  Can't you think of no way?"

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

So he done it.

Next day Tom stole a pewter spoon and a brass candlestick in the house, for to make some pens for Jim out of, and six tallow candles; and I hung around the slave cabins and laid for a chance, and stole three tin plates.  Tom says it wasn't enough; but I said nobody wouldn't ever see the plates that Jim throwed out, because they'd fall in the dog-fennel and jimpson weeds under the window-hole—then we could tote them back and he could use them over again.  So Tom was satisfied.  Then he says:

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

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

He only just looked scornful, and said something about nobody ever heard of such an idiotic idea, and then he went to studying.  By and by he said he had ciphered out two or three ways, but there warn't no need to decide on any of them yet.  Said we'd got to post Jim first.

That night we went down the lightning-rod a little after ten, and took one of the candles along, and listened under the window-hole, and heard Jim snoring; so we pitched it in, and it didn't wake him.  Then we whirled in with the pick and shovel, and in about two hours and a half the job was done.  We crept in under Jim's bed and into the cabin, and pawed around and found the candle and lit it, and stood over Jim awhile, and found him looking hearty and healthy, and then we woke him up gentle and gradual.  He was so glad to see us he most cried; and called us honey, and all the pet names he could think of; and was for having us hunt up a cold-chisel to cut the chain off of his leg with right away, and clearing out without losing any time.  But Tom he showed him how unregular it would be, and set down and told him all about our plans, and how we could alter them in a minute any time there was an alarm; and not to be the least afraid, because we would see he got away, *sure*.  So Jim he said it was all right, and we set there and talked over old times awhile, and then Tom asked a lot of questions, and when Jim told him Uncle Silas come in every day or two to pray with him, and Aunt Sally come in to see if he was comfortable and had plenty to eat, and both of them was kind as they could be, Tom says:

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

I said, "Don't do nothing of the kind; it's one of the most jackass ideas I ever struck;" but he never paid no attention to me; went right on.  It was his way when he'd got his plans set.

So he told Jim how we'd have to smuggle in the rope-ladder pie and other large things by Nat, the slave that fed him, and he must be on the lookout, and not be surprised, and not let Nat see him open them; and we would put small things in uncle's coat-pockets and he must steal them out; and we would tie things to aunt's apron-strings or put them in her apron-pocket, if we got a chance; and told him what they would be and what they was for.  And told him how to keep a journal on the shirt with his blood, and all that. He told him everything.  Jim he couldn't see no sense in the most of it, but he allowed we was white folks and knowed better than him; so he was satisfied, and said he would do it all just as Tom said.

Jim had plenty corn-cob pipes and tobacco; so we had a right down good sociable time; then we crawled out through the hole, and so home to bed, with hands that looked like they'd been chawed.  Tom was in high spirits. He said it was the best fun he ever had in his life, and the most intellectural; and said if he only could see his way to it we would keep it up all the rest of our lives and leave Jim to our children to get out; for he believed Jim would come to like it better and better the more he got used to it.  He said that in that way it could be strung out to as much as eighty year, and would be the best time on record.  And he said it would make us all celebrated that had a hand in it.

In the morning we went out to the woodpile and chopped up the brass candlestick into handy sizes, and Tom put them and the pewter spoon in his pocket.  Then we went to the slave cabins, and while I got Nat's notice off, Tom shoved a piece of candlestick into the middle of a corn-pone that was in Jim's pan, and we went along with Nat to see how it would work, and it just worked noble; when Jim bit into it it most mashed all his teeth out; and there warn't ever anything could a worked better. Tom said so himself. Jim he never let on but what it was only just a piece of rock or something like that that's always getting into bread, you know; but after that he never bit into nothing but what he jabbed his fork into it in three or four places first.

And whilst we was a-standing there in the dimmish light, here comes a couple of the hounds bulging in from under Jim's bed; and they kept on piling in till there was eleven of them, and there warn't hardly room in there to get your breath.  By jings, we forgot to fasten that lean-to door!  The slave Nat he only just hollered "Witches" once, and keeled over on to the floor amongst the dogs, and begun to groan like he was dying.  Tom jerked the door open and flung out a slab of Jim's meat, and the dogs went for it, and in two seconds he was out himself and back again and shut the door, and I knowed he'd fixed the other door too. Then he went to work on the slave, coaxing him and petting him, and asking him if he'd been imagining he saw something again.  He raised up, and blinked his eyes around, and says:

"Mars Sid, you'll say I's a fool, but if I didn't b'lieve I see most a million dogs, er devils, er some'n, I wisht I may die right heah in dese tracks.  I did, mos' sholy.  Mars Sid, I *felt* um—I *felt* um, sah; dey was all over me.  Dad fetch it, I jis' wisht I could git my han's on one er dem witches jis' wunst—on'y jis' wunst—it's all I'd ast.  But mos'ly I wisht dey'd lemme 'lone, I does."

Tom says:

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

"But my lan', Mars Sid, how's I gwyne to make 'm a witch pie?  I doan' know how to make it.  I hain't ever hearn er sich a thing b'fo'."

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

"Will you do it, honey?—will you?  I'll wusshup de groun' und' yo' foot, I will!"

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

"*Hannel 'M*, Mars Sid?  What *is* you a-talkin' 'bout?  I wouldn' lay de weight er my finger on um, not f'r ten hund'd thous'n billion dollars, I wouldn't."

**Summary: Chapter 37**

Aunt Sally notices the missing shirt, candles, sheets, and other articles Huck and Tom steal for their plan, and she takes out her anger at the disappearances on seemingly everyone except the boys. She believes that perhaps rats have stolen some of the items, so Huck and Tom secretly plug up the ratholes in the house, confounding Uncle Silas when he goes to do the same job. By removing and then replacing sheets and spoons, the boys confuse Sally so much that she loses track of how many she has. The baking of the “witch pie” is a trying task, but the boys finally finish it and send it to Jim.

**Summary: Chapter 38**

Tom insists that Jim scratch an inscription bearing his coat of arms on the wall of the shed, the way the books say. Making pens from the spoons and candlestick is a great deal of trouble, but they manage. Tom creates an unintentionally humorous coat of arms and composes a set of mournful declarations for Jim to inscribe on the wall. Tom, however, expresses disapproval at the fact that they are writing on a wall made of wood rather than stone. The boys try to steal a millstone, but it proves too heavy for them, so they sneak Jim out to help. As Huck and Jim struggle with the millstone, Huck wryly notes that Tom has a talent for supervising while others do the work. Tom tries to get Jim to take a rattlesnake or rat into the shack to tame, and then tries to convince Jim to grow a flower to water with his tears. Jim protests against the unnecessary amount of trouble Tom wants to create, but Tom replies that his ideas present opportunities for greatness.

**Summary: Chapter 39**

Huck and Tom capture rats and snakes to put in the shed with the captive Jim and accidentally infest the Phelps house with them. Aunt Sally falls into a panic over the disorder in her household, while Jim hardly has room to move with all the wildlife in his shed. Uncle Silas, not having heard back from the plantation from which the leaflet said Jim ran away, plans to advertise Jim as a captured runaway in the New Orleans and St. Louis newspapers—the latter of which would surely reach Miss Watson in St. Petersburg. Tom, partly to thwart Silas and partly because the books he has read say to do so, puts the last part of his plan into action, writing letters from an “unknown friend” that warn of trouble to the Phelpses. The letters terrify the family. Tom finishes with a longer letter pretending to be from a member of a band of desperate gangsters who are planning to steal Jim. The letter’s purported author claims to have found religion, so he wishes to offer information to help thwart the theft. The letter goes on to detail when and how the imaginary thieves will try to seize Jim.

**CHAPTER 40**

WE was feeling pretty good after breakfast, and took my canoe and went over the river a-fishing, with a lunch, and had a good time, and took a look at the raft and found her all right, and got home late to supper, and found them in such a sweat and worry they didn't know which end they was standing on, and made us go right off to bed the minute we was done supper, and wouldn't tell us what the trouble was, and never let on a word about the new letter, but didn't need to, because we knowed as much about it as anybody did, and as soon as we was half up stairs and her back was turned we slid for the cellar cupboard and loaded up a good lunch and took it up to our room and went to bed, and got up about half-past eleven, and Tom put on Aunt Sally's dress that he stole and was going to start with the lunch, but says:

"Where's the butter?"

"I laid out a hunk of it," I says, "on a piece of a corn-pone."

"Well, you *left* it laid out, then—it ain't here."

"We can get along without it," I says.

"We can get along *with* it, too," he says; "just you slide down cellar and fetch it.  And then mosey right down the lightning-rod and come along. I'll go and stuff the straw into Jim's clothes to represent his mother in disguise, and be ready to *baa* like a sheep and shove soon as you get there."

So out he went, and down cellar went I. The hunk of butter, big as a person's fist, was where I had left it, so I took up the slab of corn-pone with it on, and blowed out my light, and started up stairs very stealthy, and got up to the main floor all right, but here comes Aunt Sally with a candle, and I clapped the truck in my hat, and clapped my hat on my head, and the next second she see me; and she says:

"You been down cellar?"

"Yes'm."

"What you been doing down there?"

"Noth'n."

"*Noth'n!*"

"No'm."

"Well, then, what possessed you to go down there this time of night?"

"I don't know 'm."

"You don't *know*?  Don't answer me that way. Tom, I want to know what you been *doing* down there."

"I hain't been doing a single thing, Aunt Sally, I hope to gracious if I have."

I reckoned she'd let me go now, and as a generl thing she would; but I s'pose there was so many strange things going on she was just in a sweat about every little thing that warn't yard-stick straight; so she says, very decided:

"You just march into that setting-room and stay there till I come.  You been up to something you no business to, and I lay I'll find out what it is before I'M done with you."

So she went away as I opened the door and walked into the setting-room. My, but there was a crowd there!  Fifteen farmers, and every one of them had a gun.  I was most powerful sick, and slunk to a chair and set down. They was setting around, some of them talking a little, in a low voice, and all of them fidgety and uneasy, but trying to look like they warn't; but I knowed they was, because they was always taking off their hats, and putting them on, and scratching their heads, and changing their seats, and fumbling with their buttons.  I warn't easy myself, but I didn't take my hat off, all the same.

I did wish Aunt Sally would come, and get done with me, and lick me, if she wanted to, and let me get away and tell Tom how we'd overdone this thing, and what a thundering hornet's-nest we'd got ourselves into, so we could stop fooling around straight off, and clear out with Jim before these rips got out of patience and come for us.

At last she come and begun to ask me questions, but I *couldn't* answer them straight, I didn't know which end of me was up; because these men was in such a fidget now that some was wanting to start right NOW and lay for them desperadoes, and saying it warn't but a few minutes to midnight; and others was trying to get them to hold on and wait for the sheep-signal; and here was Aunty pegging away at the questions, and me a-shaking all over and ready to sink down in my tracks I was that scared; and the place getting hotter and hotter, and the butter beginning to melt and run down my neck and behind my ears; and pretty soon, when one of them says, "I'M for going and getting in the cabin *first* and right *now*, and catching them when they come," I most dropped; and a streak of butter come a-trickling down my forehead, and Aunt Sally she see it, and turns white as a sheet, and says:

"For the land's sake, what *is* the matter with the child?  He's got the brain-fever as shore as you're born, and they're oozing out!"

And everybody runs to see, and she snatches off my hat, and out comes the bread and what was left of the butter, and she grabbed me, and hugged me, and says:

"Oh, what a turn you did give me! and how glad and grateful I am it ain't no worse; for luck's against us, and it never rains but it pours, and when I see that truck I thought we'd lost you, for I knowed by the color and all it was just like your brains would be if—Dear, dear, whyd'nt you *tell* me that was what you'd been down there for, I wouldn't a cared.  Now cler out to bed, and don't lemme see no more of you till morning!"

I was up stairs in a second, and down the lightning-rod in another one, and shinning through the dark for the lean-to.  I couldn't hardly get my words out, I was so anxious; but I told Tom as quick as I could we must jump for it now, and not a minute to lose—the house full of men, yonder, with guns!

His eyes just blazed; and he says:

"No!—is that so?  *ain't* it bully!  Why, Huck, if it was to do over again, I bet I could fetch two hundred!  If we could put it off till—"

"Hurry!  *Hurry*!"  I says.  "Where's Jim?"

"Right at your elbow; if you reach out your arm you can touch him.  He's dressed, and everything's ready.  Now we'll slide out and give the sheep-signal."

But then we heard the tramp of men coming to the door, and heard them begin to fumble with the pad-lock, and heard a man say:

"I *told* you we'd be too soon; they haven't come—the door is locked. Here, I'll lock some of you into the cabin, and you lay for 'em in the dark and kill 'em when they come; and the rest scatter around a piece, and listen if you can hear 'em coming."

So in they come, but couldn't see us in the dark, and most trod on us whilst we was hustling to get under the bed.  But we got under all right, and out through the hole, swift but soft—Jim first, me next, and Tom last, which was according to Tom's orders.  Now we was in the lean-to, and heard trampings close by outside.  So we crept to the door, and Tom stopped us there and put his eye to the crack, but couldn't make out nothing, it was so dark; and whispered and said he would listen for the steps to get further, and when he nudged us Jim must glide out first, and him last.  So he set his ear to the crack and listened, and listened, and listened, and the steps a-scraping around out there all the time; and at last he nudged us, and we slid out, and stooped down, not breathing, and not making the least noise, and slipped stealthy towards the fence in Injun file, and got to it all right, and me and Jim over it; but Tom's britches catched fast on a splinter on the top rail, and then he hear the steps coming, so he had to pull loose, which snapped the splinter and made a noise; and as he dropped in our tracks and started somebody sings out:

"Who's that?  Answer, or I'll shoot!"

But we didn't answer; we just unfurled our heels and shoved.  Then there was a rush, and a *Bang, Bang, Bang!* and the bullets fairly whizzed around us! We heard them sing out:

"Here they are!  They've broke for the river!  After 'em, boys, and turn loose the dogs!"

So here they come, full tilt.  We could hear them because they wore boots and yelled, but we didn't wear no boots and didn't yell.  We was in the path to the mill; and when they got pretty close on to us we dodged into the bush and let them go by, and then dropped in behind them.  They'd had all the dogs shut up, so they wouldn't scare off the robbers; but by this time somebody had let them loose, and here they come, making powwow enough for a million; but they was our dogs; so we stopped in our tracks till they catched up; and when they see it warn't nobody but us, and no excitement to offer them, they only just said howdy, and tore right ahead towards the shouting and clattering; and then we up-steam again, and whizzed along after them till we was nearly to the mill, and then struck up through the bush to where my canoe was tied, and hopped in and pulled for dear life towards the middle of the river, but didn't make no more noise than we was obleeged to. Then we struck out, easy and comfortable, for the island where my raft was; and we could hear them yelling and barking at each other all up and down the bank, till we was so far away the sounds got dim and died out.  And when we stepped on to the raft I says:

"*Now*, old Jim, you're a free man again, and I bet you won't ever be a slave no more."

"En a mighty good job it wuz, too, Huck.  It 'uz planned beautiful, en it 'uz done beautiful; en dey ain't *nobody* kin git up a plan dat's mo' mixed-up en splendid den what dat one wuz."

We was all glad as we could be, but Tom was the gladdest of all because he had a bullet in the calf of his leg.

When me and Jim heard that we didn't feel so brash as what we did before. It was hurting him considerable, and bleeding; so we laid him in the wigwam and tore up one of the duke's shirts for to bandage him, but he says:

"Gimme the rags; I can do it myself.  Don't stop now; don't fool around here, and the evasion booming along so handsome; man the sweeps, and set her loose!  Boys, we done it elegant!—'deed we did.  I wish *we'd* a had the handling of Louis XVI., there wouldn't a been no 'Son of Saint Louis, ascend to heaven!' wrote down in *his* biography; no, sir, we'd a whooped him over the *border*—that's what we'd a done with *him*—and done it just as slick as nothing at all, too.  Man the sweeps—man the sweeps!"

But me and Jim was consulting—and thinking.  And after we'd thought a minute, I says:

"Say it, Jim."

So he says:

"Well, den, dis is de way it look to me, Huck.  Ef it wuz *him* dat 'uz bein' sot free, en one er de boys wuz to git shot, would he say, 'Go on en save me, nemmine 'bout a doctor f'r to save dis one?'  Is dat like Mars Tom Sawyer?  Would he say dat?  You *bet* he wouldn't!  *well*, den, is *Jim* gywne to say it?  No, sah—I doan' budge a step out'n dis place 'dout a *doctor*, not if it's forty year!"

I knowed he was white inside, and I reckoned he'd say what he did say—so it was all right now, and I told Tom I was a-going for a doctor.  He raised considerable row about it, but me and Jim stuck to it and wouldn't budge; so he was for crawling out and setting the raft loose himself; but we wouldn't let him.  Then he give us a piece of his mind, but it didn't do no good.

So when he sees me getting the canoe ready, he says:

"Well, then, if you're bound to go, I'll tell you the way to do when you get to the village.  Shut the door and blindfold the doctor tight and fast, and make him swear to be silent as the grave, and put a purse full of gold in his hand, and then take and lead him all around the back alleys and everywheres in the dark, and then fetch him here in the canoe, in a roundabout way amongst the islands, and search him and take his chalk away from him, and don't give it back to him till you get him back to the village, or else he will chalk this raft so he can find it again. It's the way they all do."

So I said I would, and left, and Jim was to hide in the woods when he see the doctor coming till he was gone again.

**Summary: Chapter 41**

Leavig Jim and Tom on the island with the raft, Huck finds a doctor and sends him to Tom in the canoe, which only holds one person. The next morning, Huck runs into Silas, who takes him home. The place is filled with farmers and their wives, all discussing the bizarre contents of Jim’s shed and the hole. They conclude that a band of robbers of amazing skill must have tricked not only the Phelpses and their friends but also the original desperadoes who sent the letter. Sally refuses to let Huck out to find Tom (who she still thinks is Sid), since she is so sad to have lost Sid and does not want to risk another boy. Huck, touched by her concern, vows never to hurt her again.

**CHAPTER 42**

THE old man was uptown again before breakfast, but couldn't get no track of Tom; and both of them set at the table thinking, and not saying nothing, and looking mournful, and their coffee getting cold, and not eating anything. And by and by the old man says:

"Did I give you the letter?"

"What letter?"

"The one I got yesterday out of the post-office."

"No, you didn't give me no letter."

"Well, I must a forgot it."

So he rummaged his pockets, and then went off somewheres where he had laid it down, and fetched it, and give it to her.  She says:

"Why, it's from St. Petersburg—it's from Sis."

I allowed another walk would do me good; but I couldn't stir.  But before she could break it open she dropped it and run—for she see something. And so did I. It was Tom Sawyer on a mattress; and that old doctor; and Jim, in *her* calico dress, with his hands tied behind him; and a lot of people.  I hid the letter behind the first thing that come handy, and rushed.  She flung herself at Tom, crying, and says:

"Oh, he's dead, he's dead, I know he's dead!"

And Tom he turned his head a little, and muttered something or other, which showed he warn't in his right mind; then she flung up her hands, and says:

"He's alive, thank God!  And that's enough!" and she snatched a kiss of him, and flew for the house to get the bed ready, and scattering orders right and left at the slaves and everybody else, as fast as her tongue could go, every jump of the way.

I followed the men to see what they was going to do with Jim; and the old doctor and Uncle Silas followed after Tom into the house.  The men was very huffy, and some of them wanted to hang Jim for an example to all the other slaves around there, so they wouldn't be trying to run away like Jim done, and making such a raft of trouble, and keeping a whole family scared most to death for days and nights.  But the others said, don't do it, it wouldn't answer at all; he ain't our slave, and his owner would turn up and make us pay for him, sure.  So that cooled them down a little, because the people that's always the most anxious for to hang a slave that hain't done just right is always the very ones that ain't the most anxious to pay for him when they've got their satisfaction out of him.

They cussed Jim considerble, though, and give him a cuff or two side the head once in a while, but Jim never said nothing, and he never let on to know me, and they took him to the same cabin, and put his own clothes on him, and chained him again, and not to no bed-leg this time, but to a big staple drove into the bottom log, and chained his hands, too, and both legs, and said he warn't to have nothing but bread and water to eat after this till his owner come, or he was sold at auction because he didn't come in a certain length of time, and filled up our hole, and said a couple of farmers with guns must stand watch around about the cabin every night, and a bulldog tied to the door in the daytime; and about this time they was through with the job and was tapering off with a kind of generl good-bye cussing, and then the old doctor comes and takes a look, and says:

"Don't be no rougher on him than you're obleeged to, because he ain't a bad slave.  When I got to where I found the boy I see I couldn't cut the bullet out without some help, and he warn't in no condition for me to leave to go and get help; and he got a little worse and a little worse, and after a long time he went out of his head, and wouldn't let me come a-nigh him any more, and said if I chalked his raft he'd kill me, and no end of wild foolishness like that, and I see I couldn't do anything at all with him; so I says, I got to have *help* somehow; and the minute I says it out crawls this slave from somewheres and says he'll help, and he done it, too, and done it very well.  Of course I judged he must be a runaway slave, and there I *was*! and there I had to stick right straight along all the rest of the day and all night.  It was a fix, I tell you! I had a couple of patients with the chills, and of course I'd of liked to run up to town and see them, but I dasn't, because the slave might get away, and then I'd be to blame; and yet never a skiff come close enough for me to hail.  So there I had to stick plumb until daylight this morning; and I never see a slave that was a better nuss or faithfuller, and yet he was risking his freedom to do it, and was all tired out, too, and I see plain enough he'd been worked main hard lately.  I liked the slave for that; I tell you, gentlemen, a slave like that is worth a thousand dollars—and kind treatment, too.  I had everything I needed, and the boy was doing as well there as he would a done at home—better, maybe, because it was so quiet; but there I *was*, with both of 'm on my hands, and there I had to stick till about dawn this morning; then some men in a skiff come by, and as good luck would have it the slave was setting by the pallet with his head propped on his knees sound asleep; so I motioned them in quiet, and they slipped up on him and grabbed him and tied him before he knowed what he was about, and we never had no trouble. And the boy being in a kind of a flighty sleep, too, we muffled the oars and hitched the raft on, and towed her over very nice and quiet, and the slave never made the least row nor said a word from the start.  He ain't no bad slave, gentlemen; that's what I think about him."

Somebody says:

"Well, it sounds very good, doctor, I'm obleeged to say."

Then the others softened up a little, too, and I was mighty thankful to that old doctor for doing Jim that good turn; and I was glad it was according to my judgment of him, too; because I thought he had a good heart in him and was a good man the first time I see him.  Then they all agreed that Jim had acted very well, and was deserving to have some notice took of it, and reward.  So every one of them promised, right out and hearty, that they wouldn't cuss him no more.

Then they come out and locked him up.  I hoped they was going to say he could have one or two of the chains took off, because they was rotten heavy, or could have meat and greens with his bread and water; but they didn't think of it, and I reckoned it warn't best for me to mix in, but I judged I'd get the doctor's yarn to Aunt Sally somehow or other as soon as I'd got through the breakers that was laying just ahead of me—explanations, I mean, of how I forgot to mention about Sid being shot when I was telling how him and me put in that dratted night paddling around hunting the runaway slave.

But I had plenty time.  Aunt Sally she stuck to the sick-room all day and all night, and every time I see Uncle Silas mooning around I dodged him.

Next morning I heard Tom was a good deal better, and they said Aunt Sally was gone to get a nap.  So I slips to the sick-room, and if I found him awake I reckoned we could put up a yarn for the family that would wash. But he was sleeping, and sleeping very peaceful, too; and pale, not fire-faced the way he was when he come.  So I set down and laid for him to wake.  In about half an hour Aunt Sally comes gliding in, and there I was, up a stump again!  She motioned me to be still, and set down by me, and begun to whisper, and said we could all be joyful now, because all the symptoms was first-rate, and he'd been sleeping like that for ever so long, and looking better and peacefuller all the time, and ten to one he'd wake up in his right mind.

So we set there watching, and by and by he stirs a bit, and opened his eyes very natural, and takes a look, and says:

"Hello!—why, I'm at *home*!  How's that?  Where's the raft?"

"It's all right," I says.

"And *Jim*?"

"The same," I says, but couldn't say it pretty brash.  But he never noticed, but says:

"Good!  Splendid!  *Now* we're all right and safe! Did you tell Aunty?"

I was going to say yes; but she chipped in and says:  "About what, Sid?"

"Why, about the way the whole thing was done."

"What whole thing?"

"Why, *the* whole thing.  There ain't but one; how we set the runaway slave free—me and Tom."

"Good land!  Set the run—What *is* the child talking about!  Dear, dear, out of his head again!"

"*No*, I ain't out of my *head*; I know all what I'm talking about.  We *did* set him free—me and Tom.  We laid out to do it, and we *done* it.  And we done it elegant, too."  He'd got a start, and she never checked him up, just set and stared and stared, and let him clip along, and I see it warn't no use for *me* to put in.  "Why, Aunty, it cost us a power of work—weeks of it—hours and hours, every night, whilst you was all asleep. And we had to steal candles, and the sheet, and the shirt, and your dress, and spoons, and tin plates, and case-knives, and the warming-pan, and the grindstone, and flour, and just no end of things, and you can't think what work it was to make the saws, and pens, and inscriptions, and one thing or another, and you can't think *half* the fun it was.  And we had to make up the pictures of coffins and things, and nonnamous letters from the robbers, and get up and down the lightning-rod, and dig the hole into the cabin, and made the rope ladder and send it in cooked up in a pie, and send in spoons and things to work with in your apron pocket—"

"Mercy sakes!"

"—and load up the cabin with rats and snakes and so on, for company for Jim; and then you kept Tom here so long with the butter in his hat that you come near spiling the whole business, because the men come before we was out of the cabin, and we had to rush, and they heard us and let drive at us, and I got my share, and we dodged out of the path and let them go by, and when the dogs come they warn't interested in us, but went for the most noise, and we got our canoe, and made for the raft, and was all safe, and Jim was a free man, and we done it all by ourselves, and *wasn't* it bully, Aunty!"

"Well, I never heard the likes of it in all my born days!  So it was *you*, you little rapscallions, that's been making all this trouble, and turned everybody's wits clean inside out and scared us all most to death.  I've as good a notion as ever I had in my life to take it out o' you this very minute.  To think, here I've been, night after night, a—*you* just get well once, you young scamp, and I lay I'll tan the Old Harry out o' both o' ye!"

But Tom, he *was* so proud and joyful, he just *couldn't* hold in, and his tongue just *went* it—she a-chipping in, and spitting fire all along, and both of them going it at once, like a cat convention; and she says:

"*Well*, you get all the enjoyment you can out of it *now*, for mind I tell you if I catch you meddling with him again—"

"Meddling with *who*?"  Tom says, dropping his smile and looking surprised.

"With *who*?  Why, the runaway slave, of course.  Who'd you reckon?"

Tom looks at me very grave, and says:

"Tom, didn't you just tell me he was all right?  Hasn't he got away?"

"*Him*?" says Aunt Sally; "the runaway slave?  'Deed he hasn't.  They've got him back, safe and sound, and he's in that cabin again, on bread and water, and loaded down with chains, till he's claimed or sold!"

Tom rose square up in bed, with his eye hot, and his nostrils opening and shutting like gills, and sings out to me:

"They hain't no *right* to shut him up!  SHOVE!—and don't you lose a minute.  Turn him loose! he ain't no slave; he's as free as any cretur that walks this earth!"

"What *does* the child mean?"

"I mean every word I *say*, Aunt Sally, and if somebody don't go, *I'll* go. I've knowed him all his life, and so has Tom, there.  Old Miss Watson died two months ago, and she was ashamed she ever was going to sell him down the river, and *said* so; and she set him free in her will."

"Then what on earth did *you* want to set him free for, seeing he was already free?"

"Well, that *is* a question, I must say; and just like women!  Why, I wanted the *adventure* of it; and I'd a waded neck-deep in blood to—goodness alive, *Aunt Polly!*"

If she warn't standing right there, just inside the door, looking as sweet and contented as an angel half full of pie, I wish I may never!

Aunt Sally jumped for her, and most hugged the head off of her, and cried over her, and I found a good enough place for me under the bed, for it was getting pretty sultry for us, seemed to me.  And I peeped out, and in a little while Tom's Aunt Polly shook herself loose and stood there looking across at Tom over her spectacles—kind of grinding him into the earth, you know.  And then she says:

"Yes, you *better* turn y'r head away—I would if I was you, Tom."

"Oh, deary me!" says Aunt Sally; "*Is* he changed so?  Why, that ain't *Tom*, it's Sid; Tom's—Tom's—why, where is Tom?  He was here a minute ago."

"You mean where's Huck *Finn*—that's what you mean!  I reckon I hain't raised such a scamp as my Tom all these years not to know him when I *see* him.  That *would* be a pretty howdy-do. Come out from under that bed, Huck Finn."

So I done it.  But not feeling brash.

Aunt Sally she was one of the mixed-upest-looking persons I ever see—except one, and that was Uncle Silas, when he come in and they told it all to him.  It kind of made him drunk, as you may say, and he didn't know nothing at all the rest of the day, and preached a prayer-meeting sermon that night that gave him a rattling ruputation, because the oldest man in the world couldn't a understood it.  So Tom's Aunt Polly, she told all about who I was, and what; and I had to up and tell how I was in such a tight place that when Mrs. Phelps took me for Tom Sawyer—she chipped in and says, "Oh, go on and call me Aunt Sally, I'm used to it now, and 'tain't no need to change"—that when Aunt Sally took me for Tom Sawyer I had to stand it—there warn't no other way, and I knowed he wouldn't mind, because it would be nuts for him, being a mystery, and he'd make an adventure out of it, and be perfectly satisfied.  And so it turned out, and he let on to be Sid, and made things as soft as he could for me.

And his Aunt Polly she said Tom was right about old Miss Watson setting Jim free in her will; and so, sure enough, Tom Sawyer had gone and took all that trouble and bother to set a free slave free! and I couldn't ever understand before, until that minute and that talk, how he *could* help a body set a slave free with his bringing-up.

Well, Aunt Polly she said that when Aunt Sally wrote to her that Tom and *Sid* had come all right and safe, she says to herself:

"Look at that, now!  I might have expected it, letting him go off that way without anybody to watch him.  So now I got to go and trapse all the way down the river, eleven hundred mile, and find out what that creetur's up to *this* time, as long as I couldn't seem to get any answer out of you about it."

"Why, I never heard nothing from you," says Aunt Sally.

"Well, I wonder!  Why, I wrote you twice to ask you what you could mean by Sid being here."

"Well, I never got 'em, Sis."

Aunt Polly she turns around slow and severe, and says:

"You, Tom!"

"Well—*what*?" he says, kind of pettish.

"Don't you what *me*, you impudent thing—hand out them letters."

"What letters?"

"*Them* letters.  I be bound, if I have to take a-holt of you I'll—"

"They're in the trunk.  There, now.  And they're just the same as they was when I got them out of the office.  I hain't looked into them, I hain't touched them.  But I knowed they'd make trouble, and I thought if you warn't in no hurry, I'd—"

"Well, you *do* need skinning, there ain't no mistake about it.  And I wrote another one to tell you I was coming; and I s'pose he—"

"No, it come yesterday; I hain't read it yet, but *it's* all right, I've got that one."

I wanted to offer to bet two dollars she hadn't, but I reckoned maybe it was just as safe to not to.  So I never said nothing.

**CHAPTER THE LAST**

THE first time I catched Tom private I asked him what was his idea, time of the evasion?—what it was he'd planned to do if the evasion worked all right and he managed to set a slave free that was already free before? And he said, what he had planned in his head from the start, if we got Jim out all safe, was for us to run him down the river on the raft, and have adventures plumb to the mouth of the river, and then tell him about his being free, and take him back up home on a steamboat, in style, and pay him for his lost time, and write word ahead and get out all the slaves around, and have them waltz him into town with a torchlight procession and a brass-band, and then he would be a hero, and so would we.  But I reckoned it was about as well the way it was.

We had Jim out of the chains in no time, and when Aunt Polly and Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally found out how good he helped the doctor nurse Tom, they made a heap of fuss over him, and fixed him up prime, and give him all he wanted to eat, and a good time, and nothing to do.  And we had him up to the sick-room, and had a high talk; and Tom give Jim forty dollars for being prisoner for us so patient, and doing it up so good, and Jim was pleased most to death, and busted out, and says:

"Dah, now, Huck, what I tell you?—what I tell you up dah on Jackson islan'?  I *tole* you I got a hairy breas', en what's de sign un it; en I *tole* you I ben rich wunst, en gwineter to be rich *agin*; en it's come true; en heah she is!  *dah*, now! doan' talk to *me*—signs is *signs*, mine I tell you; en I knowed jis' 's well 'at I 'uz gwineter be rich agin as I's a-stannin' heah dis minute!"

And then Tom he talked along and talked along, and says, le's all three slide out of here one of these nights and get an outfit, and go for howling adventures amongst the Injuns, over in the Territory, for a couple of weeks or two; and I says, all right, that suits me, but I ain't got no money for to buy the outfit, and I reckon I couldn't get none from home, because it's likely pap's been back before now, and got it all away from Judge Thatcher and drunk it up.

"No, he hain't," Tom says; "it's all there yet—six thousand dollars and more; and your pap hain't ever been back since.  Hadn't when I come away, anyhow."

Jim says, kind of solemn:

"He ain't a-comin' back no mo', Huck."

I says:

"Why, Jim?"

"Nemmine why, Huck—but he ain't comin' back no mo."

But I kept at him; so at last he says:

"Doan' you 'member de house dat was float'n down de river, en dey wuz a man in dah, kivered up, en I went in en unkivered him and didn' let you come in?  Well, den, you kin git yo' money when you wants it, kase dat wuz him."

Tom's most well now, and got his bullet around his neck on a watch-guard for a watch, and is always seeing what time it is, and so there ain't nothing more to write about, and I am rotten glad of it, because if I'd a knowed what a trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't a tackled it, and ain't a-going to no more.  But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me, and I can't stand it.  I been there before.

THE END. YOURS TRULY, *HUCK FINN*.