

CHAPTER TWO – Click on the audio to listen as you read.

Huck escapes and finds a friend

Mostly it was a lazy, comfortable kind of life, but after about two months Pop began to hit me too much with his stick. He often went away into town too, and then he always locked me in the hut. Once he was away for three days and I thought I was never going to get out again.

When he came back that time, he was drunk and angry. He wanted my money, but Judge Thatcher wouldn't give it to him. The judge wanted to send me to live with the widow again, Pop told me. I wasn't very pleased about that. I didn't want to go back there.

So I decided to escape and go down the river and live in the woods somewhere. When Pop was out, I began to cut a hole in the wooden wall of the hut. In a few days, when the hole was bigger, I could take the wood out, escape through the hole, and put the wood back.

One morning Pop sent me down to the river to catch some fish for breakfast. To my surprise, there was a canoe in the water and there was no one in it. Immediately, I jumped into the river and brought the canoe to the side. It was lucky that Pop didn't see me, and I decided to hide the canoe under some trees and use it when I escaped.

That afternoon, Pop locked me in and went off to town.

He won't be back tonight, I thought, so I began to work hard on my hole. Soon I could get out through it and I carried food and drink, and pop's gun, down to the canoe.

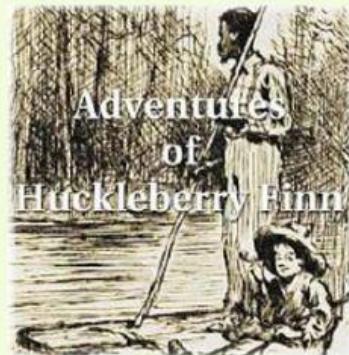
Then I put back the wood to hide the hole, took the gun to hide into the woods. There I shot a wild pig and took it back to the hut with me.

Next, I broke down the door with an axe. I carried the pig into the hut and put some of its blood on the ground. Then I put some big stones in a sack and pulled it along behind me to the river. Last of all, I put some blood and some of my hair on the axe. I left the axe in a corner of the hut and I took the pig down to the river.

'They won't know it's only a pig in the river,' I said to myself. 'They'll think it's me.'

Then I took the canoe and went down the river to Jackson's Island. By then it was nearly dark, so I hid the canoe under some trees and went to sleep.

It was after eight o'clock when I woke up the next day and the sun was high in the sky. I was warm and comfortable and I didn't want to get up. Suddenly, I heard a noise up the river. Carefully, I looked through the trees, and I saw a boat full of people. There was Pop, Judge Thatcher, Tom Sawyer and his Aunt Polly



and his brother Sid, and lots of others. They were looking for my body in the river. I watched them, but they didn't see me, and in the end they went away. I knew that nobody was going to come and look for me again. I found a good place under the trees to sleep and to put my things. Then I caught a fish and cooked it over a fire.

I lived like that for three days, and then I decided to have a look round the island. So I went into the woods. 'This is my island,' I thought. 'I'm the only person on it.'

Suddenly, just in front of me, I saw a fire, and it was still smoking. There was somebody on my island! I didn't wait. I turned and went straight back. But I couldn't sleep. After a time, I said to myself, 'I can't live like this. I must find out who it is.'

Silently I moved along the river in my canoe under the darkness of the trees and then I stopped. Through the trees I could see the light of a fire. Afraid, I left my canoe and went nearer. There was a man lying by the fire.

Suddenly, he sat up and I saw that it was Jim, Miss Watson's slave. I was really happy to see him. "Hello Jim," I cried and jumped out from behind the tree.

Jim fell to his knees, "please, don't hurt me," he cried, "I've always been good to dead people."

'It's all right, Jim. I'm not dead,' I said. 'But why are you here on the island?' I asked.

'Well, Huck,' he began. 'Old Miss Watson wanted to sell me. A man came into town and told Miss Watson that he'd buy me for eight hundred dollars. She couldn't say no, so I ran away. I ran down to the river to hide, but everybody in the town was there. They said you were dead, Huck. I had to wait all day to get away. When it was dark, I got on to a big boat and hid. When we came near this island, I jumped into the water and swam here.'

Jim finished his story and then we both carried all our things into a cave and hid the canoe under some trees. We were just in time because then the rains came. It rained for days, and the river got higher and higher. All kinds of things came down the river and one night there was a little wooden house, lying half on its side. We got the canoe out and went to take a look. Through the window we could see a bed, two old chairs and some old clothes. There was something lying in the corner and we thought it looked like a man. Jim went in to see, but he said, 'He's dead. Someone shot him in the back. Don't look at his face, Huck. It's terrible!'

I didn't want to see the dead man's face, so I didn't look. We just took the old clothes and a few other things, and went back to our cave on the island.

Another night, when we were out looking for things on the river, we found a raft. It was made of good, strong wood and it was about four meters by five meters. "This could be useful," I said to Jim. So we pulled it back to the island behind the canoe and tied it up under the trees.

Write the word under the picture.



Answer the questions in your words.

1. How was Pop different towards Huck after two months?

2. What did Pop want from Huck?

3. Why doesn't Huck want to live with Widow Douglas?

4. How did Huck escape from the hut? Explain.

5. Why did he drag a sack of stones to the river?

6. How did Huck get to Jackson island?

7. What was the noise Huck heard by the river?

8. Why was Jim on the island?

9. How did he get on the island?

10. Why did water in the river keep getting higher?

11. What was floating in the river?

12. How did the man die?

13. Why didn't Huck look at the dead man?

14. What useful thing did they find in the river?