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

The Duke and the King

Two or three days and nights went by and nothing much happened. We travelled at night when it was dark and everybody was asleep. We didn't want anyone to see Jim and ask questions about him.

Then, one morning, just after it was light, I found a little canoe, so I got into it and went over to the side of the river. I was looking round, when, suddenly, two men ran through the trees.

'Help!' they cried. 'There are men and dogs trying to catch us. But we've done nothing wrong!'

One of the men was about seventy years old; the other was about thirty, and they both had very old, dirty clothes.

I said they could come with me, and we ran quickly back to the canoe.

Back on the raft we talked for a time and then the young man said, 'My friends, I think I can tell you my secret now. I'm really a duke. My grandfather was the son of the Duke of Bridgewater, but he left England and came to America. When the old Duke died, my grandfather's younger brother stole everything and made himself the Duke of Bridgewater.' Well, of course, we were all very unhappy for our friend the Duke, but he said, 'I'll be happier if you do things for me. Bring me my dinner!'

So we did things for him, and he liked it. But the old man spoke very little and he looked unhappy, too. After a time he said, 'You know, Bridgewater, I, too, have a secret.' And he began to cry.

'What do you mean?' the Duke asked. 'What's your secret?'

And then the old man told us that he was really the first son of the King of France. He asked us all to go down on one knee when we spoke to him. We could call him 'Your Majesty', too. So that was what we did, and they were both happy. Of course, I knew that they weren't really a duke and a king, but I didn't tell Jim. It's best if everybody is happy when you're living together on a raft.

The King and the Duke were very interested in Jim. 'Is he a slave?' they wanted to know. 'Is he running away?'

I had to tell them something, so I said that Jim belonged to my uncle and was taking me to my family in New Orleans.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'Well, we'll travel down river with you, then,' said the King. 'We'll have a fine time together.'

So the four of us went on down the river, but Jim and I didn't like those two men. They were always getting drunk and making plans to get money out of people in every town. It's all right to take a chicken or something if you're hungry, but these men were really bad! Jim and I decided to get away from them as soon as we could. It wasn't easy because they wanted to be with us all the time.

Then one morning the King went off into a town and told us to wait for him. We waited all morning and he didn't come back, so the Duke and I went into town to look for him. We looked all afternoon and in the end we found him in a bar, drunk, and then he and the Duke began to fight about some money.

'Now we can get away from them,' I thought. I turned and ran back to the river. 'Quick, Jim!' I shouted. 'It's time to go!' But there was no answer. Jim wasn't there!

I ran into the woods, crying and shouting Jim's name. But there was still no answer.

Just then a boy came along. 'Have you seen a slave?' I asked him, and I described Jim.

'Why, yes,' the boy replied. 'He's a runaway slave. I heard all about it in town. A family called the Phelpses have got him now. An old man in a bar told Mr Phelps that there was a runaway slave on a raft down by the river. He said he hadn't got time to take the slave back himself. So Mr Phelps gave him forty dollars and they went down and caught the slave this afternoon. The Phelpses are going to take him back to his owner, and they'll get three hundred dollars for him!'

I knew those two men were bad. I asked the boy where the Phelpses lived and he said it was a big white house a little way down the river.

I began to make plans to get Jim back. First, I took the raft and went down to a little island. I hid the raft under the trees and lay down to sleep. Before it was light, I went off down the river in the canoe. When I thought I was near the Phelpses' place, I stopped, got out of the canoe and went up to the house. Suddenly, a lot of dogs ran out. They came from everywhere and they made a terrible noise.

A woman about fifty years old ran out of the house, with some little children behind her. She was smiling all over her face and she took me by the hands and cried, 'It's you, at last, isn't it?'

I didn't stop to think. 'Yes, ma'am,' I said.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'Well, what took you so long? We thought you were coming two days ago. Your Uncle Silas goes to town every day to meet you. He's there now, but he'll be back soon.' She didn't stop talking and I couldn't tell her that she was making a mistake. 'Tell us all about them,' she cried. 'Tell me everything.'

I knew then that I had to tell her... but just then she cried, 'Here he is! Quick, hide!' and she pushed me inside the house and behind the front door. Then her husband came in and she asked him, 'Has he come?'

'No,' her husband replied.

'Look!' she shouted, and then she pulled me out from behind the door.

'Why, who's that?' Mr Phelps cried, surprised.

'It's Tom Sawyer!' she laughed.

After reading answer the questions.

1. What did Huck find in the river? _____
2. Who did Huck meet by the river? _____
3. What did the men tell Huck?

   _____
4. Who did they introduce themselves as?

   _____
5. Why were they interested in Jim?

   _____
6. Why did Jim and Huck decide to get away from the two men?

   _____

   _____
7. What happened to Jim?

   _____
8. Who are the Phelpses?

   _____
9. Where do they live?

   _____
10. Why did Huck go to see the Phelpses?

    _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

11. Who do the Phelpses think Huck is? _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS