

CHAPTER FOUR: JACKSON'S ISLAND

The next day everyone knew about poor Dr Robinson. The sheriff found Muff Potter's knife near the body of the doctor. He put Muff in St. Petersburg's small jail. Tom and Huck looked at each other. 'We saw Injun Joe kill the doctor,' said Tom, 'Muff didn't kill him, poor Muff!'

'I know,' said Huck, 'But we mustn't say anything. Remember, Injun Joe is dangerous. I'm sorry for Muff Potter, too.' The two boys were afraid. 'We must keep this secret,' said Tom sadly. Tom could not forget. At night he had bad dreams about Injun Joe and Muff Potter. He kept the terrible secret but he was very unhappy.

Aunt Polly was worried about him. She gave him a lot of different medicines. But Tom did not feel better. He was unhappy at school too. Becky Thatcher didn't talk to him anymore. 'No one loves me,' thought Tom, 'What a horrible life!'

It was now summer and there was no more school. Tom and his friend Joe Harper went to the Mississippi river. They fished, talked and looked at the boats. One day Tom said, 'Let's go do something exciting!' 'OK!' said Joe, 'But where can we go and what can we do?' 'Let's run away! We can go and live on Jackson's Island. We can be a pirate. A pirate's life is exciting,' said Tom.

Jackson's Island was a small island in the Mississippi river. It was about three miles south of St. Petersburg. No one lived on the island. 'Huckleberry Finn can come with us too,' said Tom, 'Remember Joe, don't tell your mother, father or anyone about our adventure. Go home and bring some food. We'll meet here at midnight.' Tom and Joe were excited. At midnight the three boys met on the river.

Tom brought meat to eat. Joe brought some bread and Huck brought a frying pan. They found a small raft and they went down the river to Jackson's Island. When they arrived on the island they made a fire and cooked some meat.

'This is fun!' said Joe. 'We're free and we can do everything we want!' said Tom. 'What do pirates do?' asked Huck. 'They go on ships and take money. Then they go to an island and hide it in a safe place,' said Tom. The three boys were happy and slept under the stars.

The next morning they went swimming in the river. Then they went fishing. They cooked the fish on fire and ate it. It was delicious. After breakfast they walked around the island and went swimming again. In the afternoon they sat around the fire and ate some meat.

Suddenly Tom said, 'Can you hear a strange noise? Listen!' 'What is it?' asked Joe. 'Let's go and see,' said Huck. They ran to the river. They saw a steamboat and a lot of small boats near it.



‘Every boat from St. Petersburg is out on the river,’ said Joe, ‘What’s happening?’ ‘They’re looking for a dead body,’ said Huck, ‘The same thing happened last summer when Bill Turner fell into the river and drowned.’ ‘Who are they looking for this time?’ asked Joe. Tom thought for a moment and said, ‘I know! It’s US! They think we drowned!’ The three boys felt like heroes and laughed.

‘The people of St. Petersburg are looking for us. They’re talking about us. We’re famous!’ said Tom happily. This was an exciting adventure for Tom, Huck and Joe! They felt like real pirates on Jackson’s Island. The boats and the steamboat went away.

The boys went fishing again and had fish for dinner. Then they slept under the stars. But Tom could not sleep. The next morning he wasn’t there. ‘Where’s Tom?’ asked Joe. ‘I don’t know,’ said Huck. After a few minutes Huck said, ‘Look’s like Tom went swimming in the river. He’s coming to the island.’ Tom told them his story. ‘Last night I couldn’t sleep. I thought about Aunt Polly. So I went home but no one saw me. I saw Aunt Polly and your mother, Joe, Poor Aunt Polly was crying a lot. And your mother was very sad too. Everyone thinks we’re dead. I heard some interesting things. ‘What did you hear?’ asked Huck.

‘Well, there will be a funeral for us on Sunday at the church,’ said Tom. Huck and Joe looked at him with big eyes. ‘And now I have a great idea. Listen-’ Tom told Huck and Joe his great idea. They liked it and laughed.

Sunday was the day of the funeral. There were no happy faces in St. Petersburg. Everyone in the village was in the small church. Aunt Polly, Sid, Mary and Joe Harper's family were all dressed in black. The Reverend said many kind words about the three boys. The boy's families cried and cried. Becky Thatcher cried. Everyone cried a lot.

There was great silence for a moment. Then Aunt Polly, Mary and Joe's mother ran to the boys. They kissed Tom and Joe. Aunt Polly cried and then laughed. Poor Huck did not know what to do. No one kissed him. He started to move away but Tom stopped him.

'Aunt Polly, it's not right. Someone must be happy to see Huck,' said Tom. 'Oh, you're right, Tom!' cried Aunt Polly and she kissed Huck. Tom was very proud of his great idea. Then the Reverend said, 'Let's sing and be happy!' Everyone sang and laughed. It was a very happy day.