

MARK TWAIN

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

Summary

The story is about 14 year old child Huckleberry Finn, who is under custody of the Widow Douglas. Huckleberry escapes with a Negro named Jim, the "property" of the Widow's sister Miss Watson, away from his drunken father. On the travelling down the rivers Missouri and Mississippi they experience a lot of adventures which are sometimes dangerous, until the happy end on the Phelps' farm.

Huckleberry Finn lives in St. Petersburg, Illinois with the Widow Douglas and her sister Miss Watson. They want to civilise him, to become a sophisticated man, but he does not like that because he loves freedom and he does not like wearing a suit or praying before dinner.

Huckleberry Finn is quite rich. He and Tom Sawyer found 12000\$, and a judge Thatcher put his half of 6000\$ in the bank. Thatcher also gives him a dollar every day if he comes for it. That is pretty tempting for his drunken father. Finn's father does not let him going to school. Huckleberry Finn has to work for him. He beats him every time he is drunk and that is quite often. So one day he kidnaps him and takes him to the woods near the river in his old wooden house. Soon Huckleberry Finn escapes and everybody thinks he is dead.

The travelling begins. For a start Huckleberry Finn hides on the island in the middle of the river. There he meets the Negro Jim who also escaped - from his landlady, Miss Watson because she wanted to sell him to the South for 800\$. During the hiding on the island Huckleberry Finn visits a woman pretending he is a girl. He wants to know if someone knows where they are. They spend a few days on the island but later they have to go on because "persecutors" are very close to them.

So they build a wigwam, a raft with a little house on it and go down the river. By day they sleep and rest, at night they float down the river. Huckleberry Finn and Jim talk about everything. In fact they have a really great time. They decide to land in Cairo, but they miss it. They have to move on.

One night they meet a huge steamboat which hits their wigwam. They rescue themselves but they lose each other. Huckleberry Finn swims to the bank. He sees a house of Grangerfords and in a minute there is a number of dogs around him. Somebody steps out of the house with a gun and asks him to step in. He introduces himself as George Jackson who has fallen from a steamboat. He becomes a member of the Grangerford family. Everybody is nice to him. He gets a friend called Buck who is the youngest family member.

Soon he realises the situation in this family. There is an account of the feud between the two dynasties, the Grangerfords and the Sheperdsons. So far there were killed a number of both families' members.

During his staying at the Grangerfords Huckleberry Finn spends a good time, but soon he is involved in the account where a lot of men are killed because Sophie Grangerford and Harvey Sheperdson escaped. They want to get married. Everybody thinks again that Huckleberry Finn is dead. Soon after Huckleberry finds Jim.

They continue the travelling. In a while they meet two escaping men. They save them. They are frauds, of course. But Huckleberry Finn and Jim do not show they know. One of them says he is the Duke of Bridgewater, and the other says he is the son of Loovy the sixteenth. That is why ha calls himself a king. Huckleberry Finn and Jim agree. They call them duke and majesty.

Later on they land in some places in Arkansas. The duke and the king are actually cheating actors. They perform some shows like Romeo and Juliet or Hamlet. But shows are not long enough so the people want their money back. The duke and the king always escape away from angry people. They continue with their cheating.

One day they meet a boy who wants to get on the steamboat. The king is dressed like a preacher, so a boy thinks he is a brother of dead Mr Wilks. The king says he is not a brother of Mr Wilks but he is a preacher. A boy tells him the whole story about Wilks' and the king decides to "earn" some money and double - cross the Wilks. He almost does it but the conscience of Huckleberry Finn stops him. The king and the duke escape again from Wilks' friends.

After a while the king gets drunk and sells Jim. Huckleberry Finn escapes from the king and the duke and starts looking for Jim. Someone tells him he is captured on the Phelps farm. So Huckleberry Finn goes there.

When he gets there, a woman in late forties hugs him and asks him if he is Tom. He says yes and soon he finds out this is a house of Tom Sawyer's aunt. When real Tom Sawyer comes, they "change" their personalities. Huckleberry Finn is Tom Sawyer and Tom Sawyer is Sid Sawyer. Huckleberry Finn tells him the whole story and how he tries to rescue Jim. Tom finds no problem in that and he is ready to help him, so they start rescuing Jim.

But Tom complicates things. They dig out the hole, they use knives, shirts and all kinds of useless things, they steal sheets, knives, spoons, plates, they catch snakes which escape in the house instead of just unlocking the door. Aunt Sally was like a crazy woman - everything was missing.

When uncle Silas decides to sell Jim, Tom decides to rescue him. He sends an anonymous letter to aunt and uncle - somebody will set the Negro free. Silas calls a number of men with guns. Tom, Jim and Huck try to escape. They do it but Tom is shot in his leg. So Huckleberry Finn calls a doctor who then tells everything to aunt Sally. The whole story is now disclosed. Tom tells the truth to aunt Sally and to Huckleberry Finn that Jim is already free. Miss Watson died and elaborated him. Huckleberry Finn cannot understand why Tom helped him if Jim was free. Then the other aunt Polly comes and discloses Huck and Tom. Sally cannot believe it.

But at the end Jim tells Huckleberry Finn that his father is dead.

It is the happy news for him as well is the end of the story.

My personal opinion

I like this book very much. I think it is very interesting. I really enjoyed reading it. It has a "rich" language, sometimes difficult to understand because of unknown and old phrases.

I got the message from the book, that freedom is the most important and valuable thing but some people do not know what to do with it. Huckleberry Finn founded the most important, to and enjoyed it in its fullness.

Huckleberry Finn was also presented on television, years ago. The film was very good and absorbing like it was reading the book. I wish that it will be soon on television again.