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«Принц и нищий» — одно из самых известных произведений писателя Марка Твена, рассказывающее о приключениях молодого принца Эдуарда Тюдора и простого оборванца Тома Кенти. Двум мальчикам, похожим друг на друга как две капли воды, приходится поменяться местами. Том оказывается в королевских покоях, а Эдуард — на улицах Лондона.

Текст произведения адаптирован и сопровождается словарем. Предназначается для продолжающих изучать английский язык нижней ступени (уровень Pre-Intermediate).

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**THE PRINCE
AND THE PAUPER
by Mark Twain**

1.

In the old city of London, on an autumn day in the sixteenth century, a boy was born to a poor family of the name of Canty, who did not want him. On the same day another English child was born to a rich family of the name of Tudor, who wanted him. All England wanted him too. England had so wanted him, and hoped for him, that now the people were mad with joy. Everybody kissed

each other and cried. Everybody took a holiday, and rich and poor ate and danced and sang for days and nights. There was no talk in all England but of the new baby, Edward Tudor, **Prince of Wales**¹. But there was no talk about the other baby, Tom Canty, except among the family of paupers whom he had only brought more trouble.

London was an old and great town. It had a hundred thousand inhabitants—some think double as many. The streets were very narrow and dirty, especially in the part where Tom

¹ **Prince of Wales** — принц Уэльский, традиционный титул наследника английского престола

Canty lived, which was not far from London Bridge. The houses were of wood, with the second storey projecting over the first, and the third projecting over the second. The higher the houses grew, the broader they were. The windows were small, and they opened outward, like doors.

The house in which Tom's father lived was in a dirty little place called **Offal Court**¹, near Pudding Lane. It was packed full of poor families. Canty's family had a room on the third floor. The mother and father had a bed in the corner; but Tom,

¹ **Offal Court** — переулок Потрохов

his grandmother, and his two sisters, Bet and Nan, slept on the floor on bags of dirty straw.

Bet and Nan were fifteen-year-old twins. They were kind girls, dirty, dressed in rags, and ignorant. Their mother was like them. But the father and the grandmother got drunk whenever they could; then they fought each other or anybody who came their way; they cursed and swore always. John Canty was a thief, and his mother a beggar. They made beggars of the children, but could not make thieves of them. Among those who lived in the house, was a good old priest, and he

taught the children secretly. Father Andrew also taught Tom a little Latin, and how to read and write; and would have done the same with the girls, but they were afraid of their friends laughing at them.

All Offal Court was just like the Canties. Drinking and fighting were there every night. Broken heads were as common as hunger in that place. Yet little Tom was not unhappy. All the Offal Court boys lived like that and thought it was correct. When he came home empty-handed at night, he knew his father and grandmother would curse and beat him. In the

night his mother would slip to him and give him something to eat.

So Tom's life went along quite well. By day he begged, and by night he listened to Father Andrew's tales and legends about giants and fairies, and kings and princes. His head was full of these wonderful things, and he dreamed of seeing a real prince, with his own eyes.

He often read the priest's old books, and his dreams and reading worked some changes in him by-and-by. His dream-people were so fine that he wished to be clean and better dressed. He

began to wash himself sometimes in the Thames.

By-and-by Tom's reading and dreaming about princes' life had such a strong effect on him that he began to ACT the prince, unconsciously. His speech and manners became ceremonious and courtly to everybody's admiration and amusement. Tom's influence among young people began to grow. He seemed to know so much! and he could do and say such marvellous things! and he was so wise! Now grown people brought their problems to Tom, and were often astonished at the wisdom of his decisions. In fact he was a hero to all

who knew him except his own family who saw nothing in him.

Privately, after a while, Tom organised a royal court! He was the prince; his friends were his guards, lords and ladies, and the royal family. Daily the mock prince was greeted with elaborate ceremonies, which Tom read about in his books. After that, he would go beg for money, eat whatever he could find, and then go home and lay on foul straw, dreaming.

Presently his wish to see a real prince became the only passion of his life. One January day, he was walking around Mincing Lane and Little East

Cheap, hour after hour, barefooted and cold, looking in at shop windows. It was raining. At night Tom reached home so wet and tired and hungry that even his father and grandmother didn't bother him.

For a long time his hunger kept him awake; but at last he fell asleep, and dreamt of romantic lands, of jewelled princes who live in palaces, and had servants flying to execute their orders.

All night long he dreamt that he moved among great lords and ladies, in a blaze of light, breathing perfumes, listening to

music, and talking to the rich and the famous.

And when he awoke in the morning and looked upon what was around him, bitterness came, and with it, tears.

2.

One day Tom got up hungry, and left home hungry. He walked here and there in the city, hardly noticing where he was going, or what was happening around him. Some time later he found himself near a majestic palace—Westminster—the farthest from home he had ever walked. He stared in wonder at the vast pile of masonry, the wide-spreading wings, the frowning bastions and turrets,