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'TOM!'

No answer. 'TOM!'

No answer.

'What happened with that boy, I wonder? You TOM!'

No answer.

Aunt Polly looked everywhere, she even **bent** down, **poked** under the bed with the **broom**, and found nothing but the cat.

'Y-o-u-u TOM!'

There was a slight noise behind her and she turned just in time to catch a small boy.

‘There! What have you been doing in the **pantry**?’

‘Nothing.’

‘Nothing! Look at your hands. And look at your mouth. What IS it?’

‘I don’t know, aunt.’

‘Well, I know. It’s jam – that’s what it is. I’ve told you forty times not to touch it. Where’s my **switch**?–’

‘Wow! Look behind you, aunt!’

The old woman turned round, and Tom managed to run away from her – he climbed up the high fence, and disappeared over it.

His aunt Polly stood surprised a moment, and then laughed.

‘I can never learn anything! He’s played the same **trick enough** for me to remember it! **You can’t learn an old dog new tricks** I’m sure he won’t go to school this afternoon, and I’ll just have to make him work tomorrow, to punish him. It’s hard to make him work on Saturdays, when all the boys are having holiday. But he hates work more than he

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hates anything else, so I've GOT to find some job for him.'

Tom didn't go to school, and he had a very good time.

While the boy was eating his dinner, and stealing sugar when he had a chance Aunt Polly asked him difficult questions about his classes – she wanted to make him tell her the truth.

Tom was clever enough in his answers.

She wouldn't know that Tom was lying if it hadn't been for Sid, his younger brother.

To make the long story short Aunt Polly discovered the truth: Tom hadn't been to school and he had been swimming instead.

As soon as it became clear Tom went out at the door saying:

'Siddy, I'll beat you for that.'

Tom was not the **model boy** of the village. He knew the model boy – Sid – and hated him sometimes.

Within two minutes, or even less, he had forgotten all his troubles because he

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found a new interesting activity – whistling. He had learned to whistle a couple of days ago and now he decided to practise it.

The summer evenings were long so he had a lot of time ahead.

Then he saw a stranger boy a little larger than himself. Meeting a **newcomer** of any age **of either sex** was an important in the poor little village of St. Petersburg. This boy was well dressed – on a **week-day**. He even had shoes on – and it was only Friday. You could see that he was a city boy. The more Tom stared at the **stranger**, the higher he turned up his nose. He could feel that his own clothes were old and poor. Neither of the boys spoke. If one moved, the other moved – but only to the side; so they were moving in a circle; **keeping face to face and eye to eye** all the time.

Finally Tom started a usual dialogue. Each of the boys said he was going to beat the other one. And each said

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he had an elder brother who could also beat the other's elder brother.

Finally they fought.

They were rolling in the dirt, tearing each other's hair and clothes, covering themselves with dust and **glory**.

Tom won.

The new boy went off brushing the dust from his clothes, sobbing, and shouting what he would do to Tom the **'next time he caught him.'**

When Tom's turned to go, the new boy took a stone, threw it, hit him Tom between the shoulders and then ran away as fast as he could. Tom chased him home, and waited at the gate for some time, inviting the enemy to come outside. At last the enemy's mother appeared, and called Tom a bad, evil child.

Tom got home rather late that night, and when he climbed in through the window, he was caught by his aunt immediately. When she saw the state of his clothes she decided that Tom would not enjoy his Saturday.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

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Saturday morning came, and all the summer world was bright and fresh. There was a song in every heart and a smile on every face. But Tom was not very happy when he appeared in the street with a bucket of **whitewash** and a **long-handled brush**. When he looked at the fence, so long and high, he felt depressed.

Then he saw Jim, a slave boy, who was running out of the gate with a bucket. Tom himself had always hated bringing water from the town **pump**. But it seemed better than whitewashing. Tom said:

‘I say, Jim, I’ll bring the water if you whitewash a part of the fence.’

Jim shook his head and said:

‘I can’t, master Tom. Your aunt said you had to do it all. She’ll be angry if she learns that I helped you.’

When the boys noticed Aunt Polly coming out of the house Jim ran away with

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his bucket and Tom started whitewashing. But his energy did not last. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day.

At this dark and hopeless moment he found a way out.

He took up his brush and went to work. Ben Rogers, his friend was walking along the street eating an apple. From time to time he produced sounds: ding-dong-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was **personating** a **steamboat**. As he came closer, he called:

‘Tom!’

No answer. Tom had been whitewashing, then he looked at the fence with the eye of an artist. Tom’s mouth **watered** for the apple, but he continued working. Ben said:

‘Hello, **old chap!**’ Tom turned to Ben.

‘Why, it’s you, Ben! I didn’t notice you.’

‘I’m going swimming. Would you like to join me? Oh, I see, you can’t go, you have to work!’

‘What do you call work?’

‘Why, isn’t THAT work?’

Tom continued his whitewashing, and answered carelessly:

‘Well, maybe it is, and maybe it isn’t. All I know is it suits Tom Sawyer.’

‘Don’t say you LIKE it. I won’t believe you!’

The brush continued to move.

‘Like it? Well, does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?’

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped biting his apple. He was getting more and more interested. At last he said:

‘Tom, let ME whitewash a little.’

‘If it was the back fence I wouldn’t mind and aunt Polly wouldn’t. But it’s the front fence; it must be done very carefully. There isn’t one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it should be done.’

‘Oh, let me just try. Only just a little. I’ll give you the **core** of my apple.’

‘No, Ben, I’m afraid—’

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‘I’ll give you ALL of it!’

Tom gave the brush to Ben and sat in the shade.

He didn’t have to work any more. Some other boys stopped by now and then; at first they joked but remained to whitewash. Billy Fisher bought his chance to whitewash for a kite, Johnny Miller – for a dead rat – and so on, and so on, hour after hour. And when the afternoon came, Tom who had been so poor in the morning, became a wealthy boy. Besides **the before mentioned things**, he had twelve marbles, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through, a key that wouldn’t unlock anything, a tin soldier, a kitten with only one eye, the handle of a knife, and a lot of other valuable things.

He had had a nice, good, idle time, plenty of company – and the fence had three **coats** of whitewash on it!

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Tom came to the living-room which was their bedroom, breakfast-room, dining-room, and library at the same time, Aunt Polly was sitting by an open window. She was sure that Tom had left long ago, and she was surprised at seeing him.

‘May I go and play now, aunt?’ he asked.

‘What, already? How much have you done?’

‘It’s all done, aunt.’

‘Tom, don’t lie to me – I hate it.’

Aunt Polly went out to see for herself. She found the whole fence whitewashed **thoroughly**.

She said:

‘So, you can work when you decide to do so, Tom.’ And then she added: ‘But you seldom feel like working. Well, you can go and play.’

She even gave him an apple as a **reward**. Tom climbed over the fence and was gone.

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There was a gate, but usually he preferred to leave this way.

Tom went to the town square, where two “armies” were preparing for battle. Tom was the General of one of them. Tom and his best friend Joe Harper, commanding officer of the other army, ordered their soldiers to fight and then sat by the side chatting.

Tom’s army won a great victory, after a long and hard battle. Then the dead were counted, prisoners exchanged, and the day for the next battle was chosen; the armies walked away, and Tom went home.

On his way back, he passed the house of his schoolmate Jeff Thatcher. In the yard he noticed a beautiful girl who immediately won his heart. Tom forgot his girlfriend, Amy Lawrence right at once.

When he was sure the strange girl was watching, he began to **show off**, acting like a fool, doing all sorts of silly tricks. Although the girl seemed not to pay at-

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tention, she threw a flower to him just before she went into the house.

Tom tried to act indifferent, but then he ran and took the flower between his toes when he was sure that the girl was gone.

He stayed around the house for the rest of the evening, hoping to see the girl again, but she did not return, so he went back home.

Tom was so happy with his new love that he even wasn't offended when Aunt Polly accused him of stealing sugar. (Actually, Sid had **committed this crime**). When the old lady shouted at him and hit him he cried:

'Sid was stealing sugar and brought the sugar-bowl!'

Aunt Polly stopped, embarrassed and only said:

'I'm sure you have done something wrong, only I don't know what it was!'

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On Sunday after breakfast Tom went to learn 'his verses' from the Bible. Sid had learned his lesson days before. At the end of half an hour Tom had a general idea of his lesson, but no more.

Mary, his elder cousin, promised to give him a present if he learned the lesson well.

That made Tom **do his best** – and be a success. So Mary gave him a new knife worth twelve and a half cents. Although the knife could not cut anything, Tom was delighted. He was going to try the knife on the furniture when he was called off to dress for Sunday-school.

Mary took care of the process. She made Tom put on a suit that had been used only on Sundays during two years. He now looked much better and felt very uncomfortable. He hoped that Mary would forget his shoes, but she asked Tom to put them on:

'Please, Tom – be a good boy.'

So he got into the shoes. Mary was soon ready, and the three children went to Sunday-school – a place that Tom hated with his whole heart; but Sid and Mary were fond of it.

At the door Tom asked another pupil: ‘I say, Billy, have you got a yellow ticket?’

‘Yes.’

‘What’ll you take for it?’

‘What’ll you give?’

‘A fish-hook.’ (Tom had become rich after his whitewashing operation).

So he exchanged one of his “treasures” for a yellow ticket. Then Tom **traded** a couple of other small things for three red tickets, and a couple of blue ones. He went on buying tickets of different colours ten or fifteen minutes longer.

Then the lesson began. Almost all the children in Tom’s class were noisy, and troublesome. When they came to recite their lessons, no one knew his verses well. However, each pupil got his reward – in small blue tickets; each blue