

THE ADVENTURES OF
**TOM
SAWYER**

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TIMELESS CLASSICS



The Glorious Whitewasher

“Tom!”

No answer.

“Tom! Where is that boy? *Tom!* If I find you, I’ll ...” the old lady stopped talking.

She looked under the bed. There was no boy there. She called again.

A noise came from behind her. She turned and grabbed Tom by the shirt.

“There you are! What have you been doing?”

“Nothing.”

“I don’t believe you. Look at your sticky hands. I told you to leave that jam alone. You need a spanking.”

The old lady raised her hand.

“Look behind you, Aunt!”

She turned around.

The boy ran out the door. He scrambled over the fence.

Aunt Polly started to laugh. “I guess

I'll never learn," she said to herself. "He's always playing tricks on me. I've spoiled him. But he's my sister's boy. I have to take care of him now that she's dead. I just don't have the heart to spank him."

Aunt Polly sighed. "He'll skip school this afternoon. Then I'll have to punish him. But I've got to do my duty."

Tom *did* skip school. He had a very good day.

At supper, Aunt Polly tried to trap Tom. She wanted him to say he'd skipped school.

"It was warm today. Wasn't it, Tom?" she asked. "Didn't you want to swim?"

“No, ma’am.”

She felt Tom’s shirt. It was dry.

Tom knew what was coming. “My hair is damp. Some of us got our heads wet.”

That morning, she had sewn his shirt collar shut. Now she checked it. It was still sewn shut. She was surprised. She thought Tom had done the right thing.

Then Tom’s brother, Sid, spoke up. “Aunt Polly, I thought you sewed his shirt with white thread. Look, that thread is black.”

“*I did* sew it with white. Tom!” Aunt Polly shouted.

But Tom was out the door. “Sid,” he yelled, “I’ll get you for that!”



Saturday morning came bright and fresh. Tom stood on the sidewalk with a bucket of white paint and a brush. He looked at the fence sadly. It was time to take his punishment for skipping school.

Tom dipped his brush in the bucket. He started painting. His friends would come soon. They would make fun of him. He hated the thought of it.

Then he had a *wonderful* idea! He went happily to work painting the fence.

Soon, Ben Rogers came along. He had an apple in his hand.

Tom went on painting. He paid no attention to Ben.

“Hello, Tom,” Ben called. “I see you have work to do. I’m going swimming today. Don’t you wish you could go?”

“No. A boy doesn’t get a chance to paint a big fence like this every day.” Tom kept on painting.

Ben watched Tom sweeping his brush back and forth. Tom stepped back and looked at his work. He looked proud.

Ben said, “Hey, let me do some.”



Tom thought a minute. “No, I can’t do that. Aunt Polly says this work is too important. Hardly anyone can do it right.”

“I’ll give you my apple if you let me,” Ben offered.

Tom slowly gave up his brush. He

looked unwilling. Inside, his heart was dancing. Tom sat and munched the apple. Ben painted the fence.

Many boys fell for Tom's trick. They came to tease. They stayed to paint. In the end, Tom had a kite, a dead rat, 12 marbles, and a piece of blue glass. He got a lot of other treasures too. The fence got three coats of paint!

Tom found out something important. People want anything that is hard to get.

Tom thought about what he had learned. Then he skipped into the house to tell Aunt Polly the fence was done.