***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

***Chapter 17:***

***Translation:***

In a minute, a voice called out from an open window: “That’s enough, boys! Who’s there?” I said: “It’s me.” “Who’s me?” “George Jackson, sir.” “What do you want?” “I don’t want anything, sir. I was just walking by, but your dogs won’t let me.” “What are you doing prowling around here at this time of night, huh?” “I wasn’t prowling around, sir. I fell overboard off the steamboat.” “Oh, really? Will someone strike a match and light a lantern? What did you say your name was?” “George Jackson, sir. I’m only a boy.” “Look here. If you’re telling the truth, then you needn’t be afraid—nobody will hurt you. But don’t try to move. Stand right where you are. One of you, go wake up Bob and Tom and bring the guns. George Jackson, is there anyone with you?” “No, sir, nobody.” By now I could hear people stirring around in the house, and I saw a light. A man called out: “Snuff that light out, Besty, you old fool. Don’t you have any common sense? Put it on the floor behind the door. Bob, if you and Tom are ready, take your places. “All ready.” “Now, George Jackson, do you know the Shepherdons?” “No, sir. I’ve never heard of them.” “Well, that might be true—then it again, it might not. Okay, we’re all ready. Step forward, George Jackson. And I warn you—don’t hurry. Come over here slowly. If there’s anybody with you, he should keep his distance. If he shows himself, he’ll get shot. Come on now. Approach slowly. Push the door open a little bit by yourself—just squeeze in, okay?” I didn’t hurry. I couldn’t have, even if wanted to. I took one slow step at a time. I didn’t make a sound, though I thought I could hear my own heart beating. The dogs were as quiet as the people, but they followed a little behind me. When I got to the three log doorsteps I heard the people inside unlocking, unbarring, and unbolting the doors. I put my hand on the door and pushed it little by little until somebody said, “That’s far enough—poke your head in.” I did, but I figured they’d probably shoot it off. There was a candle on the floor. For a few seconds, everyone in the room was looking at me and I was looking at them. There were three big men with guns pointed at me. This sure made me wince. The oldest one had gray hair and looked about sixty. The other two were about thirty years old or so. All of them looked strong and handsome. There was also a sweet old gray-haired lady. Behind her were two young women, but I couldn’t see them very well. The old gentleman said: “Okay, I suppose it’s all right. Come on in.” As soon as I was inside the old gentleman locked the door, barred it, and bolted it. He told the young men to come in with their guns, and they all went in a big parlor that had a new rag carpet on the floor. They got together in a corner that was out of range of the front windows—there weren’t any windows on the sides. They held the candle and took a good look at me, and they all said, “Why, HE’S not a Shepherdson. No, there isn’t anything about him that looks like a Shepherdson.” Then the old man said he hoped I wouldn’t mind being searched for weapons, because he didn’t mean any harm by it—he only wanted to make sure. He didn’t look in my pockets, but just felt the outside with his hands before saying it was all right. He told me to make myself comfortable and at home and tell them all about myself. But the old lady said: “Bless you, Saul, the poor thing is as wet as he can be! And don’t you think he’s hungry?” “You’re right, Rachel, I forgot.” So the old lady said: “Betsy,” (she was referring to the n----- woman) “Go and get him something to eat as quick as you can, the poor thing. And one of you girls go and wake up Buck and tell him… oh, here he comes. Buck, take this little stranger and get the wet clothes off him. Lend him some of your dry clothes.” Buck looked to be around my age—thirteen or fourteen or so—though he was bigger than me. He was only wearing a shirt, and he was pretty groggy from having been woken up. He came in yawning and rubbing his eyes with one fist and dragging a gun along with the other hand. He said: “There aren’t any Shepherdsons around?” The said, no, that it was a false alarm. “Well,” he said, “if there had been some, I imagine I would have killed one.” They all laughed, and Bob said: “Why, Buck, you were so slow in getting here they might have scalped us all.” “Well, nobody came and woke me up. It isn’t right that I’m always held back. I never get to see the action.” “Never mind, Buck, my boy,” said the old man. “You’ll see plenty of action in good time. Don’t you worry about it. Go on now, and do as your mother told you.” When we got upstairs to his room, he gave me a coarse shirt, a jacket, and some pants. I put them on. While I was doing that, he asked me what my name was. But before I could tell him, he started to tell me about a bluejay and young rabbit he had caught in the woods the day before yesterday. Then he asked me where Moses was when the candle went out. I said I didn’t know because I’d never heard anything about Moses and a candle. “Well, guess,” he said. “How can I guess,” I asked, “if I’ve never heard of any of this before?” “But you can guess, can’t you? It’s easy.” “WHICH candle?” I asked. “Well, any candle,” he said. “I don’t know where he was,” I said. “Where was he?” “Why, he was in the DARK! That’s where he was!” “Well, if you knew where he was, why did you ask me?” “Darn it, it’s a riddle. Don’t you get it? Hey, how long are you going to stay here? You should stay here forever. We can have a lot of fun together—there isn’t any school now. Do you have a dog? I’ve got a dog, and he’ll go in the river and fetch wood chips that you throw in. Do you like to get all dress up on Sundays and do all that kind of nonsense? You can be sure I don’t like to, but ma makes me. Darn these awful pants! I guess I’d better put them on, but I’d rather not because it’s so warm. Are you all set? All right, come along, you old horse.” Downstairs, they had cold cornpone, cold corned beef, and buttermilk waiting for me. It was the best of that food I’ve ever had. Buck, his ma, and the rest of them smoked cob pipes, except for the two young women and the n----- woman, who was gone. They all smoked and talked, and I ate and talked. The young women had their hair loose, and it hung down their backs. They also had quilts wrapped around them. They all asked me questions. I told them how pap and me and the family were living on a little farm at the bottom of Arkansas. I told them how my sister Mary Ann had run off and gotten married and that we hadn’t heard from her since, and how Bill had gone off to find them and we hadn’t heard from HIM since. I told them about how Tom and Mort died leaving just me and pap, who was just skin and bones because of all our troubles. When he died, I took what was left, because the farm didn’t belong to us, and booked deck passage on the steamboat headed up the river. Then I’d fallen overboard. That was how I’d come to be here. They said I could live with them as I long I wanted. By then it was almost daylight, so everyone went to bed. I went to bed with Buck. When I woke in the morning, darn it, I’d forgotten what I’d said my name was. I laid there for about an hour trying to remember. When Buck woke up, I said: “Can you spell, Buck?” “Yes,” he said. “I bet you can’t spell my name,” I said. “I bet you I can, even if you think I can’t,” he said. “All right,” I said. “Go ahead.” “G-e-o-r-g-e J-a-x-o-n. There now,” he said. “Well,” I said. “You did it, even though I thought you couldn’t. It’s not an easy name to spell either, especially right off the top of your head, without studying.” I wrote it down in private in case anyone ever wanted ME to spell it for them. I wanted it handy so that I could rattle it off smoothly, as if I was used to spelling it. They were a really nice family and they lived in a really nice house. I had never seen a country house that was so nice and had so much style. It didn’t have an iron latch on the front door. It didn’t even have a wooden one with a buckskin string. It had a real brass knob that turned, just like the houses in town. There wasn’t a bed in the parlor. There wasn’t even a sign that a bed had once been there, even though plenty of houses in town had a bed in the parlor. There was a big fireplace with a brick base. They kept the bricks clean and red by pouring water on them and scrubbing them with another brick. Sometimes they washed them all over with red paint mixed with water—what they call Spanish brown—which is exactly how they do it in town. They had big brass [dog iron](javascript:void(0);)s that could hold a [sawlog](javascript:void(0);). There was a clock on the middle of the mantel; the bottom half of the glass front had a painted picture of a town on it. The clock also had a round place in the middle for the sun, and you could see the pendulum swinging behind. It was beautiful to hear that clock tick. Sometimes, when one of those traveling fix-it men came along to clean and fix it, the clock would chime a hundred and fifty times before stopping. They wouldn’t have sold that clock for anything. On each side of the clock, there was a big gaudy parrot made out of some chalk-like substance. There was a little clay cat next to one parrot and a little clay dog next to the other. A squeaking noise came out from under them whenever you pressed down on them, but they didn’t open their mouths or look interested or anything. Behind them sat a couple of big fans spread out that looked like the wings of wild turkeys. On the table in the middle of the room was a lovely clay basket that had apples and oranges and peaches and grapes piled up in it. They were much more red and yellow and prettier than real fruits, but you could tell they were fake because you could see where pieces of clay had chipped off, showing the white chalk or whatever underneath. The table had a beautiful tablecloth made of [oilcloth](javascript:void(0);). It had a red and blue spread-eagle painted on it, and a painted border all the way around. They said it had come all the way from Philadelphia. There were also some books piled up neatly on each corner of the table. One was a big family Bible filled with pictures. Another was [Pilgrim’s Progress](javascript:void(0);), a book about a man who left his family, though it didn’t say why. I read it every now and then, and got through quite a bit of it. The sentences were interesting, but difficult to get through. Another was Friendship’s Offering, which was full of poetry and other pretty writing, though I didn’t read the poetry. They also had a book of Henry Clay’s Speeches, and another of Dr. Gunn’s Family Medicine, which told you all about what to do if someone was sick or dead. There was a hymnal, and several other books. They also had nice split-bottom chairs. They were well made, and didn’t sag in the middle like a busted old basket. They had pictures on the walls. Most of them were of [Washington](javascript:void(0);)and [Lafayette](javascript:void(0);), battles, and [Highland Mary](javascript:void(0);). One was a picture called “Signing the Declaration.” There were some portraits that they called [crayon](javascript:void(0);)s, which were drawn by one of their daughters who had died had made of herself. She had drawn them when she was only fifteen years old. These pictures were different from any I’d ever seen; they were darker than usual. One was of a woman in a slim black dress that was belted tightly under the armpits and had bulges that looked like cabbages in the middle of the sleeves. She wore a large black scoop-shovel bonnet with a black veil, and she had tiny black slippers, which looked like chisels, with black tape crisscrossing her slim white ankles. She was standing under a weeping willow, leaning pensively with her right elbow on a tombstone. Her other hand hung down by her side and held a white handkerchief and a purse. Underneath the picture it said, “Shall I Never See The More Alas.”. Another picture showed a young lady with her hair combed straight and tied in a knot at the top of her head in front of a comb, making it look like the back of a chair. She was crying into a handkerchief and holding in one hand a dead bird lying on its back with its heels up. Underneath that picture it said, “I Shall Never Hear Thy Sweet Chirrup More Alas.” There was another one of a young lady with tears running down her cheeks looking out of a window at the moon. She had an open letter in one hand with a black wax seal visible on one edge. She was pressing a locket and chain against her mouth, and underneath the picture it said, “And Art Though Gone Yes Thou Art Gone Alas.” They were all nice pictures, I suppose. But I didn’t really like them very much. They would give me the chills whenever I was feeling a little down. Everyone was sad that she had died, because she had planning to draw a lot more of these pictures. You could see by the ones she had drawn what a great loss it had been. But I suppose, given her disposition, she was having a much better time in the graveyard. She had said that she was working on her greatest picture when she fell sick, and that she prayed every day and night that she could live long enough to finish. But she never didn’t. She was working on a picture of a young woman in a long white gown standing on the rail of a bridge. Her hair was falling down her back and she was looking up at the moon with tears running down her face. She was getting ready to jump off. She had two arms folded across her chest, two arms stretched out in front, and two more reaching up toward the moon. The young woman in the picture had a nice, sweet face, but she had so many arms that she looked like a spider. The daughter was going to see which pair would look best and then scratch out all the others. But, as I said, she died before she had the chance to make up her mind. They kept this picture over the head of the bed in her room, and they hung flowers on it every time her birthday came around. At other times, it was partially hidden behind a little curtain. When she was alive, this young girl had kept a scrapbook where she used to paste obituaries and reports of accidents and stories of suffering patients from the Presbyterian Observer. She’d also write poetry about these articles. It was very good poetry. For example, here’s what she wrote about a boy named Stephen Dowling Bots, who had fallen down a well and drowned: ODE TO STEPHEN DOWLING BOTS, DECEASED And did young Stephen sicken, And did young Stephen die? And did the sad hearts thicken, And did the mourners cry? No; such was not the fate of, Young Stephen Dowling Bots; Though sad hearts round him thickened, ‘Twas not from sickness’s shots. No whooping cough did rack his frame, Nor measles drear with spots; Not thes impaired the sacred name, Of Stephen Dowling Bots. Despised love struck not with woe, That head of curly knots; Nor stomach troubles laid him low, Young Stephen Dowling Bots.

|  |
| --- |
| Oh no. Then listen with tearful eye, |
| Whilst I his fate do tell. |
| His soul did from this cold world fly |
| By falling down a well. |
| They got him out and emptied him; |
| Alas it was too late; |
| His spirit was gone to sport aloft, |
| In the realms of the good and great. |

In the realms of the good and great. If Emmeline Grangerford could write poetry like that before she was fourteen, there’s not telling what she could have done had she lived. Buck said she could rattle off poetry like it was nothing. She didn’t even have to stop and think about it first. He said she would write down a line and then just scratch it out and write another one if she couldn’t come up with anything to rhyme with it. She wasn’t particular—she could write about anything you wanted, just so long as it was sad. Every time a man, woman, or child died, she would be right there with her “tribute” before the body was even cold. She called them tributes, you know. The neighbors said that if someone died, they’d first expect the doctor, then Emmeline, then the undertaker, who only once got in before Emmeline. This so traumatized Emmeline that she delayed writing a tribute for the deceased, a guy named Whistler. She wasn’t the same after that. She never complained, but she kind of pined away and didn’t live much longer. Poor thing. Many times, when her pictures started bothering me and I started thinking less of her, I made myself go up to her old bedroom to read from her old scrapbook. I liked the whole family—those dead and alive—and wasn’t going to let anything come between us. Poor Emmeline had written poetry about dead people when she’d been alive, and it didn’t seem right that there wasn’t anyone to write poems for her now that she was dead. I tried to come up with a verse or two on my own, but I just couldn’t do it for some reason. The family kept Emmeline’s room nice and clean, with everything arranged just the way she had liked having them when she’d been alive. No one ever slept there. Even though they owned plenty of n------, the old lady took care of the room herself. She often sewed and read her Bible in there. Well, as I said before, there were beautiful curtains on the windows of the parlor. They were white, and they had pictures of vine-covered castles and cattle coming to drink from the moat painted on them. There was also a little old piano in the room that had in pans in it. There wasn’t anything nicer than listening to the ladies sing “The Last Link is Broken” and play “The Battle of Prague” on that piano. The walls of all the rooms were plastered, and most rooms had carpets on the floors. The whole house was whitewashed on the outside. The house was a duplex, and the big open space between the two parts had a floor and roof. This space was cool and comfortable, and sometimes in the middle of the day, they set up a table there. Nothing could be better. Plus, the cooking was good, and there was a ton of it!

***Synopsis:***

A man calls off the dogs, saving [Huck](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/huckleberry-huck-finn/), who introduces himself as “George Jackson.” The man invites “George” into his house, where the hosts express an odd suspicion that Huck is a member of a family called the Shepherdsons. Eventually, Huck’s hosts decide that he is not a Shepherdson. The lady of the house tells Buck, a boy about Huck’s age, to get Huck some dry clothes. Buck says he would have killed a Shepherdson had there been any Shepherdsons present. Buck tells Huck a riddle, but Huck does not understand the concept of riddles. Buck says Huck must stay with him and they will have great fun. Huck, meanwhile, invents an elaborate story to explain how he was orphaned.

Buck’s family, the Grangerfords, offer to let Huck stay with them for as long as he likes. Huck innocently admires the house and its humorously tacky finery, including the work of a deceased daughter, Emmeline, who created unintentionally funny sentimental artwork and poems about people who died. Settling in with the Grangerfords and enjoying their kindness, Huck thinks that “nothing couldn’t be better” than life at the comfortable house.

***Significance:***

[Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) calls out and asks to have the dogs called off. He introduces himself as George Jackson. The man confirms Huck is not a "Shepherdson" and then acts kindly. They get him dry clothes and food and offer to let him stay as long as he would like. Huck gives them a story about his background. The family name is Grangerford. They have a big house, and Huck admires it and the furnishings.

There is a son in the family, Buck, who is around Huck's age. Buck and Huck hang out together and become friendly. A daughter in the family, Emmeline, had passed away at a young age. Her artwork is around the house, and Huck hears her poetry, which are eulogies for the dead. He finds out that when someone died, Emmeline would arrive on the scene even before the undertaker.

The Grangerford family treats [Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) well. They take pity on him and offer him anything he needs. Their actions represent the best of Southern hospitality. However, their kindness is tinged with an edge. Had Huck been a member of the Shepherdson family, Buck says he would have killed him right there. He gives no reason for why he would kill him other than his being there. So much for Southern hospitality.

Emmeline's obsession with death is odd. Why should a young girl be so intrigued by death? The fact that her poetic "tributes" take precedence over an undertaker's care for the dead is so morbid that it is comical. Emmeline represents the South's obsession with honor. In her view honor comes with death. This is evident in the shrine that is created in her honor after she dies.

***Summary:***

* While Huck is busy standing motionless to avoid being mauled to death by the dogs, a voice from the nearby house asks him who he is.
* Huck, a.k.a. Master of Deception, responds "George Jackson."
* The voice then wants to know if he's associated with "the Shepherdsons." Since he's not, he's welcomed inside the house by several men with guns. Guns pointed *at him*.
* Once the guns are put away, we meet the family: Saul, the old gentlemen; Rachel, the old lady; Buck, the young boy about Huck's age of thirteen or fourteen.
* Are their rhyming names a coincidence? We think not.
* Oh, and Betsy, their black slave.
* Buck takes Huck upstairs to get him some dry clothes, and we see that, just like Huck and, we would guess, every other adolescent boy ever, he isn't a big fan of "comb[ing] up on Sundays and all that kind of foolishness" (17.46).
* Huck eats a meal together with the family and spins them some great lies about his family in Arkansas.
* Everything is [copasetic](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/copacetic) until he wakes up the next morning having forgotten his made-up name.
* Yet the great Huck is not to be discouraged. He just taunts Buck and bets him he can't spell his (Huck's) name.
* Clever. Although Buck spells "Jackson" as "Jaxon," but whatevs.
* Huck tells us some more about this family and their house. It seems they're rather affluent for the time and place, and Huck is impressed with their collection of books (on religion, art, poetry, and politics).
* He also comments on the pictures on the wall, which were done by one of the daughters of the family—a daughter that has since passed away. They're rather macabre, so Huck reckons that, "with her disposition, she was having a better time in the graveyard" (17.62).
* The girl—whose name was Emmeline Grangerford—kept a scrapbook with poems that equally macabre. Huck feels bad that she wrote poems but no one wrote one for her when she died.
* So he gives it a shot.
* It doesn't go so well.
* Failed poetry aside, Huck is having a grand old time living with the Grangerfords, wearing Buck's clothes, and eating their food.

***Analysis:***

Huck knows better than to run when surrounded by dogs, and stands stock still. Within a few moments, a man calls out to him from the house telling him to be still. After several of the men in the house prepare their rifles, Huck is allowed to approach. He cautiously enters the house and when the family sees him, they immediately become friendly. Huck has happened upon the Grangerford household, which is in a drawn out and violent feud with the nearby Shepherdson family. When the Grangerfords recognize that Huck is no relation to the Shepherdsons, they welcome him with open arms.

Huck tells the family that he is an orphan named [George Jackson](https://www.gradesaver.com/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/study-guide/character-list#george-jackson) from down south who has lost everything, and arrived at their home after falling off of a steamboat. The Grangerfords offer him a place in their home and he agrees to stay. The youngest son, Buck, is near to Huck's age and they soon become good friends.

As Huck grows acclimated to his new home, he learns that the family had a younger daughter named Emmeline who passed away several years earlier. She was a talented poet and painter, and concentrated her work on eulogies for the dead. Huck thinks Emmeline's poetry is very beautiful and wishes that he could compose some lines devoted to Emmeline, but is unable to come up with anything.

The family is quite wealthy considering their location. They own a fairly large house with nice furnishings and even have intellectual books in the parlor. Huck is happy to stay there, especially when he discovers their wonderful cooking.

***Synopsis:***

This chapter begins one of the most touching adventures in Twain's book. It begins when Huck, now stranded after the raft accident, goes ashore, finding a double log house, where he is taken in by the owners, after a rather alarming confrontation. The chief concern of the residents, who are armed and seemingly dangerous, is whether or not Huck is a Shepherdson. Of course, he is not, anymore than he is the George Jackson he pretends to be.

He is invited in and treated almost immediately as family, soon befriending Buck Grangerford, who is about his age. He loves the food and the house décor. They buy his story of how he had to leave home after his father died. The family's house is filled with crockery and brass dog irons and a large fireplace and he feels very much at home. There are pictures everywhere of American patriots. He relates a touching story about Emily Grangerford, who died very young, but not before creating touching pictures and wrote poetry that moved Huck deeply.

Again, it seems that Huckleberry is very lucky, having stumbled on a comfortable place to stay when he has been stranded by an errant steamboat. Twain takes much care to paint the circumstances of his new home in great detail. Still, of course, the reader will not forget the strange circumstances in which he is confronted by the Grangerfords and the mysterious Shepherdsons they are so concerned about.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

A man, speaking out of a window into the darkness, commands the dogs to hush and asks, “Who’s there?” [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) says that he’s George Jackson, only a boy. The man asks if Huck knows the [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons). Huck says that he does not, but the man remains skeptical. Nevertheless, he invites Huck into the house, but tells him that, if anybody is with him, Huck better tell them to stay back lest they be shot. Huck slowly approaches and enters the house, greeted by a family, the [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons), some of whom are armed. All of them agree, though, that Huck is not a Shepherdson.

***Analysis Part 1:***

As a rule, Huck, however receptive and empathetic, distrusts the people he meets on his travels, giving false names as a matter of course. But, as this scene makes clear, it’s not only Huck who is distrustful: the Grangerford who invites Huck into his home is skeptical of Huck too. While it is good of the Grangerfords to overcome their distrust, it is also sad that their society is structured in such a way as to engender such distrust at all.

***Summary Part 2:***

The [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) are welcoming and friendly and provide [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) with a meal, clothes, and a place to stay. The boy who lends Huck clothes, Buck, is about as old as Huck is. He boasts that if there had really been [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) outside, he would have killed one. His father tells Buck that he’ll get his chance to do just that, but all in good time. After changing into dry clothes and speaking with Buck, Huck goes down into the parlor to find the Grangerfords smoking and talking. He eats and talks with them. The family assures Huck that he can stay with them for as long as he likes.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Buck is like Huck in almost every way, even in the sound of their names, except for the fact that he is embroiled in an inherited family feud. While the Grangerfords seem good, that the youngest of them should be so bloody in his thoughts is shocking. Of course, Buck cannot be held accountable for his involvement in the feud. As Huck was harmed by his father, so too is Buck harmed by his, though in a subtler way.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) admires the [Grangerford](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons)’s home, many of the features of which, like the brass doorknob and the brick-bottomed fireplace, are more characteristic of a house in town than in the country. Huck also admires the family’s collection of books, which includes classics like Pilgrim’s Progress, which Huck finds “interesting” but “tough.” Hanging on the parlor walls are pictures depicting people and scenes from Revolutionary America, like George Washington and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Huck and Pap’s household is contrasted with the Grangerford household: whereas the former is characterized by laziness and meanness, the latter is civil, literate, and historically conscious. Despite all their cultivation, however, the Grangerfords are still hypocritically engaged in a barbaric feud with the Shepherdson family.

***Summary Part 4:***

Also hanging on the walls are pictures painted by a member of the Grangerford family, Emmeline, a little girl who died young, all of which are dark in theme and color. Her masterpiece is of a woman preparing to jump from a bridge, but [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) thinks the woman looks too “spidery.” Emmeline also wrote poetry about the deaths of men, women, and children; for example, a ballad for a boy who drowned in a well. Huck likes Emmeline’s art, and even tries to pay tribute to her with a poem of his own, but he proves unable to write one. Emmeline’s room, Huck says, is kept the same as it was on the day she died.

***Analysis Part 4:***

If Huck is a vital realist in his speech and actions, Emmeline is a morbid romantic, whose imagination is as grandiose as Tom Sawyer’s, but much darker. Could it be the case, though, that her art is about death only because it is a classical artistic subject? The literary form at which Huck is most at home is the novel, which, unlike Emmeline’s poems, is stuffed to the brim with life.