***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

***Chapter 18:***

***Translation:***

Colonel Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was pure gentleman, and his family was just as noble. He was of good breeding, as the saying goes, and the widow Douglas always said breeding is just as valuable for a man as it is for a racehorse. No one ever denied that she was of the finest aristocratic stock in our town, either. Pap had always said that too, though he was from about as fine a quality lineage as a catfish. Col. Grangerford was very tall and very slim, and he had a gray complexion. There was no sign of red anywhere in his face. He sahved his face clean every morning. He had very thin lips and nostrils, a high nose, heavy eyebrows, and very black eyes sunk so deeply into his head that you would swear they were looking out at you from within a cavern. He had a high forehead, his hair was black and straight and fell to his shoulders, and his hands were long and thin. Every day he put on a clean shirt and a full suit that was made out of linen so white it hurt your eyes when you looked at it. On Sundays, he wore a suit with blue tailcoats and brass buttons. He carried a mahogany cane that had a silver head. There was nothing frivolous about him, not one bit. And he was never loud. He was as kind as a person could be—you could just feel that, you know, and so you could rest at ease a bit. Sometimes he smiled, which was good to see. But whenever he straightened himself up like a [liberty pole](javascript:void(0);)and the lightning began to flicker out from under his eyebrows, you wanted to climb a tree first and ask questions later. He never had to remind anyone to mind their manners, because everyone was always on their best behavior around him. Everyone loved to have him around, too. He was fairly sunny most of the time—I mean, he made you feel like there was good weather about. When his mood became stormy, things would be awfully dark for a moment. But then his mood clear up, and everything would be fine again for about a week. When he and the old lady came downstairs in the morning, the whole family got out of their chairs to say good morning to them, and they wouldn’t sit down again until the two of them had sat down. Then Tom and Bob mixed a glass of [bitters](javascript:void(0);)from the decanter on the counter and handed it to him. He held it in his hand and waited until Tom and Bob’s drinks were mixed. Then they all bowed and said, “Our duty to you, sir and madam.” And then THEY made a small bow, said thank you, and all three of them drank. Then Bob and Tom poured a spoonful of water on the sugar and smidge of whisky or apple brandy that was in the bottom of their tumblers, and gave it to Buck and me. Then we toasted and drank to the old people, too. Bob was the oldest, and Tom was the second oldest. They were tall, beautiful men with very broad shoulders, brown faces, long black hair, and black eyes. They dressed in white linen from head to toe, just like the old gentleman, and they wore [Panama hat](javascript:void(0);)s. Then there was Miss Charlotte. She was twenty-five years old, tall, proud, and grand. She was as good as a person could be when she wasn’t worked up, but when something stirred her, she could give you a look that would make you wilt on the spot, just like her father could. She was beautiful. Her sister, Miss Sophia, was also beautiful, but it a different kind of beautiful. She was as gentle and sweet as a dove, and she was only twenty. Each person had their own n----- to wait on them—even Buck. My n----- had it pretty easy, because I wasn’t used to having someone do things for me. Buck’s n-----, however, was on the go most of the time. That was all that was left of the family, but there used to be more—three sons had been killed, and Emmeline had died. The old gentleman owned a lot of farms and over a hundred n------. Sometimes a ton of people would come to the house, having traveled on horseback from ten or fifteen miles away. They’d stay five or six days, and make such a ruckus around the house and river. They would dance and picnic in the woods during the day, and throw balls at the house at night. Most of these people were relatives. The men brought their guns with them. They were a finely-bred group, let me tell you. There was another aristocratic clan around those parts—made up of five or six families—by the name of Shepherdson. They were as high class, wellborn, rich, and grand as the Grangerfords. The Shepherdsons and the Grangerfords used the same steamboat landing, which was about two miles up the river from our house. So sometimes when I went up there with a lot of our folks, I would see a lot of the Shepherdsons riding their fine horses there. One day Buck and I were deep in the woods hunting. We heard a horse coming as we were crossing the road. Buck said: “Quick! Into the woods!” We dove into the woods, and then peered out through the leaves. Pretty soon, a splendid young man came galloping down the road, riding his horse gracefully and looking like a soldier. He had his gun resting across the horn of his saddle. I’d seen him before—it was young Harney Shepherdson. I heard Buck’s gun go off next to my ear, and saw Harney’s hat tumble off his head. He grabbed his gun and rode straight to the spot where we were hiding. But we didn’t wait—we started running through the woods. The woods weren’t thick, so I looked over my shoulder to dodge the bullets. Twice I saw Harney aim his gun at Buck. Then he rode back the way he’d come—to get his hat I guess, though I couldn’t see. We didn’t stop running until we got home. The old gentleman’s eyes blazed for a minute—mainly because he was pleased, I think—then his face calmed down, and he said gently: “I don’t like the fact that you shot him from behind the bush. Why didn’t you step out into the road, my boy?” “The Shepherdsons don’t do that, father. They always take any advantage they can get.” Miss Charlotte held her head up like a queen while Buck was telling the story. Her nostrils flared and her eyes snapped. The two young men brooded, but they didn’t say anything. Miss Sophia turned pale, but her color came back when she found out that the man hadn’t been hurt. As soon as I could get Buck alone by the [corn cribs](javascript:void(0);)under the trees, I said: “Did you want to kill him, Buck?” “You bet I did.” “Why? What did he do to you?” “Him? He never did anything to me.” “Well, why did you want to kill him, then?” “No reason—just because of the feud.” “What’s a feud?” “What? Where were you raised? Don’t you know what a feud is?” “I’ve never heard of it before—tell me about it.” “Well,” Buck said, “a feud works like this: A man gets in a fight with another man and kills him. Then that other man’s brother kills HIM. Then the rest of the brothers from both sides go after each other. Then the cousins get involved. Pretty soon, everyone’s been killed off, and the feud’s over. This all happens kind of slowly, and takes place over a long time.” “Has this one been going on for a long time, Buck?” “I would say so! It started around thirty years ago. There was a fight over something, and then a lawsuit to settle it. The suit went against one guy, so he went and shot the man that won the suit—which he had to do, of course. Any man would have done the same.” “What was the fight about, Buck? Was it over land?” “I suppose it was—I don’t know.” “Well, who did the shooting? Was it a Grangerford or a Shepherdson?” “Lord, how should I know? It was so long ago.” “Doesn’t anyone know?” “Oh sure, I’d guess pa knows, and some of the other old people. But they’ve probably forgotten what the fight was about in the first place.” “Have a lot of people been killed, Buck?” “Yes. there’s been many funerals. But people don’t always die when they get shot. Pa has some buckshot in him, but he doesn’t mind because it doesn’t weigh much. Bob’s been carved up with a Bowie knife before, and Tom’s been hurt once or twice.” “Has anyone been killed this year, Buck?” “Yes—we killed one, and they killed one. About three months ago, my fourteen year old cousin, Bud, was riding through the woods on the other side of the river. He wasn’t carrying any weapons, which was plain foolish. He was in a secluded spot when he suddenly heard a horse coming up from behind. He saw it was old Baldy Shepherdson riding up with, gun in his hand and white hair flying in the wind. Instead of dismounting and running into the bush, Bud decided to try and outrun him. The chase went on for about five miles, with the old man gaining on him the whole time. Bud finally realized it wouldn’t be any use to keep running. He stopped and turned to face the old man, so that the bullet holes would be in the front of his body, you know. The old man just rode up and shot him down. He didn’t get much chance to celebrate, though. Our people killed him within the week.” “It sounds to me like that old man was a coward, Buck.” “I would say he WASN’T a coward. Not by a long shot. There isn’t a coward among those Shepherdsons—not one. And there aren’t any cowards among the Grangerfords either. Why, that old man fought for half an hour again three Grangerfords—and he came out the winner. They were all on horseback. He jumped off his horse and ducked behind a little pile of wood, keeping his horse in front of him to block the bullets. But the Grangerfords stayed on their horses, circling the old man and shooting at him, and the old man kept shooting back. He and his horse were both shot up when they got back home, but the Grangerfords had to be BROUGHT home—one of them was dead and another died the next day. No, sir—if you’re looking for cowards, don’t waste your time looking among the Shepherdsons. You won’t find them.” On the next Sunday, we all went to church about three miles away. Everyone rode on horseback. The men brought their guns with them, as did Buck. They kept the guns between their knees or leaned against the wall to keep them accessible. The Shepherdsons did the same. The sermon was terrible—all about brotherly love and other nonsense—but everyone said it was a good sermon and talked about it the whole way home. They had a lot to say about faith, good deeds, grace, [preforeordestination](javascript:void(0);), and I don’t know what all else. It seemed to me to be one of the worst Sundays I’d ever had. Everyone started dozing off about an hour after dinner, some in their chairs and some in their rooms. Things were getting pretty dull. Buck and his dog were stretched out asleep on the grass in the sun. I went up to our room, planning to take a nap myself. I found sweet Miss Sophia standing in the doorway of her room, which was next to ours. She took me into her room and shut the door. She asked me if I liked her, and I said I did. Then she asked me if I would do something for her and not tell anyone. I said I would. She said she’d accidentally left her Bible at the church. It was in her seat, between two other books. She asked if I could sneak out and bring it back to her without saying anything to anyone. I said I would, and I snuck out and headed down the road. There wasn’t anyone in the church, except maybe a hog or two. The door had no lock, and pigs like to lie on the cool hardwood floors in the summer. If you pay attention, you’ll notice that most folks don’t go to church unless they have to. Pigs are different, though. Something’s up, I said to myself. It’s not normal for a girl to be so worried about a Bible. So I picked up the book, shook it a bit, and a piece of paper fell out. It said “HALF PAST TWO O’CLOCK” in pencil. I looked through the rest of the book, but couldn’t find anything else. I didn’t understand what the message meant, so I put the paper back inside, and headed back home. When I got there, Miss Sophia was waiting for me up in her room. She pulled me inside and shut the door. Then she looked in the Bible until she found the paper. She looked glad as she read it. Before I knew it, she had grabbed me and squeezed me tightly and said I was the best boy in the world. She also reminded me not to tell anyone. Her face was red for a minute. When I got my breath back, I asked her what the paper was all about. She asked me if I had read it, and I said no. And then she asked me if I could read at all, and I said, “Not really—only [coarse hand](javascript:void(0);).” Then she said the paper was only a bookmark to help keep her place. Then she said that I could go and play now. I headed off down to the river, thinking this over. Pretty soon, I noticed that my n----- was following me. When we were out of view of the house, he looked all around for a second, and then ran up to me saying: “Master George, if you come down to the swamp, I’ll show a whole bunch of[water moccasins](javascript:void(0);).” That’s odd, I thought, he said the same thing yesterday. He should know no one likes water moccasins enough to go hunting for them. I wondered what he was up to, so I said: “All right, lead the way.” I followed him for about half a mile, and then he started heading across the swamp. We waded in ankle-deep water for about another half mile until we came to a flat little piece of land. It was dry and thick with trees, bushes, and vines. He said: “Go right in there just a few feet, Master George. That’s where they are. I’ve seen them before, and I don’t care to see them anymore.” Then he started walking away, and pretty soon he disappeared into the trees. I headed in the direction he’d pointed until I came to an open space about the size of a bedroom. It was draped with hanging vines and there was a man lying there fast asleep. By golly, it was my old Jim!” I woke him up. I imagined he was going to be really surprised to see me again, but he wasn’t. He was so glad that he nearly cried, but he wasn’t surprised. He said he’d swum along behind me the night the boat hit us. He heard me yelling, but he didn’t answer because he didn’t want anyone to catch HIM and reenslave him. He said: “I’d been injured just a little and couldn’t swim very fast, so I was far behind you. After you’d landed, I figured I could catch up with you on land without having to shout to you. But I slowed down when I saw that house. I was too far away to hear what they said to you, and I was afraid of the dogs. But when things quieted down again and I knew you were in the house, I headed out into the woods to wait for a day. Some n------ passed by early in the morning as they were headed out to the fields. They helped me and showed me this place where the dogs wouldn’t find me because of the water. They brought me food to eat every night and told me how you were doing.” “Why didn’t you tell my Jack to bring me here sooner?” “Well, it wasn’t any use to bother you, Huck, until we could do something. But we’re okay now. I bought pots and pans and food when I got the chance and I’ve been patching up the raft at night when….” “WHAT raft, Jim?” “Our old raft.” “Are you telling me that our raft wasn’t smashed to pieces?” “No, it wasn’t. It had been torn up an awful lot, especially one end of it. The damage wasn’t serious, though we did lose most of our traps. We’d have been able to see the raft if we hadn’t dove so deep and swum so far under the water, and if the night hadn’t been so dark and we weren’t scared out of our minds. But it’s just as well that we didn’t see it, because now it’s all fixed up and almost as good as new. And we’ve got a lot of new stuff to replace what was lost.” “But how did you get the raft back again, Jim—did you catch it?” “How would I be able to catch it when I’ve been in the woods? No, some of the n------ found it on a nearby snag at a bend in the river. They hid it in a creek among the willows. They were talking so much about which of them now owned it that pretty soon I heard about it too. I set them all straight by telling them that it didn’t belong to any of them because it was ours. I asked them if they were going to steal a young white gentleman’s property and get beaten for it. Then I gave them ten cents each. They were happy with that and wished more rafts would come along and make them rich. They’ve been really good to me, these n------. I don’t ever have to ask them twice to help me with whatever I need, kid. Your n-----’s a good one, and pretty smart.” “Yes, he is. He didn’t even tell me that you were here—he told me to follow him so that he could show me some water moccasins. That way, if anything bad happens, he won’t be in trouble. He can honestly say he’s never seen us together.” I don’t want to talk much about the day that followed, so I guess I’ll just sum it up quickly. I woke up at dawn and was going to roll over and go back to sleep when I noticed how quiet everything was—there didn’t seem to be anyone else stirring in the house. That wasn’t normal. Then I noticed that Buck was gone. I got up, wondering what was going on. I went downstairs, but there wasn’t anyone around. Everything was as still as a mouse. It was just the same outside. What’s going on, I wondered. I ran across my Jack down by the woodpile. I said: “What’s going on?” He said:   
“Don’t you know, Master George?”

“No,” I said. “I don’t.” “Well, Miss Sophia has run away! Yes sir, she has! She ran off sometime in the middle of the night. No one knows where she went. They think she just ran off to get married to that young Harney Shepherdson. The family found out about it about half an hour ago or so. I TELL you they didn’t waste any time taking action. You’ve never seen such a flurry of guns and horses! The women went gather the rest of the relatives, and old Master Saul and the boys took the guns and went up the river road to catch that young man and kill him before he can get across the river with Miss Sophia. I’d bet it’s about to get rough.” “Buck left without waking me up?” “Well, sure he did! They weren’t going to mix you up in this business. Master Buck loaded his gun and said he was going to kill a Shepherdson or die trying. Well, there will be plenty of them, I imagine, an you can bet he’ll kill one if he gets the chance.” I ran up the river road as fast as I could. Pretty soon I began to hear guns firing way off in the woods. When I came within sight of the log store and the woodpile where the steamboats land, I began to follow along the treeline and brush until I found a good spot. I was about to hide behind a four-foot high pile of boards that was a little in front of a cottonwood tree, but I decided to climb a tree instead. I climbed up into the forked branches to watch, and it was a lucky thing that I did. There were four or five men galloping around on their horses in open space in front of the log store. They were swearing and yelling and trying to get at a couple of young guys who were hiding behind another woodpile near the steamboat landing. They couldn’t make it to the landing, though, because they were getting shot at every time they showed themselves on the river side of the woodpile. The two guys were squatting back to back behind the pile, so they could see in both directions. Pretty soon the men stopped galloping around and yelling. They started riding toward the store. One of the guys behind the woodpile got up, drew a steady bead with his gun over the woodpile, and shot. One of the men on horseback fell out of his saddle. The men jumped off their horses, grabbed the injured man, and started to carry him to the store. That’s when the two guys behind the woodpile started to run. They got halfway to the tree where I was hiding before the other men noticed them. The men jumped on their horses and charged after them. They gained quickly, but it didn’t do any good because the guys had such a good head start. The two men reached the woodpile right in front of my tree and slipped behind it. This gave them the upper hand again. One of the boys was Buck, and the other was a skinny kid about nineteent years old. The men galloped around some more, then rode away. As soon as they were out of sight I called down to Buck. He couldn’t see me, so he was awfully surprised—he didn’t know what to make of my voice coming out of the tree. Then he told me to keep a lookout and let him know when the men came back in sight. He said they were playing some trick and would be back soon. I wished I weren’t in that tree, but I couldn’t risk coming down. Buck began to cry and curse. He said that he and his cousin Joe—that was the other kid—would pay them back for what happened today. He said that his father and his two brothers had been killed as well as two or three Shepherdsons. He said the Shepherdsons had ambushed them. He said that he and his father and brothers should have waited for their relatives to come since the Shepherdsons were too strong for them. I asked what had happened to young Harney and Miss Sophia. He said they’d safely gotten across the river. I was glad to hear that, but Buck carried on about not having been able to kill Harney that day in the woods. I’d never heard anything like it. All of a sudden there was a Bang! Bang! Bang! Three or four guns went off—the men had snuck around through the woods and come in on foot from behind! Both of the boys got injured, but they ran for the river. As they swum downstream with the current, the men ran up to the bank and started shooting at them, yelling, “Kill them! Kill them!” The scene made me so sick that I nearly fell out of the tree. It would make me sick to tell EVERYTHING that happened there. Seeing such things made me wished I’d never come to shore that night. I’ll never forget what I saw. I dream about it a lot. I was so afraid to come down that I stayed in the tree until it began to get dark. Sometimes I would hear the sound of guns way off in the woods. Twice I saw little gangs of men with guns gallop past the log store, so I figured that the fighting was still going on. I was feeling pretty sad. I made up my mind that I would never go near that house again, because I figured that I was somehow to blame. I figured that piece of paper meant that Miss Sophia was supposed to meet Harney somewhere at half past two o’clock so that they could run off together. And I figured I ought to have told her father about the paper and the funny way she’d acted. Then maybe he would have locked her up and this awful mess wouldn’t have happened. Once I got down out of the tree, I crept downstream along the riverbank for a bit. I found two bodies lying in the edge of the water, and I tugged them ashore. Then I covered up their faces and snuck away as quickly as I could. I cried a little when I was covering up Buck’s face, because he’d been really good to me. It was dark now. I didn’t go near the house. Instead I headed back into the woods toward the swamp. Jim wasn’t on his island, so I hurried off toward the creek. I pushed through the willows, anxious to jump aboard the raft and get out of this awful place. But the raft was gone! My goodness, I was so scared! It took me a moment to catch my breath. Then I started yelling. A voice not twenty-five feet away from me said: “Good land! Is that you, kid? Don’t make any more noise.” It was Jim’s voice. Nothing had ever sounded so good before. I ran along the bank a bit and got aboard. Jim grabbed me and hugged me, he was so glad to see me. He said: “Lord bless you, child. Again, I was sure you were dead. Jack’s been here—he says he supposed you’d been shot because you never came back home. So I was going to head out on the raft this very minute toward the mouth of the creek. I was all ready to leave as soon as he came back again and told me for certain that you WERE dead. Lord, I’m mighty glad to have you back again, kid.” I said: “All right—that’s great—that means they won’t be able to find me. They’ll think I’ve been killed and floated down the river. Something’s up there that will help make them think that I am dead, so… so don’t waste any time, Jim. Just head toward the big river as fast as you can.” I couldn’t relax until the raft was about two miles down river and out in the middle of the Mississippi. Then we hoisted our signal lantern and figured that we were free and safe once again. I hadn’t had a bite to eat since the day before, so Jim got out some fried cornmeal, buttermlike, pork, cabbage, and greens. There nothing in the world that’s better than when those things are cooked just right. While I ate my supper we talked and had a good time. I was awfully glad to get away from the feuds, and Jim was just as glad to get away from the swamp. We agreed there was no better home than a raft. Other places seem claustrophobic, but a raft doesn’t. You can feel free and relaxed and comfortable on a raft.

***Synopsis:***

Huck admires Colonel Grangerford, the master of the house, and his supposed gentility. A warmhearted man, the colonel owns a very large estate with over a hundred slaves. Everyone in the household treats the colonel with great courtesy. The Grangerford children include Bob, the oldest; then Tom; then Charlotte, age twenty-five; Sophia, age twenty; and finally Buck. All of them are beautiful.

One day, Buck tries to shoot a young man named Harney Shepherdson but misses. Huck asks why Buck wanted to kill Harney, and Buck explains that the Grangerfords are in a feud with a neighboring clan of families, the Shepherdsons. No one can remember how or why the feud started, but in the last year, two people have been killed, including a fourteen-year-old Grangerford. The two families attend church together and hold their rifles between their knees as the minister preaches about brotherly love.

After church one day, Sophia Grangerford has Huck retrieve a copy of the Bible from the pews. She is delighted to find inside a note with the words “Half-past two” written on it. Later, Huck’s slave valet leads Huck deep into the swamp and tells Huck he wants to show him some water-moccasins. Huck finds [Jim](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/jim/) there, much to his surprise. Jim says that he followed Huck to the shore the night they were wrecked but did not dare call out for fear of being caught. Some slaves found the raft, but Jim reclaimed it by threatening the slaves and telling them that it belonged to his white master.

The next day, Huck learns that Sophia Grangerford has run off with Harney Shepherdson. In the woods, Huck finds Buck and a nineteen-year-old Grangerford in a gunfight with the Shepherdsons. Both of the Grangerfords are killed. Deeply disturbed, Huck heads for Jim and the raft, and the two shove off downstream.

***Significance:***

Once on shore, [Huck](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/character-analysis/huckleberry-finn) finds himself at an impressive log house owned by the Grangerford family. After they are convinced that Huck is not a member of the Shepherdson family, the Grangerfords take Huck in, give him warm clothes, and feed him. Huck tells everyone that his name is George Jackson and that he fell off a passing steamboat.

The Grangerfords have a son named Buck, who is about Huck's age, and the two become close friends over the next few days. Huck admires the stately house with its large fireplaces, ornate door locks, and elaborate decor. The morbid paintings and poetry of Emmeline, a deceased daughter of the Grangerfords, also fascinate him.

Huck soon learns that the Grangerfords share a steamboat landing with another aristocratic family named Shepherdson. When Huck and Buck go hunting, Buck takes a shot at young Harney Shepherdson and misses. While the boys run away, Huck notices that Harney has a chance to shoot Buck but rides away instead. Huck wonders about Harney but finally decides he was going after his hat. In response to Huck's questions, Buck explains that the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons have been feuding for so long that no one remembers why it began in the first place.

After Huck delivers a message for Sophia Grangerford, he is taken over to the swamp by one of the family's many slaves. Among the trees, Huck finds [Jim](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/character-analysis/jim), who says that he has found the raft. The next day, Miss Sophia elopes with Harney Shepherdson. The bizarre feud escalates, and several men on both sides of the family are killed, including Buck. Huck regrets ever coming ashore and cannot tell us "all that happened" because it would make him sick to do so. He rejoins Jim, and the two decide a raft is the best home.

The introduction of the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons adds a new element of humor to [Twain](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/mark-twain-biography)'s novel. Whereas earlier Twain satirizes the actions of "common" townspeople, the stately families provide a perfect opportunity for Twain to burlesque the Southern code of chivalry and aristocracy of the antebellum South. The Grangerford's house represents a gaudy and tasteless display of wealth, and Huck's appreciation of the decor only adds to the humor. The decor that exemplifies the Grangerford's taste is the artistic work of Emmeline, the deceased daughter who pined away after failing to discover a rhyme for "Whistler." In contrast to Huck's practical fascination with death, Emmeline's work displays a romantic and sentimental obsession that even gives Huck the "fantods."

Twain also uses the families to underscore his subtle satire on religion, as the two families attend the same church, leaning their guns against the walls during the sermon about "brotherly love." The mixture of theology and gunplay is ironic, as is the family's subsequent reaction that the sermon was filled with positive messages about "faith and good work and free grace and preforeordestination." Twain's Calvinist background resurfaces in his combination of predestination and foreordination.

The feud between the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons is one of the more memorable chapters in *Huck Finn* because of its extreme violence. The fact that the two noble families do not know why they continue to fight is ironic, but the irony deepens when the families actually draw blood. Huck's casual observance turns into participation, and when he witnesses the death of his young friend, Buck, he is unable to recount the story to readers. The hated calls of "Kill them, kill them!" prompt Huck to wish that he had never gone ashore, despite his affection for the Grangerfords. The theme of death and brutality, then, is present in all facets of society, including the wealthy, and the peace of the river is never more apparent to Huck.

When Huck returns to the raft and he and Jim are safe, Huck wearily observes that " . . . there warn't no home like a raft, after all . . . . You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft." The unaffected statement solidifies the raft/shore dichotomy and reinforces the idea that society, despite its sophistication, is cruel and unjust.

Glossary

**dog-irons**iron braces used to hold firewood.

**Pilgrim's Progress**a religious allegory by John Bunyan (1678).

**mud-cat** a catfish.

**liberty-pole**a tall flagstaff planted in the ground.

**bowie** a steel knife about fifteen inches long, with a single edge, usually carried in a sheath.

**nip and tuck** so close that the outcome is uncertain.

**predestination** the theological doctrine that God foreordained everything that would happen.

**foreordination** predestination.

**puncheon floor** floor made of a heavy, broad piece of roughly dressed timber with one side hewed flat.

***Summary:***

* Now we learn about Colonel Grangerford, the head of the house and also a fine aristocratic gentleman.
* In fact, the whole family has good manners (read: they're uptight). The sons Bob and Tom are oldest; next comes Miss Charlotte (who is twenty-five) and her sister Sophia (twenty). Each of them has their own slave, he says.
* How fancy.
* The other big aristocratic clan around town is the Shepherdsons. And this town isn't big enough for the both of them.
* When the boys are outside walking one day, Buck tells Huck to jump into the bushes quickly as a man on horse approaches.
* The man is young Harney Shepherdson, and Buck greets him by… trying to shoot him with his gun from his convenient hiding place in the bushes.
* He misses, and the boys run home. At this point Huck asks the incredibly relevant question of why Buck tried to kill this apparently harmless guy.
* It's a feud.
* Huck doesn't know what a "feud" is, so Buck explains, adding that it started 30 years ago. Of course, he can't remember *why* it started, not having been alive, but clearly that's not the point.
* Recently, Buck says, a Shepherdson shot his fourteen-year-old cousin to death. Of course, they retaliated by killing the Shepherdson.
* He adds that there isn't a single coward in either family.
* The next Sunday they all go the church, and the men all bring their guns. How cozy!
* Once they get home, Miss Sophia (the Grangerford daughter who is twenty) takes Huck aside and asks for a favor. It turns out she left her prayer book at church, and she needs him to back for it.
* Huck is all, "Sure!" but he knows something's up. He thumbs through the retrieved book and finds a note that says "Half-Past Two."
* When Sophia gets the book and the note, she's all bubbly and excited, which she then tries to cover up by telling Huck the note was just her bookmark (he promises her he can't read script-writing anyway).
* A little later, the slave who has been serving Huck asks him to come down to the swamp. Jim is there.
* Huck is all, "Hey! I forgot you existed!"
* Jim tells his tale: after their raft was broken up, he swam to shore but hid so that he wouldn't be taken back into slavery. Since then, the Grangerfords' slaves have been helping him out (in terms of food and generally not dying in the swamp).
* And he even recovered the raft, which wasn't completely destroyed by the steamboat.
* Huck is all, "OK, great! See you later!" and heads back to the house.
* But the next day is a day he doesn't care to talk about too much. This doesn't bode well.
* First off, it turns out that Miss Sophia has run off.
* We're guessing it was sometime around half-past two, which is a big "Uh-oh" realization for Huck.
* Worse still, she ran off to marry Harney Shepherdson. It's like [Romeo and Juliet](https://www.shmoop.com/romeo-and-juliet/), only less poetic.
* Now the Grangerford men are all packing up their guns to get her back before Harney takes her across the river. Even Buck is gone.
* Huck, feeling rather guilty, takes off toward the river looking for Buck.
* In the woods, he finds Buck and his nineteen-year-old cousin Joe in a gunfight with the Shepherdsons.
* Huck doesn't want any of that, so he climbs a tree for safety.
* When the scuffle is over, he calls down to Buck, who relates the news to him: his father is dead, and so are his two brothers.
* Just then, there's another explosion of gunfire, and Huck sees Buck and Joe shot down dead.
* He doesn't want to tell us any more details, Huck says, because he doesn't like to talk about this and he had enough dreams about it as it is.
* Feeling as though this is all his fault (because he helped deliver the conspiratorial note to Sophia), Huck cries a bit and, after the attackers are gone, covers up the faces of the two dead bodies.
* Deciding that these people are wack, Huck runs to Jim, who is mighty glad to see that Huck isn't dead. They take off on the raft back along the Mississippi River.
* Finally, Huck can relax. There's no home like a raft, he says, where everything is "free and easy" (18.84).

***Analysis:***

[Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) goes into great detail about Colonel Grangerford, whom he clearly admires. The Colonel is a wealthy landowner and has many slaves. Huck also describes each of Grangerford's children.

While Buck and Huck are out hunting, Buck shoots at a man named Harney Shepherdson, but he misses. When Huck asks him why he shot at the man, Buck tells Huck of the feud that his family has with the Shepherdsons. When questioned Buck cannot explain when the feud began or what the cause of it was.

The two families attend the same church. One Sunday Sophia Grangerford leaves a book at church and she asks Huck to get it for her. Huck agrees and brings the book back to her. It contains a note with the words "Half-past two" written on it. Later Huck's slave—who was assigned to him by the Grangerfords—takes him to the swamp. [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/symbols/#Jim) is waiting for him and he tells Huck that he made it to shore after the raft got smashed. However, he could not call out to Huck because he was afraid of being caught. [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Jim) also lets Huck know he has found and fixed the raft.

The next day Sophia and Harney elope, and the feud erupts again. Huck finds Buck who tells him that Colonel Grangerford and two of his sons have been murdered. Buck and his cousin are trying to extract revenge, but they eventually die too. Huck is bothered by the violence and is happy to make his way back to Jim and the swamp. They get onto their raft and enjoy being out on the Mississippi once again.

Buck sees the feud as honorable. The feud is part of Buck's family's tradition and participating in it is a way to show loyalty and pride in his family. Buck recognizes that the feud will eventually kill him as the feud does not end until everyone is dead. Like his sister, Emmeline, who romanticizes death through poetry, Buck romanticizes death by his full-fledged participation in the feud. The feud sounds like something [Tom](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Tom) Sawyer would read about in his adventure books. However, in reality the feud leads to senseless deaths and no one wins.

[Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) tries to make sense of the feud but cannot understand Buck's blind adherence to the notion of killing for no reason. Huck recognizes that there is nothing romantic about it, and the whole thing makes him sad.

The scene describing the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons shared trip to church is filled with irony and comes off as funny. The men bring their guns but leave them at the door. Apparently this is out of respect for the church and the preacher. The preacher talks about "brotherly love," and "everybody said it was a good sermon." None of the characters, with the possible exception of Huck, realize how ridiculous this is. How could two families caught up in a feud and whose guns lie by the door, ready to be taken up should the need arise, appreciate a sermon about brotherly love? This scene is another poke at organized religion by [Twain](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/author/). People who claim to be adherents of faith murder senselessly, but they still take time out for church.

The two-facedness extends to racism and slavery as well. Nearly two pages are devoted to describing how wonderful the Grangerfords are (Huck would presumably feel the same if he happened to have stayed with the Shepherdsons). After the glowing description Huck talks about their ownership of slaves. It is simply presumed that Southerners of a certain class have slaves. It is not a mark against them and people do not judge them negatively because of it.

***Critical Study:***

Huck introduces the reader to most of the Grangerford family. The father of the house is Colonel Grangerford, whom Huck describes as a powerful, well-respected and honored man. The family owns a considerable amount of land and over one hundred slaves, including a slave for each member of the household. The two eldest sons are Tom and Bob, and the youngest is Buck, with whom Huck becomes friends. There are two daughters: Miss Charlotte, who bears herself like her father, and Miss Sophia, who is timid and kind.

While out hunting one day, Huck and Buck hear a horse approaching behind them. Quickly, they run behind a bush and wait to see who arrives. Harvey Shepherdson passes by and Buck takes a shot at him, knocking off his hat. Harvey then follows the two boys into the woods but is unable to catch them. At this point, Buck explains the family feud to Huck. For over thirty years, the men in each family have been committed to killing off the men in the opposing family. No one remembers why the feud started, but several men have been killed each year.

When the Grangerfords attend church, all the men carry guns with them, and ironically listen to preaching about brotherly love. After the service and once they have all returned home, Miss Sophia pulls Huck aside and urgently asks him to return to the church and fetch her Testament, which she accidentally left there. Huck does as he is asked and finds the book, but also sees a note that has been slipped into it which reads, "half past two." Huck returns the Testament to Sophia, and promises that he did not read the note.

When Huck goes outside, he realizes that his personal slave is following him very closely, which is unusual. The slave offers to show him some water moccasins, an offer which he had extended the day before as well. Huck realizes that the slave is speaking to him in some kind of code and that something else is going on. Huck agrees to follow him and in the swamp is surprised to find Jim asleep on the ground. Jim has the raft, which he completely repaired, and is waiting for Huck to rejoin him so they can continue their trip downriver.

The next day Miss Sophia elopes with Harvey Shepherdson, and the feud is rekindled in full force. Buck's father and both his brothers are killed in an ambush, and Huck arrives at the harbor in time to see Buck and his cousin shooting at five grown men. Eventually the men manage to sneak around Buck and kill both the boys while Huck watches from a tree that he climbed in an attempt to find safety. Once the Shepherdsons have left, Huck pulls Buck and the other boy out of the river and onto dry land where he weeps and covers their faces.

Huck runs back to the house and sees that it is quite silent in the wake of the family tragedy. He goes to the swamp, finds Jim, who is glad to see that Huck lived through the massacre, and together they push the raft into the river and start floating downstream.

***Critical Analysis (Ch8-18):***

On the island, Huck feels liberated. Seeing his friends search for his body troubles him only slightly After a few days, he discovers that he is not alone on the island: Jim has run away from Miss Watson, who had threatened to sell him down the river. Jim's escape troubles Huck, but together they enjoy a good life: fishing, eating, smoking, and sleeping. They find a house floating down the river, with a dead man m it, from which they take some valuables. Huck appreciates the lore that Jim teaches him, but still likes to play tricks. He leaves a dead rattlesnake on Jim's bed, and Jim gets bitten by the snake's mate. He recovers, but interprets the bite as the result of Huck touching a snakeskin—a sure bringer of bad luck. Jim suspects that there is more to come.

One night, Huck dresses as a girl and goes across to town to "get a stirring-up." He discovers that there is a reward offered for Jim and that the island is no longer a safe hiding place. He rushes back to the island, and he and Jim float down the Mississippi, sleeping by day and drifting by night. Living this way, they get to know each other, and Jim tells Huck about his children. They also have several adventures. They board a wrecked steamboat and steal some ill-gotten goods from three thieves on board, inadvertently leaving them to drown.

Huck and Jim get separated in a fog. They call out, but for hours at a time, they seem lost to each other. Huck falls asleep, and when he awakens, he sees the raft. He sneaks aboard and convinces Jim it was all a dream. When Huck points to evidence of the night's adventure and teases him for being gullible, Jim teaches Huck a lesson:

"When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin' for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mas' broke bekase you waz los', en I didn' k'yer no mo' what become er me en de raf' En when I wake up en fine you back ag'in, all safe en soun', de tears come, en I could 'a' got down on my knees en lass' yo' foot, I's so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin "bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim Wid a lie. Dat truck dab is trash, en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fien' s en makes' em ashamed."

. It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger; but I done It, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither I didn't do him no more mean tucks, and I wouldn't done that one If I'd 'a' knowed It would make him feel that way.

***Critical Study:***

Huck does very well with his new family. He respects the tall, slender, head of the household, Colonel Grangerford. The whole family is extremely respectful of them, getting out of their chairs to wish them a good morning. Bob, Tom, Miss Charlotte, Miss Sophia and Buck each have their own servants and generally a good life. But there is a secret discord in this family. They have a serious feud with another family, the Shepherdsons. In fact, one day Buck shoots the hat off young Harney Shepherdson, but Harney comes back for it. The Colonel reprimands Buck for shooting behind a bush. Huck finds out that Buck doesn't even know the origin of the feuds. He just hates the Shepherdsons. Still, everyone goes to their church together.

Huck's servant takes him over to a marsh, where he finds Jim. The raft is still being fixed up. When Huck goes back home, he finds that Miss Sophia has run off with Harney Shepherdson. Huck had unknowingly delivered a message to Harney for her and now their elopement has turned into a major feud. There is a gunfight, there are several deaths, and Buck was killed. They leave in the raft, Huck glad to get out of one of the more uncomfortable adventures so far.

This is probably one of the saddest adventures of Huck's. And it makes one think again if this is really the meaningless tale it's supposed to be. There is a notice in the beginning of the book by Order of the Author. "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot."

The fact is that The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in it's own brilliant, understated way tackles many pressing moral issues and digs deep into the idea of moral conscience in the first place. In this chapter, Twain shows the consequence of clan-like, revenge thinking and the futility of this kind of warfare between families.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) regards Mr. Grangerford, who is the least frivolous of men, as being a gentleman, well-bred, dignified, a joy, but also the stern peace-keeper of the household if need be, though there is seldom the need. This is because all of the [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) are respectful and good-spirited. The older sons of Mr. Grangerford are “tall” and “beautiful” in Huck’s estimation. One afternoon, they toast their parents along with Huck and Buck. The Grangerford women are all beautiful too, one proud, grand, but good, another gentle as a dove. Three Grangerford sons have died, along with Emmeline.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Mr. Grangerford is a foil to Pap. Where Pap is debauched and murderous toward even his own son, Mr. Grangerford is dignified and beloved, even in his just sternness. He is the kind of man who, we think, should be most self-reliant and self-governed. But, just like Pap, Mr. Grangerford is swept up by societal dictates to endanger his family in their feud with the Shepherdsons. That his children are so good and beautiful just shows how much he stands to lose.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) observes that many slaves serve the [Grangerford](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) family, each Grangerford being tended to by one slave. Huck himself has a slave to tend to him while staying at the Grangerford home, though, because Huck is not used to being served, he does not give his slave much work to do, while Buck, in contrast, works his slave very hard. Mr. Grangerford, Huck learns, owns many farms and over a hundred slaves, and it is by profiting from his slave-worked farms that Mr. Grangerford has amassed his wealth.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Just as the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud is hypocritical, so too is it hypocritical that a person as cultivated and seemingly good as Mr. Grangerford should own slaves. Indeed, the means of his and his family’s cultivation is built on slave labor. Buck may have read Bunyan, but he has learned from his father that owning and being cruel to slaves is a matter of course.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) learns that there is another aristocratic family living nearby: the [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons), as proud and grand as the [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons). One day, as Huck and Buck are hunting, a Shepherdson named Harney rides by. Buck tells Huck to jump into the woods and Huck does so. Buck fires a shot at Harney, but only manages to knock his hat off. Harney rides toward where the boys are, gun in hand, but they run as fast as they can, not stopping till they reach the Grangerford home. Mr. Grangerford is pleased to hear this story recounted. However, he tells Buck that he does not want him to shoot Shepherdsons from behind a bush, but that he should jump into the middle of the road next time to shoot.

***Analysis Part 3:***

This passage introduces the Shepherdson family, who are in bloody conflict with the Grangerfords. Mr. Grangerford implies that the feud is waged for the sake of honor, which is bestowed by society on its members, like how Miss Watson imposes her values on Huck. Though seeking honor is dangerous, even fatal, Mr. Grangerford encourages Buck to seek it. Honor, it would seem, is more important to the Grangerfords than life itself.

***Summary Part 4:***

Huck asks Buck why he wanted to kill Harney. Buck says he doesn’t have a reason, that Harney never did anything to him, but “it’s on account of the feud” that he would have killed him. Huck has never heard of a feud. Buck explains that it’s when one two families fight till everybody’s dead, and then there’s no more feud. Buck explains that many [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) and [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) have died in the feud, and many have been wounded. He explains how, just this year, an old Shepherdson rode down and killed a young Grangerford, only to be killed himself a week later. Huck says the old man must be a coward, but Buck says there isn’t a coward in either of the two feuding families.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Like a miniature Civil War, the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud has cost many lives, and Buck himself casually supposes that it will end only when everybody involved has been killed, which only shows how pointless the bloodshed is. More than that, Buck doesn’t even know what the feud is about; he has pitifully inherited his bleak bloody fate from the society he lives in. What makes the feud all the more pathetic is Buck’s insistence that all involved are rather heroic. So many good people are killing one another, and all for nothing.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) goes to church with the [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) and listens to a sermon about brotherly love, which he finds tiring but which the Grangerfords discuss approvingly at length. After church, Miss Sophia, a Grangerford girl, asks Huck into her room. There, she asks him to do her a favor and not tell anybody, which Huck agrees to do. Miss Sophia tells Huck to retrieve her copy of the New Testament from the church. As Huck enters the church, he notices many hogs resting on the cool floor. He observes that, while people go to church only when they have to, hogs go to church whenever they can.

***Analysis Part 5:***

It is ironic that the Grangerfords, who are waging a feud of brotherly hate, approve of the sermon on brotherly love. Hypocritically, what they approve is the opposite of what they practice. In this case, religion could instruct the Grangerfords in leading better, happier lives, but their commitment to Christian values is less than their commitment to senseless honor; or, worse, they don’t even realize that they’re hypocrites. Huck's innocent observations about humans and hogs in church allow Twain to drive home this charge of religious hypocrisy.

***Summary Part 6:***

After retrieving Miss Sophia’s Testament, [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) shakes it and out falls a note, on which is written: “Half-past two.” Huck gives the Testament and note to Miss Sophia, who lights up when she reads the latter. Huck inquires as to what the note is about, but Ms. Sophia, secretively, doesn’t respond, and she sends Huck off to play.

***Analysis Part 6:***

This scene foreshadows Miss Sophia’s elopement with a Shepherdson boy. The note in the Testament is right at home there: its contents give Miss Sophia information about meeting with her beloved, whish is consistent with the ideal of brotherly love.

***Summary Part 7:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) heads down to the [river](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-mississippi-river), only to notice that the slave tending to him, [Jack](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters), is close behind him. Jack tells Huck that, if he comes down into the nearby swamp, he (Jack) will show him a lot of water-moccasins (a kind of snake). Huck, though suspicious, agrees, and follows Jack through the swamp. Instead of leading Huck to snakes, however, Jack leads him to [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/jim), hidden on a densely vegetated piece of land. Jim tells Huck that their [raft](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-raft) survived the steamboat crash, patched up by Jim himself, and is hidden.

***Analysis Part 8:***

Right after Miss Sophia makes to rendezvous with her partner, Jack, of his own free will, and with benevolence, unites Huck with Jim. We might think that Jack is eager to help Huck because he has not been cruel as Buck is to his slave, and that he helps Jim because, like Jim, he also has a love for freedom. This scene also foreshadows Huck’s escape from the feud on the repaired raft with Jim.

***Summary Part 9:***

The next day, [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) notices he is alone in the [Grangerford](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons)’s house. He goes outside, where [Jack](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters) tells him that Miss Sophia has run away to marry Harney Shepherdson. All the Grangerfords are out and about trying to prevent the marriage. Huck runs after the Grangerfords to the river road, where he finds mounted and armed [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) shooting at Buck and another Grangerford hidden behind a woodpile. Huck hides in a tree and watches one of the Grangerfords shoot a Shepherdson out of his saddle. The other Shepherdsons tend to the man, and eventually ride away. Huck calls to Buck, who begins to cry, saying that his father and brothers are dead, and that he wishes he had killed Harney the day he saw him on the road.

***Analysis Part 9:***

Like Romeo and Juliet, Miss Sophia and Harney come from feuding families but love one another nonetheless. Their families try to put an end to their love for no reason other than the feud, as if to protect the family name, but all their actions to that end only consume the families themselves in senseless bloodshed. Most of the male Grangerfords are wiped out, Buck becomes personally embittered towards the Shepherdsons, and it seems that he was right when he said that the feud will be over only when everybody’s dead.

***Summary Part 10:***

The [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) ride back and shoot at Buck and the other [Grangerford](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) boy. Wounded, the two boys jump into the [river](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-mississippi-river). [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) feels so sick he almost falls out of his tree. He regrets, he says, ever having seen such things, and dreams about them often. After dark, Huck climbs out of his tree and vows never to return to the Grangerford house. He feels guilty for having ignited the day’s violence by not telling anybody about the note in Miss Sophia’s Testament, which he figures must have meant that Miss Sophia was to meet Harney at the time specified. As Huck creeps along the riverbank, crying, he finds two dead bodies, one of them Buck’s. Huck covers their faces, thinking how good Buck was to him.

***Analysis Part 10:***

Even though Huck hates the mindless violence he witnesses to the point that he feels sick, and the part of human nature that gives rise to such violence, he only does so because he has such a deep love for human goodness, like Buck’s as expressed before his tragic, senseless death. It is difficult to keep in mind, also, that Huck is just a boy, yet he feels as though he’s bearing the weight of so many deaths for not exposing Miss Sophia’s elopement with Harney. Huck grows from this experience, however: in the future, instead of even considering idealist solutions to problems, he will more and more privilege practical consequences.

***Summary Part 11:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) goes to where [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/jim) is hiding. Jim is so glad to see Huck that he hugs him. Huck tells Jim to lose no time in shoving the [raft](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-raft) off into the [river](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-mississippi-river) so that the pair can leave the violence and danger of the feud behind them. Huck is nervous until he and Jim drift two miles away from where the [Grangerfords](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) and [Shepherdsons](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-grangerfords-and-shepherdsons) live, at which point he feels safe, and he and Jim share a meal. Huck meditates that all homes seem “cramped up and smothery” except for a raft, aboard which “you feel mighty free and easy and comfortable.”

***Analysis Part 11:***

Even though the Grangerfords were a welcoming surrogate family to Huck, their lives were so cramped up with their mindless feud that no one could feel free in their company. Indeed, it is only on the raft, on the wide-open river, in the company of his surrogate father Jim, so to speak, that Huck can feel free and comfortable at all.