***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

***Chapter 23:***

***Translation:***

The duke and the king worked hard all day, setting up a stage and curtain and row of candles for footlights. That night, the house was jammed full of men in no time at all. When the place couldn’t hold any more men, the duke quit selling tickets at the door and went around the back and up on stage. He stood before the curtain and made a little speech, praising this tragedy and saying it was the most thrilling play there ever was. He went on and on about the tragedy and about Edmund Kean the Elder, who was going to play the main character. At last, when he’d built up everyone’s expectations high enough, he rolled up the curtain. The next minute the king came prancing out on all fours, naked. He was painted in rings and stripes all over in all sorts of colors and looked as splendid as a rainbow. And… well, never mind the rest of his outfit—it was just as wild, but it was really funny. The people nearly died laughing. And when the king finished pracing around and capered off stage, they roared and clapped and raged and guffawed until he came back and did it all over again. And they made him do it another time after that. Honestly, it would have made a cow laugh to see the things that old idiot was doing on stage. Then the duke let the curtain down again and bowed to the people, saying that the great tragedy will be performed only two more nights because they had to go perform in London, where they’d already sold seats for it on [Drury Lane](javascript:void(0);). Then he gave another bow and said that if he succeeded in pleasing them and instructing them, then he’d be just as deeply obliged if they could tell their friends and get them to come and see it too. Twenty people yelled out: “What? Is it over? Is that ALL?” The duke answered yes. Then all hell broke loose. Everyone yelled out, “Cheated!” and got up angrily, headed for the stage and those tragedians. But a big, handsome looking man jumped up on a bench and shouted: “Hold on! Just a word, gentlemen.” Everyone stopped and listened. “We’ve been cheated, and cheated badly. But we don’t want to be the laughing stock of this entire town, do we? I bet we’d never hear the last of this as long we live. NO. What we want is to leave here quietly and talk this show up. We make sure the REST of the town comes to see it. Then we’ll all be in the same boat and equally cheated. Isn’t that sensible?” (“You be it is! The judge is right!” everyone shouted.) “All right—not a word about being cheated. Go home, and tell everyone you know to come and see the tragedy.” The next day, the only thing the townspeople were talking about was how great that show was. The house was jammed again that night, and we cheated this crowd the same way. When the king, the duke, and I got home to the raft we all had supper. Around midnight, they made Jim and me back the raft out and float it down the middle of the river. After we’d floated about two miles downstream, we hid the raft. The house was crammed again on the third night—and there weren’t any newcomers in the audience this time. Instead, the house was filled with people who’d been at the show the previous two nights. I stood by the duke at the door, and I saw that everyman who went in had bulges in his pockets or something stuffed up under his coat—and it wasn’t perfume or anything nice. I smelled rotten eggs and cabbages and stuff, and if I knew the signs of a dead cat—and I do—then there were sixty-four of them in the house that night. I shoved my way inside for a minute, but it was too risky for me—I couldn’t stand it. When the place couldn’t hold any more peole, the duke gave a guy a quarter and told him to take his post selling tickets at the door. Then he started for the stage door, and I went after him. The minute we turned the corner and were in the dark, he said: “Now walk fast until you’re away from the houses, then run for the raft like the wind!” I did, and he did the same. We reached the raft at the same time, and were gliding downstream in less than two seconds. It was dark and quiet as we edged toward the middle of the river. No one said a word. I imagined the poor king was in for a rough time with the audience. But that turned out not to be the case because soon enough he crawled out from under the wigwam and said: “Well, how’d the scam pan out this time, duke?” Apparently he hadn’t been uptown at all. We waited until we were about ten miles below the village before we lit a light. Then we lit a fire and had supper. The king and the duke almost laughed their bones loose over the way they’d tricked those people. The duke said: “Greenhorns! Morons! I knew the first audience keep quiet and let the rest of the town get tricked too. And I knew they’d try to set a trap for us the third night, thinking it was THEIR turn to get us back. Well, it IS there turn, and I’d pay money to see the looks on their faces. I WOULD like to be there when they realize what’s happened. They can turn it into a picnic if they like—they certainly brought plenty of picnic food!” Those scoundrels took in four hundred and sixty-five dollars in those three nights. I never saw money hauled in by the wagon load like that before. Pretty soon, when they were asleep and snoring, Jim said: “Doesn’t it surprise you the way those kings behave, Huck?” “No,” I said. “It doesn’t” “Why not, Huck?” “Well, it doesn’t because that’s just the kind of people they were born to be. I imagine all royalty is like that.” “But Huck, those kings of ours are real scoundrels. That’s just what they are, real scoundrels.” “Well, that’s what I’m saying—all kings are scoundrels, as far as I can tell.” “Is that so?” “Read about them some time—you’ll see. Look at Henry VIII. Our king here is a Sunday school teacher compared to HIM. Or look at Charles II, Louis XIV, Louis XV, James II, Edward II, Richard III, or forty others. Besides, all of Saxon royalty used to raise hell in the old times. Why, you ought to have seen old Henry VIII in his prime. HE was something else. He used to marry a new wife every day and chop off her head the next morning. And he would do it with as much indifference as if he were ordering eggs. ‘Bring me Nell Gwynn,’ he’d say. They’d bring her in. Next morning, ‘Chop off her head!’ And they’d chop it off. ‘Bring me Jane Shore,’ he’d say, and she’d come. Next morning, ‘Chop off her head’—and they’d chop it off. ‘Get me Fair Rosamum.’ Fair Rosamum comes. Next morning, ‘Chop off her head.’ And he made every one of them tell him a story every night, and he kept that up til he had collected a thousand and one tales. Then he put them all in a book and called it the Doomsday Book—which was a good name for it because that’s what it was to the wives. You don’t know anything about kings, Jim, but I do; our old rascal is one of the tamest in history. How do you think Henry went about stirring up trouble in his country? Did he tell anyone what was going to happen? Did he put on a show? No. All of a sudden he throws all the tea in overboard and into Boston Harbor and hammers out the Declaration of Independence and dares people to object. That was his style, you see—he never gave anyone a chance. He suspects his father, the Duke of Wellington, so what does he do? Ask him to visit him? No—he drowned him in a cask of wine as if he were a cat. If people left money lying around where he happened to be, you know what he’d do? He’d take it. If you hired him to do something and paid him and didn’t sit down and watch him do it, what would he do? He wouldn’t do it. And if he opened his mouth, you know what would happen? A lie would pop out every time unless you were fast enough to shut it. That’s the kind of guy Henry was, and if HE were here instead of our kings, he would have fooled that town a lot worse than ours did. I’m not saying that ours our lambs, because they aren’t, but when you look at the cold facts, they’re not nearly as bad as Henry VIII. All I’m saying is that kings are kings, and you just have to cut them some slack. All in all, they’re a pretty roudy bunch. It’s just the way they’re raised.” “But this one does SMELL like a pile of garbage, Huck.” “Well, they all do, Jim. We can’t change the way kings smell. History doesn’t talk about that anyway.” “Now the duke, he’s not such a bad guy in some ways.” “Yeah, the duke is different. But not that different. This one’s kind of a rough duke. When he gets drunk, no one would be able to tell the difference between him and a king.” “Well, anyways, I’m not eager to have any more of them, Huck. This is all I can stand.” “I feel that way too, Jim, but we’ve got them on our hands. We’ve got to remember what they are and cut them some slack. Sometimes I wish we found out about a country that’s run out of kings.” What was the use to tell Jim that these guys weren’t really a king and duke? It wouldn’t have done any good. Besides, it was just like I said—you couldn’t tell the difference between them and the real ones anyway. I went to sleep, and Jim didn’t call me when it was my turn to steer. He did that pretty often. When I woke up at daybreak, he was sitting there with his head down between his knees, moaning and crying to himself. I pretended not to notice. I knew what it was all about. He was thinking about his wife and his children back upriver, and he was feeling miserable and homesick. He’d never been away from home before in his life, and I believe he cared just as much about his family as white folks do for theirs. It doesn’t seem natural that he would, but I guess it’s so. He was often moaning and crying like that at night when he thought I was asleep. He’d say things like, “Poor little ‘Lizabeth! Poor little Johnny! It’s mighty hard. I expect I won’t ever get to see you anymore. Not any more!” He was a good n-----, Jim. This time, though, I started talking to him about his wife and young ones, and after a while he said: “I feel so bad this time because I heard something on the bank that sounded like a whack or a slam a while ago, and it reminded me of the time I was mean to my little ’Lizabeth. She was only four years old, and she caught a bad case of [scarlet fever](javascript:void(0);). But she got well, and one day she was standing around, and I said to her: “‘Shut the door.’” “She didn’t do it. She just stood there, smiling at me. It made me mad, so I said again—pretty loudly this time: “‘Don’t you hear me? Shut the door!’” “She just stood there the same way, sort of smiling. I was boiling angry! I said: “‘I swear I’ll make you MIND me!’” “And with that I grabbed her and slapped the side of her head and sent her sprawling. Then I went into the other room and was gone about ten minutes. When I came back, the door was still open. The child standing in the doorway, looking down, crying, with tears running down her face. Man, was I MAD! I went for the child, but just then along came the wind and slammed the door shut behind the child—ka-BLAM!—and, my Lord, the child never moved! My breath almost jumped out of me, and I felt so… so… I know how I felt. I crept out trembling, then crept around her and opened the door nice and slowly. I poked my head in behind the child, soft and quiet, until I suddenly yelled ‘POW!’ as loudly as I could. SHE NEVER BUDGED! Oh Huck, I burst out crying and grabbed her in my arms and said, ‘Oh, poor little thing! Let the Lord God Almighty forgive poor old Jim because he is never going to forgive himself as long as he lives!’ She was completely deaf, and she couldn’t speak either. And I’d been treating her so horribly!”

***Synopsis:***

The Royal Nonesuch plays to a capacity audience. [The dauphin](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/the-duke-and-the-dauphin/), who appears onstage wearing nothing aside from body paint and some “wild” accoutrements, has the audience howling with laughter. But the crowd nearly attacks [the duke and the dauphin](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/the-duke-and-the-dauphin/) when they end the show after only a brief performance. The people in the crowd, embarrassed at having been ripped off, decide to protect their honor by making certain that everyone in the town gets ripped off. After the performance, they tell everyone else in town that the play was wonderful. The second night, therefore, also brings a capacity crowd.

As the duke has anticipated, the crowd on the third night consists of the two previous nights’ audiences coming to get their revenge. [Huck](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/huckleberry-huck-finn/) and the duke make a getaway to the raft before the show starts. They have earned $465 over the three-night run. [Jim](https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/character/jim/) is shocked that the royals are such “rapscallions.” Huck explains that history shows nobles to be rapscallions who constantly lie, steal, and decapitate, but his history knowledge is factually very questionable.

Huck does not see the point in telling Jim that the duke and the dauphin are fakes. Jim spends his night watches “moaning and mourning” for his wife and two children. Though “it don’t seem natural,” Huck concludes that Jim loves his family as much as white men love theirs. Jim is torn apart when he hears a thud in the distance that reminds him of the time he beat his daughter Lizabeth for not doing what he told her to do. When he was beating her, Jim didn’t realize that Lizabeth couldn’t hear his instructions because a bout with scarlet fever had left her deaf.

***Critical Study(Ch20-23):***

Preparing for their next scam, the duke and king practice the balcony scene from [Romeo and Juliet](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/r/romeo-and-juliet/romeo-and-juliet-at-a-glance) and the sword fight from [Richard III](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/r/richard-iii/play-summary). As an encore, the duke also teaches the king a jumbled version of [Hamlet](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/h/hamlet/hamlet-at-a-glance)'ssoliloquy*.*A few days later, they go ashore in Arkansas and decide to display their knowledge of Shakespeare. The town is a squalid place with streets of mud and loafers spitting tobacco. As [Huck](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/character-analysis/huckleberry-finn) explores, a drunken man named Boggs races into town vowing to kill a man named Colonel Sherburn. The local townspeople laugh at Boggs and remark that his behavior is common practice, and he is harmless. After a brief period, Sherburn comes out of his office and tells Boggs to stop speaking out against him. Boggs continues to swear at Sherburn, and, in retaliation, Sherburn levels a pistol and kills him.

The town immediately decides that Sherburn must be lynched, and they storm to his house in an angry mob. When they arrive, Sherburn greets them from the roof of his porch and stands up to the mob. The crowd quickly disperses after Sherburn calls them cowards and declares they do not have the "grit enough" to confront a real man.

After the [Shakespearean](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/shakespearecentral) Revival fails to bring in any significant money, the duke and king advertise a show where no women and children are allowed. Unable to resist, several men show up for the first show to find the king on stage, naked and painted with colorful stripes. The men soon realize they have been scammed, but instead of revealing their ignorance to the rest of the town, they convince the other townsmen to attend the show. After two successive scams, the townsmen arrive at the third show with plans to tar and feather the duke and king. While the men prepare to barrage the stage with rotten vegetables, the duke sneaks out with Huck, and they join the king and [Jim](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/character-analysis/jim) and leave the town.

As with the satire of the camp meeting, the parody of Shakespeare is another staple of frontier humor that [Twain](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/mark-twain-biography) uses for comic effect. The duke's version includes a mixture of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, and the resulting soliloquy contains misplaced phrases such as "To be, or not to be; that is the bare bodkin."

The irony of the two frauds attempting to quote Shakespeare is surpassed only by the irony of their attempt to present it to the small Arkansas village. Huck's description of the barren town and its inhabitants reminds readers of the squalid and cruel nature of society. The men are not only cruel to defenseless animals, they are also vicious with one another as is revealed in the death of poor Boggs. Similar to Twain's use of the Mississippi, the murder of Boggs is based on a real event that Twain witnessed as a young man. The incident illustrates the dangers of pride and a mob mentality, and also symbolizes human's contempt for one another. The fact that Boggs' earlier actions are deemed harmless further illustrates that no one in Huck's world is immune from corruption and hatred.

The cruelty of the Boggs episode is easily recognized by Huck, as is the general squalor of the town. Huck's reaction is noteworthy, for it contrasts sharply with the "evils" of his companion, Jim. Among the string of characters that Huck encounters — from Pap to the Grangerfords to Sherburn — Jim stands above them despite society's condemnation. Huck's inability to transcend his environment and give way to his instincts forces him to struggle with Jim's plight. Even in comparison to the disorder and injustice of the towns and their inhabitants, Huck still cannot reconcile his abolitionist actions and Jim's freedom. Huck's character further matures as he watches Jim mourn for his wife and children because he misses them. Huck observes that blacks possibly love their families as much as whites love theirs. Huck's observation underscores the depth of ignorance and bigotry exhibited in a society that does not believe blacks to be as capable of strong emotions as whites.

The King's Campelopard and the Royal Nonesuch are based upon degrading and bawdy humor, and thus they are appropriate for the townsmen. As mentioned earlier, the strategy of the confidence man is to play upon the virtues and vices of society. By appealing to the base nature of the men, the duke and the king are able to lure them into their scam and then escape before retaliation.

Glossary

**Capet**Hugh Capet, king of France (987-996); here, the duke's reference to the king.

**jimpson weed**jimson weed; a poisonous annual weed (Datura stramonium) of the nightshade family, with foul-smelling leaves, prickly fruit, and white or purplish, trumpet-shaped flowers.

**sold**scammed, to be made a fool

***Summary:***

That does the trick. The place is packed the following night.

Fortunately, the audience loves it when, during this performance of *The Royal Nonesuch*, the king comes out naked and prancing about.

Unfortunately, the audience *doesn't* love it when after ten seconds of this tomfoolery, the show is over.

They're all ready to lynch the duke and the king for taking their money without a real show to present.

Lynching seems to be everyone's weekend sport.

Then one brilliant guy reminds them that they don't want to look foolish in front of the rest of the townspeople for wasting their money. A much better plan would be to get everyone else to see the show tomorrow and *then* lynch the duke and the king.

The mob is all, "Good idea!"

So the duke and king clean up for a second night in a row.

On the third night, the townspeople arrive with a vengeance. And lots of rotten fruit for throwing purposes.

Unfortunately, the duke and the king have absconded with the money from all three nights' worth of shows: $465.

So, our gang of four is back on the raft and moving along the river once again.

In private (which we imagine is a difficult condition to obtain on a small raft with four people), Jim tells Huck that these men are clearly "[rapscallions](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rapscallion)."

Huck responds that *all* kings are rapscallions—like "[Henry the VIII](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/henry_viii_king.shtml)," who used to chop off all his wives' heads.

Of course, Huck exaggerates and generally mixes up his history, but still, the boy has a point.

That night, Jim stays awake during his watch, while Huck sleeps. When Huck wakes up at daybreak, he finds Jim having a mini-breakdown.

Turns out, Jim is homesick for his family. He tells Huck a story about his daughter: he once asked her to close the door to their house, but she ignored him.

He asked her again, only to find that she still wouldn't obey him.

So, obviously, then he hit her across the head, only to find out later that the child was deaf and couldn't hear him in the first place.

That's a great thing to think about while you're away from your family, right?

***Critical Analysis:***

The duke and the king prepare for their new production. The show sells out. [Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) and the crowd find the show very funny. In the end, however, the people are angry at the length of the show and feel duped. They are ready to become an angry mob again and rush the audience but instead worry that people will find them fools. So they agree to encourage others to come to the show so they will be cheated as well. On the third night there is a packed house again, but the people plan on taking revenge. The duke and Huck join the king and [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/symbols/#Jim), who are on the raft, and make a run for it. [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Jim) does not understand how kings can act in such a manner but Huck says that's the way they are. Both Huck and Jim would like to be rid of the duke and the king.

That night Jim expresses homesickness and laments about being separated from his wife and children. He tells Huck a story about a time he was mean to his child because he did not realize she had gone deaf and dumb from scarlet fever. Jim feels very bad about it.

The reaction to the ridiculous play reveals the townspeople's spitefulness toward each other. They willingly play a part in cheating each other. These same people find it funny to see a drunk man curse someone. Their ugly behavior leaves the reader feeling they get what they deserve.

On the other side of things [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/symbols/#Jim)'s decency and humanity surprise [Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck). Based on Huck's reaction to seeing [Jim](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Jim) pine over his lost family, the prevailing attitude in the South is that slaves don't care "as much for [their] people as white folks does for their'n." Slave families are broken up in an attempt to destroy their family bonds. When this cruel strategy works, people presume that insensitivity is simply an inherent trait in slaves, making them less than white people. Witnessing Jim's sensitivity and recognizing that he too has feelings about his family is part of Huck's education. Huck is on the path to seeing slaves as equals to whites.

For Huck the story of how a parent is concerned and upset about how he was insensitive toward his child is particularly poignant. It contrasts with [Pap](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Pap), Huck's father, who beats Huck for no reason at all. The paternal side of Jim has been evident in numerous exchanges with Huck, and it is clear that such feelings have their roots in his role of father to his own children.

***Significance:***The Royal Nonesuch opens to a house packed with men. The Duke greets them and hypes up the audience for the King. The King emerges completely naked, covered in paint, and crawling on all fours. The audience laughs their heads off, and he is called back to do it twice more. Then the Duke thanks them all and wishes them a good night.

The men are furious that the show is so short and realize they have been "sold," or cheated. But, before they can rush the stage in protest, one man stands up and tells them that they will be the laughingstocks of the town if it ever is revealed how badly they were cheated. They all agree to leave and tout the show for being wonderful so the rest of the town can be cheated as well.

As a result, the next night's performance is also full, and the audience leaves just as angry. The third night, all the men show up, carrying rotten eggs, dead cats, and other foul items with them. The Duke pays a man to mind the door and he and Huck rush away to the raft. They immediately push out onto the river and the King emerges from the wigwam where he and [Jim](https://www.gradesaver.com/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/study-guide/character-list#jim) have been hiding all along. Together, the two con-artists made four hundred sixty-five dollars.

That night, Jim grieves over no longer being able to see his wife and children. Huck remarks that Jim cares almost as much about his family as a white person would. Jim then tells Huck a story about when he was with his daughter, Elizabeth, one day. Jim told her to shut the door and she just stood there smiling at him. Jim got mad that she did not obey and yelled at her until he finally whacked her on the side of the head for not listening to him. Ten minutes later Jim returned and his daughter still had not closed the door. She was standing in the same place, crying. At that moment, a strong wind slammed the door behind her, causing Jim to jump. However, his daughter never moved an inch. Jim realized his poor daughter had lost her hearing. Jim tells Huck that he burst out crying upon making this realization and grabbed his daughter to give her a hug. Ever since, he has felt terrible about how he treated her.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

All day the [duke](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) and [king](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) prepare for their performance of “The Royal Nonesuch,” rigging up a stage with a curtain and lighting. Many men are in attendance that night, and, after the duke talks the show up, the king enters on all fours, naked, and painted “as splendid as a rainbow.” The audience laughs wildly, so much so that the king performs his “capering” act three times.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Thus far, the duke and king have seemed, while vaguely seedy and selfish, harmless enough and farcically silly, a perception strengthened by the king’s ridiculous performance, which the audience finds hilarious. The duke and king seem to know what society wants (low farce), and they deliver.

***Summary Part 2:***

After that, the [duke](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) thanks the audience members and asks them to spread the word about the show. The audience members, however, are dissatisfied with how short the show was. They begin to storm the stage before a big man jumps up on a bench and shouts that they have been cheated, yes, but that they don’t want to be the laughing-stocks of the town. He proposes that they talk the show up to the other men in town, which they all proceed to do.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The men in the audience resent having been defrauded, but instead of limiting the damage the duke and king can do to their community, they maximize it to protect their own externally derived sense of dignity. They know that what the duke and king are doing is wrong, but hypocritically become complicit in it.

***Summary Part 3:***

The next day, the [duke](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) and [king](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) play to a full house and scam them in the same way as they did the audience before. As they eat later that night, the duke and king tell [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/jim) and [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) to float the boat two miles below town and to hide it. On the third and final night of performing “The Royal Nonesuch,” the house is crammed again, but Huck notices that the men in the audience all have rotten eggs and produce and dead cats hidden in their pockets and coats. Just before the show is scheduled to start, the duke tells Huck to make a run for the [raft](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-raft). He does so, and the duke does the same.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The duke and king must expect that the men in the town will use the third show as a way to exact revenge against the con men themselves; otherwise, they would not know to make an escape plan for the night of their final performance. The townspeople, then, are woefully predictable in their selfishness, which the duke and king rather cunningly exploit. We can’t help but think that society had it coming, so to speak.

***Summary Part 4:***Back at the [raft](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/symbols/the-raft), [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) and the [duke](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) meet up with [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/jim) and the [king](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king), who didn’t even go to town for the performance. The duke revels in how well he and the king pulled off the scam, and mocks the townsmen for thinking that they would get the last laugh by throwing their eggs and cabbages and cats at the con men. All in all, the duke and king make a little less than five hundred dollars.

***Analysis Part 4:***

The duke’s mockery of society is reminiscent of Colonel Sherburn’s critique, though Sherburn’s centers on the cowardice of society, whereas the duke’s centers on people’s overestimation of themselves and their cleverness. Huck might agree with these critiques, but he would not exploit society out of selfishness as Sherburn and the con men do.

***Summary Part 5:***[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) knows that the [duke](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) and [king](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-duke-and-king) are really just con men, but he doesn’t think it would do any good to tell [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/jim) that, and anyway, Huck thinks, “you couldn’t tell them from the real kind.” The next morning, Huck wakes to find Jim mourning, thinking about his wife and children. Huck realizes, even though it doesn’t seem natural to him, that Jim must care just as much about his family as white people do for their own. Jim recounts to Huck how one time he asked his daughter to shut the door and she didn’t do it but just smiled at him. Jim slapped her, only to learn soon after that the girl is deaf and dumb. Jim doesn’t think he’ll ever forgive himself for harming her.

***Analysis Part 5:***Huck implies here that anybody who exploits society for purposes of self-interest, from a con man to a monarch, is villainous: social standing doesn’t reflect one’s character. For example, Jim, who is oppressively marginalized, reveals here that he is maybe the most morally sensitive character in the novel, supremely loving of his daughter and ashamed for having hurt her out of ignorance. In what is central to his growth, Huck learns that blacks are just as capable of love as whites.