***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

***Chapter 6:***

***Translation:***

Well, pretty soon my old man was up and about again. He sued Judge Thatcher for that money. He also went after me for continuing to go to school. He caught me a couple times and beat me fiercely, but I continued to go to school just the same and usually just avoided pap or outran him. I didn’t really want to go to school before, but I figured I’d go now just to spite pap. The lawsuit was slow, and it looked like they were never going to start the process, so every now and then I’d borrow two or three dollars from Judge Thatcher to keep pap from beating me. Every time he got money, he’d get drunk, and every time he got drunk, he tore up the town. And every time he tore up the town, he got thrown in jail. This way of life suited him perfectly—it was right in his line of work. Pap started hanging around the widow’s house too much, so she finally told him that if he didn’t stop, she’d make life hard for him. That REALLY got him mad. He said he would show her who was in charge of Huck Finn. So he watched out for me, and caught me one Spring day. He took me about three miles upriver in a skiff, and we crossed over into the state of Illinois. He took me to a secluded old log hut that was hidden away by trees so thick you wouldn’t be able to find it unless you already knew it was there. Pap kept me with him all the time, so I never got a chance to run away. We lived in that old cabin, and he always locked the door and put the key under his head at night. He had a gun—which he’d stolen, I guess—and lived on what we fished and hunted. Every once in a while he’d lock me in the hut and take the ferry down to the store three miles away, where he’d trade fish and game for whisky. He’d bring it home and get drunk and have a good old time. And then he’d beat me. The widow eventually found out where I was, and she sent a man over to try and bring me back. Pap drove him off with the gun, though. It wasn’t long until I’d settled in and gotten used to life there. I even liked it—except for the being beaten part. It was kind of fun and relaxing lounging around all day, smoking and fishing and not having to read or study. Two months or so passed and my clothes became all raggedy and dirty. I didn’t understand how I could have ever liked it so much at the widow’s house, where you had to wash, eat on a plate, comb your hair, go to bed and get up at regular hours, fuss over the Bible, and put up with Miss Watson picking on you all the time. I had stopped cussing because the widow didn’t like it, but I started back up again because pap didn’t care. All in all, it was pretty easy living in the woods, and I didn’t want to go back. But after awhile pap started beating me more and more and I couldn’t stand it any more. I had bruises all over. He started going away and locking me inside a lot too. Once he locked me in and was gone for three days, which made me terribly lonely. I thought he’d drowned, and that I’d never get out of the hut. I was scared, and made up my mind to find some way out. I had tried to get out of the cabin several times before, but never found a way. The window wasn’t big enough to fit a dog, and the chimney was too narrow for me to climb through. And the door was made of thick, solid slabs of oak. I looked around the place at least a hundred times—it was pretty much the only thing for me to do—but Pap was careful not to leave a knife or anything in the cabin when he was away. But this time I found something—an old, rusty wood-saw that didn’t have a handle. It was lying between one of the rafters and the clapboards of the roof. I put some grease on the blade and went to work. There was an old saddle blanket nailed to the wall at the far end of the cabin behind the table to keep the wind from coming in through the chinks and blowing out the candle. I got under the table, lifted the blanket, and started sawing a section at the base of the wall big enough for me to crawl through. It took a long time, and when I was almost done, I heard the sound of pap’s gun firing in the woods. I covered up my work, lowered the blanket again, and hid my saw. Pretty soon pap came in. Pap wasn’t in a good mood—which meant he was acting like his normal self. He said he’d gone to town, and that everything was all messed up. His lawyer said he thought he’d win the lawsuit and get the money if the trial ever started, but that Judge Thatcher knew how to put it off a long time. He also said that people were saying there was going to be another trial to try and take me away from pap and make the widow my legal guarden, and that this time it would actually work. This startled me because I didn’t want to go back to the widow’s house, where Id’ be so confined and civilized as they called it. The old man started swearing and cussing everything and everybody he could think of. Then he cussed them all over again just to make sure he hadn’t forgotten anyone. After that, he finished up with some general swearing at people whose names he didn’t even know, saying what’s-his-name and continuing right on with his cussing. He said he’d like to see the widow become my guardian. He said he’d be on the lookout for them and would stash me at this secret place six or seven miles away where they wouldn’t find me no matter how hard they looked. That made me nervous again, but only for a minute because I figured that I wouldn’t be around much longer for him to do that anyway. The old man made me go to the skiff to bring the stuff he’d gotten in town. There was a fifty-pound sack of corn meal, a side of bacon, some ammunition, a four-gallon jug of whisky, an old book and two newspapers for [wadding](javascript:void(0);), and some [tow](javascript:void(0);). I carried a load up to the cabin, then went back and sat down in the bow to rest. I thought about it for awhile and reckoned that I’d take the gun and some fishing line when I ran away into the woods. I figured I wouldn’t stay in one place, but would just walk around the country, mostly at night, and hunt and fish to stay alive. I’d get so far away that neither my old man nor the widow would ever find me again. I decided that if pap got drunk enough—which I figured he would—I would finish sawing through the cabin wall that night. I sat there thinking so long that I didn’t realize how much time had passed until the old man yelled at me and asked whether I’d fallen asleep or drowned. It was almost dark by the time I finished carrying everything up to the cabin. While I was cooking supper, the old man drank a gulp or two of whisky and started cussing again. He had gotten drunk in town and spent the night in the gutter, which made him look awful. You would have though he was [Adam](javascript:void(0);)because he was so covered in mud. Almost every time he got drunk, he attacked the government. This time he said: “They call this a government! Just look at it! The law is going to let them take a man’s son away from him—his own son, which he went to all the trouble and worry and expense to raise. Just when that son finally grows up and is ready to work and do something for HIM so that he can relax, the law tries to take him away. They call that government! That ain’t nothing. The law is backing that old Judge Thatcher and helping him keep me away from my own property. The law stuffs a man worth more than six thousand dollars into this old trap of a cabin and lets him wear clothes that ain’t fit for a pig. They call that government! A man doesn’t have any rights under a government like this. Sometimes I just feel like leaving the country once and for all. And I TOLD them that. I told this right to Judge Thatcher’s face. Lots of people heard me, and can vouch for what I said. I said that for two cents I’d leave the damned country and never go near it again. Those are the very words I used. I told them to look at my hat, if you can even call it that: The top raises up and the rest droops down til it’s below my chin. It’s barely a hat at all anymore, but more like a piece of stovepipe that my head has been shoved into. Just look at it, I told them. What a fine hat for one of the wealthiest men in town to wear—if I could just get what’s rightfully mine. “Oh yes, this government is wonderful, just wonderful. Just listen to this: There was an elderly free n----- from Ohio who was the nicest looking grey-haired man in the state. He was a mulatto who looked as white as any white man. We wore the whitest shirt you’ve ever seen and the shiniest hat too. He had a gold watch and chain and a silver-headed cane. There wasn’t a man in town with clothes as fine as his. And do you know what they said about him? They said he was a college professor, who could speak several different languages and knew everything. But that isn’t the worst thing. They said he could VOTE in his home state. Well that sure pissed me off. What’s this country coming to, I asked myself. It was election day, and I would have voted myself, if I hadn’t been too drunk to get to the polls. But when they told me there was a state in this country where a n----- could vote, I stopped dead in my tracks. I said I’d never vote again as long as I live. Those are the very words I used—everyone heard it. The country can rot for all I care. And to see the confident way that n----- acted! He wouldn’t have even stepped aside had I shoved him out of my way. I asked everyone why this n----- wasn’t being put up for auction and sold into slavery? And do you know what they said? They said he could only be sold into slavery after he’d been in the state for six months, and he hadn’t been here that long yet. Can you believe it? That’s some kind of government that won’t even sell a free n----- til he’s been in the state for six months. Here you’ve got a government that calls itself a government and thinks it’s a government and lets on like it’s a government, yet it refuses to act until six months have passed before it can grab that sneaky, thieving, blasted white-shirted free n-----—” Pap went on and on, paying no attention to where he was walking. Suddenly, he fell head over heels over the tub of salted pork and scraped both shins. Then he started cussing and swearing at n-----, the government, and a little bit at the tub. He held his shins and hopped around the cabin, first on one leg and then on the other, until he finally gave the tub a swift kick. But that turned out to be a pretty dumb idea, because the foot he lashed out with was the same one where his toes stuck out the front of the boot. He let off a hair-raising howl, fell down in the dirt, and rolled around holding his toes and cussing more ferociously than ever before. He even admitted it later on. He said that he out-cussed even old Sowberry Hagan in his heydey. But I imagine he was just exaggerating. After supper pap took the jug of whisky and said he had enough to get drunk twice and get the [delirium tremens](javascript:void(0);)once. That’s the word he always used. I figured in about an hour he’d be so drunk he’d be blind. This would be my chance to either steal the key or finish sawing the hole in the wall and crawl out. He drank and drank and eventually tumbled down on to his blankets. But luck wasn’t with me, since instead of falling sound asleep, he just rolled around uncomfortably. He groaned and moaned and thrashed around for such a long time that I got sleepy just waiting for him to sleep. Before I knew it, I’d fallen sound asleep, and even left the candle burning. I don’t know how long I slept, but I woke up when I suddenly heard this awful scream. There was pap looking crazy, and jumping around everywhere. He was yelling about snakes, saying they were crawling up his legs. He even said one had bitten him on the cheek. I looked around, but I couldn’t see any snakes. He ran around the cabin screaming, “Get him off! Get him off! He’s biting me on the neck!” I never saw a man whose eyes looked so wild and crazy. Pretty soon he’d exhausted himself and fell down panting. Then he rolled around as fast as lightening, kicking things, punching, grabbing at the air with his hands. He was screaming and saying that devils had gotten ahold of him. Pretty soon he’d worn himself out, and lay still in the corner of the cabin, moaning. Then he lay perfectly still and didn’t make a sound. I could hear the owls and the wolves off in the distant woods, and everything seemed incredibly still. Soon, though, he raised himself half way up, cocked his head to one side as if listening, and said: “Stomp, stomp, stomp. That’s the dead. Stomp, stomp, stomp. They’re coming after me, but I won’t go. Augh, they’re here! Don’t touch me! Take your cold hands off me! Just let this poor devil alone!” Then he got down on all fours and crawled off, begging his hallucinations to leave him alone. He rolled himself up in his blanket and curled up under the old pine table, begging to be left alone. Then I could hear him crying through the blanket. Eventually he rolled out from under the table and jumped up on his feet, looking crazy again. He saw me and came after me. He called me the Angel of Death and chased me around the cabin with a pocket knife. He was saying he was going to kill me so that I couldn’t come after him. I begged him to stop and kept saying that it was me, Huck. He just laughed—it was a high pitched screech—and swore and continued chasing me. I stopped suddenly and tried to run under his arm, but he grabbed my jacket between the shoulders. I thought I was dead, but I slid out of the jacket fast as lightning, which saved me. Pretty soon he was exhausted again, and he dropped down to the ground with his back against the door. He said he’d rest just a minute and then kill me. He sat on his knife, said he’d sleep to build up his strength. Then he would show me who was boss. He soon dozed off. After a bit, I pulled the split-bottom chair over, climbed on it carefully, so as not to make any noise, and got the gun. I slipped the [ramrod](javascript:void(0);)down the barrel to make sure it was loaded. Then I laid it across a barrel of turnips so that it was pointed at pap. I sat down behind it and waited for him to wake up. Time dragged on slowly.

***Summary:***

* Until now, Huck wasn't the biggest fan of going to school. But now that his father told him not to, he's a regular teacher's pet.
* Meanwhile, Pap has started a court case to try to get Huck's $6,000. The trial drags on, and all the time Huck has to keep getting money for his father to avoid beatings.
* Not that anything really stops him.
* His father finally kidnaps him and takes him to live on the river in a lovely little shack with all the modern luxury of a swinging door and floorboards.
* During his stay, Huck gets regular beatings. He can't run off, because every time Pap leaves he locks Huck inside.
* But Huck is adaptable, and he gets used to life in the shack by the river.
* It's not that bad, he says, since he gets to live in the wild as he likes and there's no one around to scold him about manners and spitting and so forth.
* So everything's great.
* Except for the beatings and that one time he was locked up for three days straight.
* Finally, during one awesome instance of solitary confinement, Huck finds an old wood-saw and goes to work at a slab of wood on the back wall of the cabin.
* He hides the saw when Pap comes home acting even less pleasant than usual because Judge Thatcher is dragging out the trial as long as possible.
* He's also worried that the Widow will try to get custody again and win this time, now that he's made an utter idiot of himself about town.
* Yeah, that sounds like a reasonable thing to be worried about it.
* Huck may not like being locked up, but he also doesn't want to go back to civilization. He decides to run away just as soon as he can.
* That night, Pap gets roaring drunk and comes back home absolutely covered in mud from lying in the gutter.
* He starts cussing out everything, from the government (who won't let him have his rights) to Judge Thatcher (who won't let him have Huck's $6,000) to black men who are educated (who he thinks shouldn't be allowed to know more than he does).
* In fact, having learned that some states let black men vote, he decides he'll never vote again.
* Real mature, Pap.
* Pap continues to drink, fall down, hurt himself, and act the poster child for racism and bigotry.
* Huck falls asleep and wakes up to see Pap in a [**delirious fit**](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001771/), screaming about snakes and the devil.
* After some more sleeping, crying, and screaming, Pap jumps up and starts chasing Huck around the cabin, calling him the "Angel of Death."
* When he finally passes out again, Huck picks up the rifle and sits down with it pointed at Pap. You know, just in case he wakes up and tries to murder his son again.

***Synopsis:***

Pap sues Judge Thatcher for Huck’s fortune and continues to threaten Huck about attending school. Huck continues to attend, partly to spite his father. Pap goes on one drunken binge after another. One day, he kidnaps Huck, takes him deep into the woods to a secluded cabin on the Illinois shore, and locks Huck inside all day while he rambles outside. Eventually, Huck finds an old saw, makes a hole in the wall, and resolves to escape from both Pap and the Widow Douglas, but Pap returns as Huck is about to break free.

Pap complains that Judge Thatcher has delayed the trial to prevent him from getting Huck’s wealth. He has heard that his chances of getting the money are good but that he will probably lose the fight for custody of Huck. Pap continues to rant about a mixed-race man in town; Pap is disgusted that the man is allowed to vote in his home state of Ohio, and that legally he cannot be sold into slavery until he has been in Missouri six months. Later, Pap wakes from a drunken sleep and chases after Huck with a knife, calling him the “Angel of Death” but stopping when he passes out. Huck holds a rifle pointed at his sleeping father and waits.

***Analysis (Ch1-6):***

In these chapters, Twain makes a number of comments on the society of his time and its attempts at reform. We see a number of well-meaning individuals who engage in foolish, even cruel behavior. The new judge in town refuses to give custody of Huck to Judge Thatcher and the Widow, despite Pap’s history of neglect and abuse. This poorly informed decision not only makes us question the wisdom and morality of these public figures but also resonates with the plight of slaves in Southern society at the time. The new judge in town returns Huck to Pap because he privileges Pap’s “rights” over Huck’s welfare—just as slaves, because they were considered property, were regularly returned to their legal owners, no matter how badly these owners abused them. Twain also takes the opportunity to mock the bleeding-heart do-gooders of the temperance, or anti-alcohol, movement: the judge is clearly naïve, misguided, and blind to the larger evils around him, and the weeping and moralizing that goes on in his home is grating, to say the least.

Throughout these chapters, Huck is at the center of countless failures and breakdowns in the society around him, yet he maintains his characteristic resilience. Indeed, Huck’s family, the legal system, and the community all fail to protect him or to provide a set of beliefs and values that are consistent and satisfying to him. Huck’s wrongful imprisonment elicits sympathy and concern on our part, even though this imprisonment does not seem to distress Huck in the least. Sadly, Huck is so used to social abuses by this point in his life that he has no reason to prefer one set of abuses over the other. Likewise, although Pap is a hideous, hateful man in nearly every respect, Huck does not immediately abandon him when given the chance. Pap is, after all, Huck’s father, and Huck is still a fairly young boy. Ultimately, Pap’s kidnapping of Huck provides an opportunity for Huck to break from this society that has done him harm.

Pap, the embodiment of pure evil, is one of Twain’s most memorable characters. Because we have no background information to explain his present state, his role is primarily symbolic. The deathly pallor of his skin, which is nauseating to Huck, makes Pap emblematic of whiteness. Unfortunately, Pap represents the worst of white society: he is illiterate, ignorant, violent, and profoundly racist. The mixed-race man who visits the town contrasts Pap in every way: he is a clean-cut, knowledgeable, and seemingly politically conscious professor. In establishing the contrast between Pap and the mixed-race man, Twain overturns traditional symbolism of his time and implies that whiteness, not blackness, is associated with evil. Jim’s vision of Pap’s two angels and Huck’s two future wives extends this sense of confusion over good and bad, human and inhuman, right and wrong in Huck’s world. At this point, Jim is unclear as to which will win, and even less clear about which *should* win.

***Critical Study(Ch5-6):***

That evening, [Huck](https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/character-analysis/huckleberry-finn) discovers Pap in his room. After the initial shock, Huck decides Pap is too disheveled to be a threat. Pap's hair is "long and tangled and greasy," his face is extremely pale, and his clothes are in rags. Pap immediately notices how clean Huck is in comparison and then begins a tirade about Huck attending school and trying to be more of a man than his father.

Over the next few days, Pap tries to get Huck's money from Judge Thatcher and gain custody of Huck. Pap is unable to get any money, except when he takes a dollar or two directly from Huck. Although the widow wants to raise Huck, Pap convinces a new judge that he has changed and will start a life free from alcohol and sin. The new judge decides that "he'd druther not take a child away from its father" and grants custody to Pap. The new judge finally realizes he has been taken for a fool, however, when Pap sneaks out and breaks his arm after getting "drunk as a fiddler."

Instead of avoiding school, Huck attends just to spite Pap. When the widow tells Pap to stop loitering around her house, Pap kidnaps Huck and takes him upriver to the Illinois shore. The widow discovers Huck's location and sends a man to rescue him, but Pap drives the man off with a gun.

After a couple of months, Pap's beatings become too harsh and too frequent, and Huck decides to escape. The same night as Huck's decision, Pap gets extremely drunk and begins to denounce the government for its laws and the positive treatment of African-Americans. Eventually both Pap and Huck fall asleep, and Huck wakes up to find Pap screaming about snakes and calling Huck the "Angel of Death."

Upon discovering Pap, Huck's first thoughts are of the beatings that Pap used to give him. When Huck sees Pap's appearance, however, he immediately is put at ease. Pap's disheveled appearance does not frighten Huck; instead, Pap appears as a clown or buffoon with exaggerated features. The appearance is similar to other exaggerated frontier characters in American humor, but Pap is more than a caricature; he is the most evil character in the novel, and he is white, "a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body's flesh crawl."

Pap's threats are humorous because of the obvious irony; how could a father not be proud of his son learning to read? But as in Chapter 4, the threats are laced with the realization that Huck has been beaten by Pap before. Huck stays captive for the next couple of months and begins to enjoy his old life, free from manners, education, and religion. Huck's "free" life with Pap, however, comes at the price of physical abuse.

Pap's miserable character represents yet another negative element of society. Pap exudes bigotry and hate. His ludicrous tirade against the government and blacks is pathetically comical because of his obvious arrogance and ignorance and the slapstick humor involved in Huck's description. The irony, however, is more painful than it is humorous because it symbolizes a common racist attitude built on ignorance and insecurity.

When Pap calls Huck the Angel of Death at the end of Chapter 6, the name appears to be one of Pap's hallucinations. The label is important, however, and foreshadows the numerous deaths that Huck encounters as he escapes down the Mississippi.

Glossary

**black slouch**a felt hat with a broad, floppy rim.

**put in her shovel**offered an opinion.

**pungle**to pay.

**bullyragged**scolded, chastised.

**forty-rod**cheap whisky.

**tow**a rope made from strands of broken or coarse flax or hemp.

**mulatter**mulatto, a person who has one black parent and one white parent.

**habob**aristocratic member of the community.

**delirium tremens**involuntary muscle spasm usually associate with drinking alcohol and characterized by sweating, anxiety, and hallucinations.

***Critical Analysis:***

[Pap](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Pap) pursues Judge Thatcher to try to gain custody of [Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck) and his money. The trial goes nowhere. Meanwhile Pap tries to get Huck to stop going to school, which only inspires him more. Huck gives his father money occasionally to protect himself from being hit. His father takes the money and gets drunk.

One day after the widow tells Pap to stay away, he determines that he is the boss of Huck and kidnaps him. Pap takes Huck up the river a few miles to the Illinois shore and keeps him locked up. The widow learns of Huck's whereabouts and sends someone to get him, but Pap drives him off.

Huck adjusts to the lifestyle of Pap and comes to enjoy it, as all he does is fish and smoke all day. However, Pap continues to hit him to the point where Huck cannot stand it any longer. One day Pap locks Huck in the cabin and leaves for three days. Huck gets lonesome and decides he will run off. Before he finishes his escape Pap returns and launches into tirades about various topics including the government.

He sends Huck outside to get the supplies he has brought from town. That night Pap gets drunk and falls asleep. He awakens and chases Huck with a knife and threatens him while calling him the "Angel of Death." Pap falls back asleep and Huck holds a gun for protection.

[Pap](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Pap) curses the government and sees it as inept. Ironically it is the inept government that is unable to protect his son, [Huck](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/The-Adventures-of-Huckleberry-Finn/character-analysis/#Huck), from him. Pap is clearly unfit to care for his child. Yet when he kidnaps Huck nothing happens to him. The widow tries to get Huck back but the government does nothing about it. One would think Huck, as a boy, should be taken as a ward of the state. Pap himself recognizes this irony.

Somehow Pap sinks lower in this chapter. His addiction to alcohol controls him, and he is a nasty drunk. He is a racist and full of hate. His diatribe reveals just how ignorant he is. His vow not to vote because a mulatto man has the right to vote is far from a threat. The mulatto is educated, a college professor, and clean-cut. Based on the little we know about the two men, the country is better off having the mulatto vote. Pap, with his uneducated, racist, angry ways, has nothing to offer.

Huck deals with Pap and adjusts to the new situation, even if he is not pleased with every circumstance. This once again reinforces his ability to cope with challenges. Huck has low expectations and accepts things as they are.

Significance:

[Pap](https://www.gradesaver.com/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/study-guide/character-list#pap) begins hanging out around the town and demands Huck give him money every few days. When the widow tells Pap to get away from her property, he kidnaps Huck and takes him three miles upriver to a log cabin. Pap carefully locks the door and never leaves Huck's side without making sure that Huck cannot escape. Huck enjoys being free from school but soon gets upset that he is being beaten so much.

Searching for a way to escape, Huck discovers part of a saw that is missing its handle and starts to saw off a log in the rear corner of the cabin, but is forced to stop when Pap returns. Pap is drunk and makes Huck go outside and bring in all the supplies he has brought from town. Pap proceeds to drunkenly curse everyone he has ever met and spends a significant part of his tirade criticizing the government.

Huck hopes to escape after Pap falls asleep, but Pap has a fitful night, and Huck is afraid he might wake up and catch him trying to get out of the cabin. At one point Pap jumps up thinking he is covered with snakes. Later, he dreams that the angel of death is after him and he starts to chase Huck around the cabin with a knife. Huck runs for his life and manages to survive after Pap falls asleep again. Huck then takes down the gun and holds it for protection.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) continues to harass [Judge Thatcher](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters) for [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn)’s money, and he harasses Huck for not stopping school. Huck goes to school nevertheless, with even more desire if only to spite Pap. The “law trial” Pap instigates proceeds slowly, so Huck borrows two or three dollars from Judge Thatcher once in a while to give to Pap, so that Huck might avoid a beating. With Huck’s money, Pap gets drunk, and every time he gets drunk he gets rowdy and is jailed. Huck thinks this “was right in his line.”

***Analysis Part 1:***

Even though Huck is adaptable to his surroundings, he is more rebellious than anything: it’s exactly because Pap tells him not to go to school that Huck insists on going to school. Huck pushes back against any rigid structure that is imposed on him. Pap, on the other hand, leads a repetitious life, getting drunk, getting, jailed, getting drunk, etc.

***Summary Part 2:***

When [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) loiters around the [Widow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-widow-douglas-and-miss-watson)’s estate too much, the Widow reprimands him. Pap vows to show her who [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn)’s boss is, so one day he kidnaps Huck and takes him to an isolated log hut in the woods near the river. Pap is with Huck at all times, so that Huck has no chance for escape. The two live on what fish they catch and what game they shoot with Pap’s (probably stolen) gun. Sometimes Pap locks Huck up to go down to the store to trade fish and game for whiskey. Huck eventually becomes accustomed to his new living situation, despite the beatings.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The cabin that Pap takes Huck to is a symbol for imprisonment, a place where Huck’s freedom is physically limited. Huck’s imprisonment there is analogous to Jim’s bondage: both are socio-economically motivated (Pap wants Huck’s money as a slaveholder wants to profit from holding his slave), and both involve oppression and violence. Characteristically, Huck adapts to life in the cabin, because he has no other reasonable option.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) comes to like the “lazy and jolly” life he leads with [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap), the smoking and fishing he does without the burden of study. His nice clothes become dirty and tattered. Huck even wonders how he ever adapted to the lifestyle endorsed by the [Widow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-widow-douglas-and-miss-watson), what with its manners and rules. Though Huck had stopped cussing over the course of his “sivilizing,” he resumes because Pap doesn’t object.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Huck lives in the present, unbound by the past: he lives whatever life he thinks is currently best, and has no nostalgia for his previous ways of life. One consequence of this, though, is that Huck is something of a slow learner: it’s because he doesn’t change readily in response to past experiences that Huck is so slow to accept Jim not as a black slave inferior to whites but as an equal human being deserving of freedom.

***Summary Part 4:***

However, [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) eventually begins to beat [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) so often and so severely that Huck, covered with welts, can no longer stand the abuse. Pap also begins to leave Huck alone too often, locking him in the cabin, such that Huck is often “dreadful lonesome.” Scared one time that Pap has drowned and that he might never be freed from the cabin, Huck begins to look for ways to escape. There is no way out of the cabin, though, so Huck looks for tools to make an escape. He finds a rusty old saw which he carefully begins to use an old saw he finds to remove a section from a log of the cabin, big enough for him to squeeze through. Soon after he begins, Huck hears Pap’s gun go off in the woods outside. Huck hides all evidence of his work, just before Pap returns home.

***Analysis Part 4:***

It is only when a way of life becomes untenable for Huck that he seeks to change it. Here, for example, it is only after living with Pap becomes unsafe that Huck seeks means of escaping from Pap, which he could have done anytime in the past but neglected to do. Huck formulates a very practical plan for his escape, resourceful and efficient. This plan is contrasted later with Tom’s plan to liberate Jim from the Phelps Farm, which is maybe more stylish than Huck’s, but much more romantic, less practical, and more dangerous.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) is characteristically in a bad mood when he comes in. He rants that his lawsuit to get [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn)’s money is proceeding too slowly, and that it looks as though the [Widow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/the-widow-douglas-and-miss-watson) and [Judge Thatcher](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters) may be successful in another bid to win custody of Huck. This shakes Huck up “considerable,” because Huck doesn’t want to return to being “sivilized” at this point. Pap then begins to cuss violently, saying that he’d like to see the Widow try to get custody of Huck, threatening to take Huck to an even more isolated location. Huck is worried, but consoles himself that Pap won’t get the chance to take him away, because Huck will have escaped by then. Pap tells Huck to load their skiff (a kind of boat) with supplies required for a journey, prompting Huck to further plan his escape.

***Analysis Part 5:***

That Huck wants to live neither with the Widow, where he is not free enough, nor with Pap, where he is too free, reveals that freedom for Huck can be either deficient or excessive, and that the ideal degree of freedom is somewhere between those two extremes, between living only by rigid rules or flouting such rules altogether. However, at this point, Huck has not yet learned which rules he should live by, and it is education in this regard that constitutes a major part of his maturation

***Summary Part 6:***

After [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) loads the skiff, he and [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) sit down to dinner, during which Pap becomes drunk. He begins to rant against the government for taking Huck from his flesh-and-blood father, just as Huck is becoming useful to him, and also for supporting [Judge Thatcher](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters) in keeping Huck’s money. Pap then goes on to denounce the government for allowing a man of mixed race to become a wealthy, educated college professor with the right to vote, because Pap doesn’t think a person of mixed race should have opportunities and rights as good as those of white people. Indeed, he thinks the professor should be put up at a slave auction and sold.

***Analysis part 6:***

Pap thinks of himself as a victim of bad government policies, but in doing so he neglects to take into account the people who have tried to help him salvage his life, like the new judge, nor does he accept responsibility for his bad decisions. Pap is also resentful of all people more successful than he is; a vicious racist, he doesn’t believe a black man should be more materially successful than him, and is resentful of successful black people in general.

***Summary Part 7:***

As he rants, [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) wanders around the cabin, eventually tripping on a tub of salt pork, which makes him cuss even more. He hops around the cabin, kicks the tub with his boot that has “a couple of his toes leaking out of the front end,” howls even more, and ends up rolling around in the dirt. After supper, Pap gets his jug of whiskey, and [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) predicts that he will be very drunk by the end of the night, at which point Huck could make his escape. But Pap stays up late thrashing and moaning, and Huck himself, exhausted, falls asleep. He wakes to Pap screaming that snakes are crawling up his legs. Pap hops around the cabin some more till he falls down, and, after rolling violently on the floor, lies still, saying soon thereafter that the dead are after him. Pap rises and crawls, begging the dead to leave him alone, and starts to cry.

***Analysis Part 8:***

Pap’s self-destructiveness is exemplified in this scene: he hurts himself, but, rather than tend to his injury, he, rather hypocritically, only exacerbates it by lashing out and, in lashing out, hurting himself even more This resembles how he refuses the new judge’s help in being reformed and, falling back into drunkenness, literally hurts himself after falling out of his window. As for Pap’s hallucinations, the first may draw on Pap’s religious beliefs. In the Bible, the snake is a figure for the Devil and sin, which Pap is haunted by. Pap’s hallucination of the dead touching him foreshadows his own death by drowning chapters later.

***Summary Part 9:***

After some time passes, [Pap](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/pap) jumps up “looking wild,” and he goes after [Huck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-adventures-of-huckleberry-finn/characters/huckleberry-finn) with a knife, calling him the Angel of Death. Huck tells Pap that he’s not the Angel of Death, but Pap only laughs and continues to chase Huck. At one point, Pap grabs Huck by the back of his jacket. Huck thinks that Pap is just about to kill him, and so he slides out of his jacket and succeeds in saving himself. Pap soon drops down with his back against the door to rest, guarding the knife under him, and falls asleep. Huck grabs Pap’s gun, loads it, and points it at the sleeping Pap, waiting, as time slowly drags on, for him to wake up.

***Analysis Part 9:***

Pap is clearly not in his right mind at this point, drunk and despairing as he is, so much so that he thinks Huck is the Angel of Death. An irony here is that, though Pap’s hallucination pertains to a Christian image, Pap is acting most unlike a Christian: he does not accept death tranquilly, with the promise of redemption and eternal life in Heaven in mind, and he is viciously violent toward Huck.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

It was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books nor study. Two months or more run along, and my clothes got to be all rags and dirt, and I didn't see how I'd ever got to like it so well at the widow's, where you had to wash, and eat on a plate, and comb up, and go to bed and get up regular, and be forever bothering over a book, and have old Miss Watson pecking at you all the time. I didn't want to go back no more. I had stopped cussing, because the widow didn't like it; but now I took to it again because pap hadn't no objections. It was pretty good times up in the woods there, take it all around. (6.4)

***Explanation 1:***

Aside from the kidnapping, being down at Pap's isn't so bad. But is this nature? Is this the clean, gentle, sort of spooky woods, or is this just a kind of perverted civilization, like pigs living in their filth in a pigpen?

***Quotation 2:***

I was pretty tired, and the first thing I knowed I was asleep. When I woke up I didn't know where I was for a minute. I set up and looked around, a little scared. Then I remembered. The river looked miles and miles across. The moon was so bright I could a counted the drift logs that went a-slipping along, black and still, hundreds of yards out from shore. Everything was dead quiet, and it looked late, and SMELT late. You know what I mean—I don't know the words to put it in. (6.22)

***Explanation 2:***

Yeah, we don't either. But Huck does. He really gets the natural world; he understands its rhythms, and he can even tell the time by how it smells. (We'd be lost without our watches.)

***Quotation 3:***

"Call this a govment! why, just look at it and see what it's like. Here's the law a-standing ready to take a man's son away from him—a man's own son, which he has had all the trouble and all the anxiety and all the expense of raising. Yes, just as that man has got that son raised at last, and ready to go to work and begin to do suthin' for HIM and give him a rest, the law up and goes for him. And they call THAT govment! (6.10)

***Explanation 3:***

Pap wants all of the rights of fatherhood (having a son to look after him in his old age) without any of the responsibilities (actually caring for and educating that son). But we really can't imagine that Pap went to too much anxiety and expense to raise Huck.

***Quotation 4:***

here was a free n\*\*\*\*\* there from Ohio—a mulatter, most as white as a white man. He had the whitest shirt on you ever see, too, and the shiniest hat; and there ain't a man in that town that's got as fine clothes as what he had; and he had a gold watch and chain, and a silver-headed cane—the awful- est old gray-headed nabob in the State. And what do you think? They said he was a p'fessor in a college, and could talk all kinds of languages, and knowed everything. And that ain't the wust. They said he could VOTE when he was at home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was just about to go and vote myself if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a State in this country where they'd let that n\*\*\*\*\* vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote agin. (6.11)

***Explanation 4:***

Oh, Pap. Like that racist relative who shows up at every family gathering, he just digs himself into a really, really ugly hole. But is he an exception, or is he just saying what almost everyone in the book is thinking?

***Quotation 5:***

…so every now and then I'd borrow two or three dollars off of the judge for him, to keep from getting a cowhiding. Every time he got money he got drunk; and every time he got drunk he raised Cain around town; and every time he raised Cain he got jailed. He was just suited – this kind of thing was right in his line. (6.1)

***Explanation 5:***

Pap’s alcoholism is cyclical in nature, and Huck has come to expect drinking binges and violence from his father.

***Quotation 6:***

Every little while he locked me in and went down to the store, three miles, to the ferry, and traded fish and game for whisky, and fetched it home and got drunk and had a good time, and licked me.

[…]

The old man made me go to the skiff and fetch the things he had got. There was a fifty-pound sack of corn meal, and a side of bacon, ammunition, and a four-gallon jug of whisky, and an old book and two newspapers for wadding, besides some tow. (6.3-8)

***Explanation 7:***

For Huck’s father, alcohol has become a priority over food and other necessities. Huck’s dad takes his need to feed the addiction to hurtful levels.

***Quotation 7:***

I got the things all up to the cabin, and then it was about dark. While I was cooking supper the old man took a swig or two and got sort of warmed up, and went to ripping again. He had been drunk over in town, and laid in the gutter all night, and he was a sight to look at. A body would a thought he was Adam – he was just all mud. Whenever his liquor begun to work he most always went for the govment. (6.9)

***Explanation 7:***

Huck has learned to expect certain drunken episodes from his father.

***Quotation 8:***

After supper pap took the jug, and said he had enough whisky there for two drunks and one delirium tremens. That was always his word. I judged he would be blind drunk in about an hour, and then I would steal the key, or saw myself out, one or t'other. He drank and drank, and tumbled down on his blankets by and by; but luck didn't run my way. He didn't go sound asleep, but was uneasy. He groaned and moaned and thrashed around this way and that for a long time. (6.12)

***Explanation 8:***

Huck tries to use his father’s alcoholism against him to plan an escape.

***Quotation 9:***

I don't know how long I was asleep, but all of a sudden there was an awful scream and I was up. There was pap looking wild, and skipping around every which way and yelling about snakes. He said they was crawling up his legs; and then he would give a jump and scream, and say one had bit him on the cheek – but I couldn't see no snakes. He started and run round and round the cabin, hollering "Take him off! take him off! he's biting me on the neck!" I never see a man look so wild in the eyes. Pretty soon he was all fagged out, and fell down panting; then he rolled over and over wonderful fast, kicking things every which way, and striking and grabbing at the air with his hands, and screaming and saying there was devils a-hold of him. He wore out by and by, and laid still a while, moaning. Then he laid stiller, and didn't make a sound. I could hear the owls and the wolves away off in the woods, and it seemed terrible still. He was laying over by the corner. By and by he raised up part way and listened, with his head to one side. He says, very low:

"Tramp – tramp – tramp; that's the dead; tramp – tramp – tramp; they're coming after me; but I won't go. Oh, they're here! don't touch me – don't! hands off – they're cold; let go. Oh, let a poor devil alone!" (6.13-14)

***Explanation 9:***

Pap’s alcoholism has gone so far as to make him delusional. The disease has completely taken over his life.

***Quotation 10:***

By and by he rolled out and jumped up on his feet looking wild, and he see me and went for me. He chased me round and round the place with a clasp-knife, calling me the Angel of Death, and saying he would kill me, and then I couldn't come for him no more. I begged, and told him I was only Huck; but he laughed SUCH a screechy laugh, and roared and cussed, and kept on chasing me up. Once when I turned short and dodged under his arm he made a grab and got me by the jacket between my shoulders, and I thought I was gone; but I slid out of the jacket quick as lightning, and saved myself. Pretty soon he was all tired out, and dropped down with his back against the door, and said he would rest a minute and then kill me. He put his knife under him, and said he would sleep and get strong, and then he would see who was who. (6.15)

***Explanation 10:***

Huck’s very life is put in danger by his father’s alcoholism.