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Everybody was willing. So Tom got out a sheet of paper that he

had wrote the oath on, and read it. It swore every boy to stick to the

band, and never tell any of the secrets; and if anybody done any-

thing to any boy in the band, whichever boy was ordered to kill that

person and his family must do it, and he mustn't eat and he mustn't

sleep till he had killed them and hacked a cross in their breasts,

which was the sign of the band. And nobody that didn't belong to

the band could use that mark, and if he did he must be sued; and if

he done it again he must be killed. And if anybody that belonged to

the band told the secrets, he must have his throat cut, and then have

his carcass burnt up and the ashes scattered all around, and his name

blotted off of the list with blood and never mentioned again by the

gang, but have a curse put on it and be forgot forever.

Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it

out of his own head. He said, some of it, but the rest was out of pirate-

books and robber-books, and every gang that was high-toned had it.

Some thought it would be good to kill the families of boys that told

the secrets. Tom said it was a good idea, so he took a pencil and

wrote it in. Then Ben Rogers says:

“Here’s Huck Finn, he hain't got no family; what you going to do

‘bout him?”

“Well, hain't he gor a father?” says Tom Sawyer.

“Yes, he’s got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He

used to lay drunk with the hogs in the tanyard, but he hain’t been

seen in these parts for a year or more.”

They talked it over, and they was going to rule me out, because

they said every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it

wouldn't be fair and square for the others. Well, nobody could think

of anything to do—everybody was stumped, and set still. I was most

ready to cry; but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them

Miss Watson—they could kill her. Everybody said:

“Oh, she'll do. That's all right. Huck can come in.”

‘Then they all stuck a pin in their fingers to get blood to sign with,

and I made my mark on the paper.

“Now,” says Ben Rogers, “what's the line of business of this Gang?”

“Nothing only robbery and murder,” Tom said.