



The Prince and the Pauper

By Mark Twain

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Mark Twain's historical fable explores what happens when the Prince of Wales changes places with a young beggar

Set in sixteenth-century England, *The Prince and the Pauper* follows two boys with vastly different lives: Tom Canty, the indigent child of an abusive, roustabout thief, and Prince Edward, the son of King Henry VIII and heir to the throne.

One day, daydreaming while wandering near the king's palace, Canty catches sight of the prince—and nearly catches a brutal beating from the royal guards. Prince Edward commands them to stop and invites the street urchin into his immaculate home. Both fascinated by their strikingly similar appearances, the two boys craft a plot that could unwittingly upend the monarchy: to temporarily switch clothes, thereby swapping lives. Through first-hand experience—and a series of humorous follies—the two discover that neither life is as carefree as they expected.

In *The Prince and the Pauper*, Twain elevates the classic theme of mistaken identity with his inimitable storytelling to create something uniquely American: a historical fable.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (November 30, 1835 – April 21, 1910), better known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American author and humorist. He wrote *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and its sequel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), the latter often called “the Great American Novel”. He grew up in Hannibal, Missouri, which provided the setting for *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*. After an apprenticeship with a printer, he worked as a typesetter and contributed articles to the newspaper of his older brother, Orion Clemens. He later became a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River before heading west to join Orion in Nevada. He referred humorously to his singular lack of success at mining, turning to journalism for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*. In 1865, his humorous story, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”, was published, based on a story he heard at Angels Hotel in Angels Camp, California, where he had spent some time as a miner.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Margaret Clayton:

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