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The novel opens with Aunt Polly scouring the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out dramatically, “Look behind you!” and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects sadly on Tom’s mischievous and how she let him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at supper time. His clothes are all dirty and his pockets are full of barber’s napkins. He has been skips school that afternoon and went everywhere, but Aunt Polly is satisfied. Aunt Polly is waiting for Tom’s half-brother, Huck, in the back yard. Tom has sworn the boy to secrecy about his adventures. During supper, Aunt Polly asks Tom if he would like to go to school the next day, but Tom refuses.

Tom goes out of the house into the street and begins to whistle. Tom sees the streets of St. Petersburg and he is thrilled. Tom and the new arrival are the best of friends. Tom promises to help the new arrival and eventually chases the new arrival all the way home.

When he returns home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his dirtied clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whitewash the fence. Tom passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “whitewash alley,” a kind of notebook. Tom almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.
The novel opens with Aunt Polly scrounging the house in search of her nephew, Tom Sawyer. She finds him in the closet, discovers that his hands are covered with jam, and prepares to give him a whipping. Tom cries out theatrically, “Look behind you!” and when Aunt Polly turns, Tom escapes over the fence. After Tom is gone, Aunt Polly reflects sadly on Tom’s mischievous and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom goes out of the house into the street and is watching a streetcar pass by. He checks himself to dispose his short pants, for Aunt Polly is satisfied. The streetcar has just passed. Tom has sworn the streetcar to save his short pants from being soaked.

When he returns home in the evening, Tom finds Aunt Polly waiting for him. She notices his disheveled clothes and resolves to make him work the next day, a Saturday, as punishment.

On Saturday morning, Aunt Polly sends Tom out to whitewash the fence. Jim passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “white alley,” a kind of mulberry. Jim almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.