The novel opens with Aunt Polly scurrying 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 mischief and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at supper. His clothes are torn, his hair is mussed, and he has a lot of dirt on his face. He tells Aunt Polly about his adventures. During supper, Aunt Polly tells Tom that school will be skipped school that afternoon and next morning as punishment. Tom is pleased and jumps high that his college is still a ways from home, but still, Tom’s half-brother, Huck, is too. Tom arranges the house for the evening and eventually chases the newcomers 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. Sam passes by, and Tom tries to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “white alley,” a kind of means. Tom almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his task.
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 naughtiness and how she lets him get away with too much.

Tom comes home at supper, drenched and wet from head to foot, and Aunt Polly is satisfied. Daring supper, Aunt Polly tells Tom about his adventures, but Tom has skipped school that morning and got wet from playing in the rain. Aunt Polly is shocked and worried. But Tom’s half-brother, Benjy, is visiting, and Tom calls on him to help him disguise his wet clothes.

Tom goes out of the house into the rain. He tells his aunt that he is going for his work and eventually returns the wet clothes 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. Jim passes by, and Tom stays to get him to do some of the whitewashing in return for a “stone alley,” a kind of marble. This almost agrees, but Aunt Polly appears and chases him off, leaving Tom alone with his tasks.