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Reading Notes

roundabout  a short, close-fitting jacket  
trucker  stuff or rubbish

dander  temper or anger

lam  to give a full beating to

do
cat  a folk name for the devil

singed cat  a person who is better than he appears

natty  neat and tidy

high feather  high spirits

Vocabulary

1. questions that were full of guile

2. unalloyed pleasure

3. glowering at each other

4. uncovered an ambuscade

5. adamantine in its firmness

Comprehension Questions

1. Who is characterized in this chapter?

2. What does this statement mean: “I never did see the beat of that boy!”

3. Why does Tom live with his aunt?

4. Describe Sid.

5. What new interest makes Tom forget his troubles?

6. What day of the week is it?
Quotations

Name the speaker and anyone spoken to or spoken about.
1. “But old fools is the biggest fools there is.”
2. “He was not the model boy of the village. He knew the model boy very well, though, and loathed him.”
3. “Diligence and attention soon gave him the knack of it, and he strode down the street with his mouth full of harmony and his soul full of gratitude. He felt much as an astronomer feels who has discovered a new planet. No doubt as far as strong, deep, unalloyed pleasure is concerned, the advantage was with the boy, not the astronomer.”

Discussion Questions

1. What causes the fight between Tom and the new boy?
2. Find an example of colloquial speech in the chapter and explain what it means.
3. What motivates Tom to loathe the “model boy” of the village?
4. According to the author, what is the difference between Tom’s discovery in whistling and an astronomer’s discovery of a new planet?

Focus Passage

Find the paragraph that begins: “Hang the boy, can’t I ever learn anything? Ain’t he played me tricks enough like that for me to be looking out for him by this time? …”

1. Who is speaking and to whom?
2. Who is “the boy” being spoken about?
3. What is the main problem being discussed?
4. Why is the problem difficult to solve?
5. What does the speaker plan that happens in the next chapter?