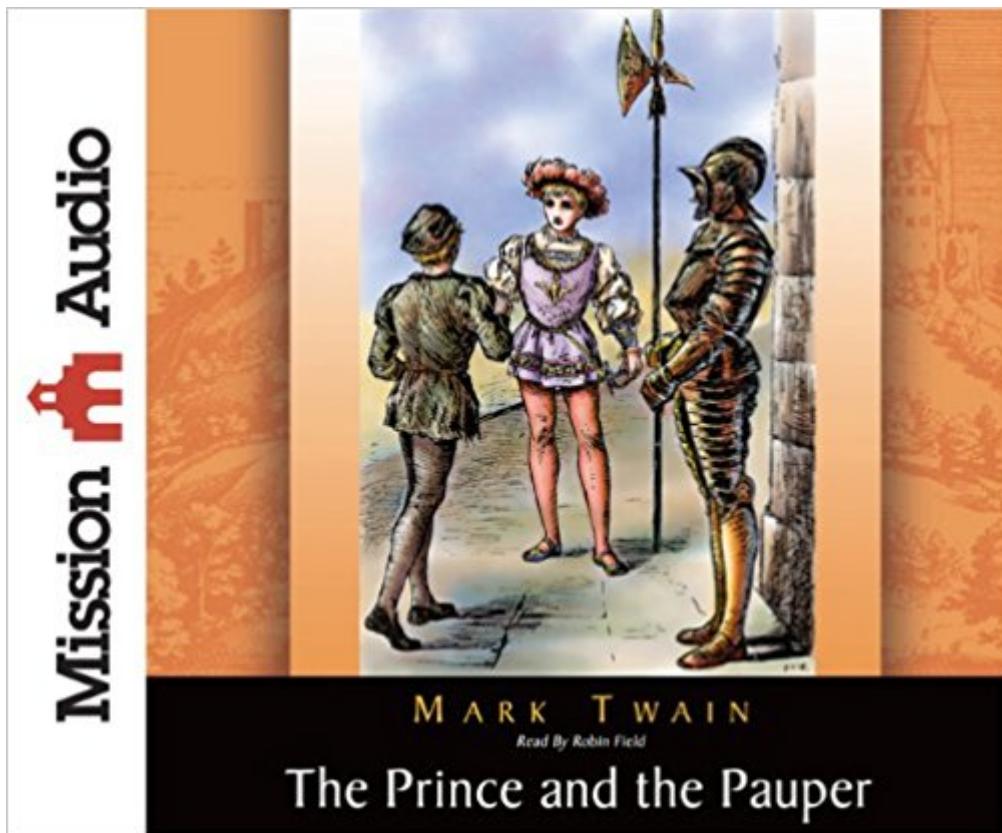


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# The Prince And The Pauper



## **Synopsis**

After the young Prince Edward VI of England and a peasant boy switch places, the little king tries to escape from a world in which he must beg for food, sleep with rodents, face ridicule, and avoid assassination. Meanwhile, the peasant, who is now the prince, dreads exposure and possible execution; members of the Court believe he has gone mad. As a result of the swap, both boys learn that social class, like so much of life, is determined by chance and random circumstance. Originally published in 1881, *The Prince and the Pauper* is one of Mark Twain's earliest social satires. With his caustic wit and biting irony, Twain satirizes the power of the monarchy, unjust laws and barbaric punishments, superstitions, and religious intolerance. Although usually viewed as a child's story, *The Prince and the Pauper* offers adults critical insight into a people and time period not really all that different from our own.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Twain was . . . enough of a genius to build his morality into his books, with humor and wit and--in the case of *The Prince and the Pauper*--wonderful plotting." E. L. Doctorow, award-winning American novelist --E. L. Doctorow, award-winning American novelist" Funny, adventurous, and exciting, yet also chock-full of . . . exquisitely reasoned harangues against society's ills."

--Christopher Paul Curtis, Newbery Medal-winning author --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

**MARK TWAIN (1835-1910)** was born Samuel L. Clemens in the town of Florida, Missouri. One of the most popular and influential authors our nation has ever produced, his keen wit and incisive

satire earned him praise from both critics and peers. He has been called not only the greatest humorist of his age but the father of American literature. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Hard to find books for teens and younger to read (and enjoy), especially for school. Teen read for homeschooling and really liked it. Recommend for all ages.

Great read and is an excellent product, I would buy it again if I needed another one and the transaction was awesome to...

My 10yo loved this audio book, especially the accent it was read in -- a great voice with an English accent. Great condition!

Very good condition

This was one of the few novels of Mark Twain which I had never gotten around to reading. My copy of the book had a brief autobiographical account of Twain which I appreciated. I knew the story quite well from having seen the Disney movie. I saw the Disney movie approximately fifty years ago, yet I remembered the story and even most of the scenes quite clearly. The movie followed the book quite closely. The one thing missing from the movie that comes out in the book is

Twain's humor, such as when the Pauper, newly installed in his role as Prince, doesn't know the proper etiquette for scratching his nose. This is light reading for the young at heart, though Twain includes poignant social commentary concerning the horror that passed for justice at that time in history. Even if you know the story, the book is well worth reading, even if you are not, as I am, an avid fan of Mark Twain.

One day while the Prince was out exercising in the yard, he saw a boy being hit by one of the palace guards. Infuriated that they should treat even the poorest of his father's subjects so, he invited the boy in. Noticing the way the boy was eyeing his fine clothing, he offered to let the boy try them on; this was not solely an unselfish act, for the Prince had often wondered what it would be like to wear such rags and be free to play in the mud, and rather than be left naked, he put on the poor boy's rags. Looking in the mirror, he noticed that they looked so physically similar that the only way one could tell them apart was by their clothing. Looking further, he noticed a bruise that had

been delivered by the guard, and, forgetting himself and his attire, strode out of the room in fury to let the guard have a piece of his mind. The guard, seeing the poor boy who had caused him so much trouble threw the prince out without a second thought! The Pauper was left in princely raiment, and eventually someone came to him to inquire about something or other. He told them he was not the Prince, and thus they thought him mad (for anyone who would claim to be a Prince would obviously be rational, and likewise, anyone who claimed himself to not be must be insane). Thus begins a story where a poor man finds that a king lives in a gilded cage, and a king discovers that a poor man barely manages to live at all. This was a great story full of laughs and interesting insights. I literally laughed aloud when I heard the reasoning behind the thinking that the "Prince" must have gone mad. And it was quite funny when the actual Prince made a friend who thought him mad, but humored him anyway, and became an Earl because of it! The only thing I didn't like is that Mr. Twain tends to try and create a realistic atmosphere, and thus he writes the conversation to be the way it would sound. That's all well and good, but it makes it much more difficult to puzzle out what's being said. I don't think that the story would have suffered at all by fixing up the speech to be closer to what readers would be accustomed than to having it be similar to what it might really have been like in the sixteenth century. Memorable Quote: The distant dogs howled, the melancholy kine complained, and the winds went on raging, whilst furious sheets of rain drove along the roof; but the Majesty of England slept on, undisturbed, and the calf did the same, it being a simple creature and not easily troubled by storms or embarrassed by sleeping with a king. For more reviews like this, please visit [...]

The Prince and the Pauper, by Mark Twain, narrated by Norman Dietz: This is a fun, easy adventure story, well-written (of course), and enjoyable. As I was listening to it, I realized that it's enjoyable partly because it's got such a wonderfully compelling theme. The premise of two people from disparate walks of life exchanging places for awhile is a powerful setup, because the author immediately has not one, but two storylines in which the joys and absurdities of any given lifestyle can be explored from the perspective of an outsider. (It's no accident that modern reality shows like "Trading Spaces," and "Wife Swap" have similar premises). I doubt Twain was the first person to exploit this device, but it makes me curious to know who used it before him. Anyway, Twain does it justice. One thing I found myself questioning as I listened to this book, is its classification as 'children's literature'. While it's true that the themes of the book are far less weighty than 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn', (for example), it would not in my mind, be easy reading for kids. For one thing, the language isn't always straightforward. For another, there are some rather adult

depictions of cruelty and violence. My mom read me this book when I was about eight years old, and either she read me the abridged version, or she edited out the more grizzly scenes, because I certainly don't remember the nastier bits. On the subject of classification: in the introduction to this audiobook, the narrator explains 'The Prince & the Pauper' was Mark Twain's first attempt at historical fiction. However, it seems to me that the lines of this genre are a little gray. Earlier fiction by Twain, including 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer', drew heavily upon Twain's experiences, and are therefore in some sense historical. On the flip side, Twain's early book 'Roughing It', (which Wikipedia describes as 'travel literature') is more fact than fiction, but has certainly been embellished, exaggerated, and peppered with apocryphal anecdotes. That got me wondering: when does satire become so over-the-top that it becomes fiction? At any rate, it is true that 'The Prince and the Pauper' weaves fact and fiction more intimately together than Twain's previous works: although the plot is a product of Twain's imagination, the book features a protagonist who really did exist, and depicts a few events that really did happen. Moreover, this book seems to represent Twain's first foray into writing about cultures and times with which he was not intimately familiar. Anyway, these matters of classification have nothing to do with my rating: I'd recommend this book to young adults, and older adults like me who enjoy a fun, easy adventure story. My only complaint is that I feel as though the last chapter is underwhelming. The resolution of the many threads in the story could have been fabulously-fun. Instead, it falls a bit flat.

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