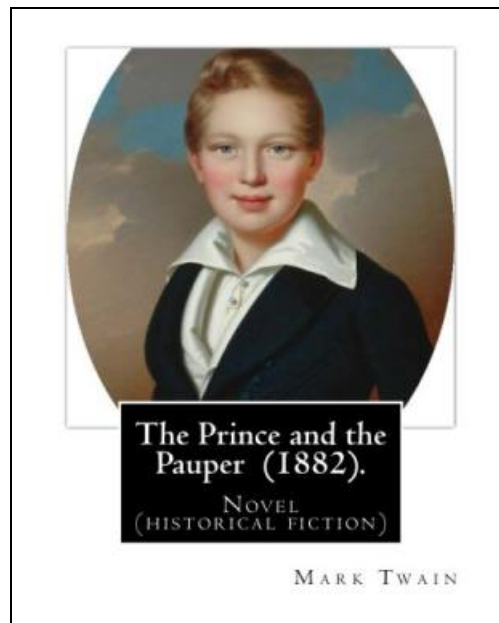


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The Prince and the Pauper is a novel by American author Mark Twain. It was first published in 1881 in Canada, before its 1882 publication in the United States. The novel represents Twain's first attempt at historical fiction. Set in 1547, it tells the story of two young boys who are identical in appearance: Tom Canty, a pauper who lives with his abusive father in Offal Court off Pudding Lane in London, and Prince Edward, son of King Henry VIII. Plot[edit] Tom Canty, youngest son of a poor family living in Offal Court, London, has always aspired to a better life, encouraged by the local priest (who has taught him to read and write). Loitering around the palace gates one day, he sees a prince (the Prince of Wales - Edward VI). Coming too close in his intense excitement, Tom is nearly caught and beaten by the Royal Guards; however, Edward stops them and invites Tom into his palace chamber. There the two boys get to know one another, fascinated by each other's life and their uncanny resemblance; they were born on the same day. They decide to switch clothes temporarily. The Prince momentarily goes outside, quickly hiding an article of national importance (which the reader later learns is the Great Seal of England), but dressed as he is in Tom's rags, he is not recognized by the guards, who drive him from the palace, and he eventually finds his way through the streets to the Canty home. There he is subjected to the brutality of Tom's abusive father, from whom he manages to escape, and meets one Miles Hendon, a soldier and nobleman returning from war. Although...



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