

Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens). The Adventures of Tom Sawyer – From Chapter 3

As he [Tom Sawyer] was passing by the house where Jeff Thatcher lived, he saw a new girl in the garden -- a lovely little blue-eyed creature with yellow hair plaited into two long-tails, white summer frock and embroidered pan-talettes. The fresh-crowned hero fell without firing a shot. A certain Amy Lawrence vanished out of his heart and left not even a memory of herself behind. He had thought he loved her to distraction; he had regarded his passion as adoration; and behold it was only a poor little evanescent partiality. He had been months winning her; she had confessed hardly a week ago; he had been the happiest and the proudest boy in the world only seven short days, and here in one instant of time she had gone out of his heart like a casual stranger whose visit is done.

He worshipped this new angel with furtive eye, till he saw that she had discovered him; then he pretended he did not know she was present, and began to "show off" in all sorts of absurd boyish ways, in order to win her admiration. He kept up this grotesque foolishness for some time; but by-and-by, while he was in the midst of some dangerous gymnastic performances, he glanced aside and saw that the little girl was wending her way toward the house. Tom came up to the fence and leaned on it, grieving, and hoping she would tarry yet awhile longer. She halted a moment on the steps and then moved toward the door. Tom heaved a great sigh as she put her foot on the threshold. But his face lit up, right away, for she tossed a pansy over the fence a moment before she disappeared.

The boy ran around and stopped within a foot or two of the flower, and then shaded his eyes with his hand and began to look down street as if he had discovered something of interest going on in that direction. Presently he picked up a straw and began trying to balance it on his nose, with his head tilted far back; and as he moved from side to side, in his efforts, he edged nearer and nearer toward the pansy; finally his bare foot rested upon it, his pliant toes closed upon it, and he hopped away with the treasure and disappeared round the corner. But only for a minute -- only while he could button the flower inside his jacket, next his heart -- or next his stomach, possibly, for he was not much posted in anatomy, and not hypercritical, anyway.

He returned, now, and hung about the fence till nightfall, "showing off," as before; but the girl never exhibited herself again, though Tom comforted himself a little with the hope that she had been near some window, meantime, and been aware of his attentions. Finally he strode home reluctantly, with his poor head full of visions.

Define Each Word

evanescent: _____

furtive: _____

grotesque: _____

heave: _____

pliant: _____

Write the Correct Word from the Vocabulary

1. Shakespeare's Iago, the villain in *Othello*, presents a _____ caricature of the ambitious and jealous underling.
2. The _____ stem of the young willow tree bent almost to the ground during the windstorm.
3. Sammy's _____ attraction for the girl he met at the A & P market disappeared when he started dating his high school sweetheart.
4. Jackie took a _____ glance at her suitor, and in that instant, she decided she would at least speak with him.
5. The overweight man's torso _____ with exhaustion as he finished the 5 kilometer run.

Comprehension and Discussion: Answer Each Question in Complete Sentences

1. In the first paragraph, the narrator mentions Amy Lawrence. Who is she and why does she "vanish out of [Tom's] heart"?

2. How would you characterize Tom's personality? What evidence from the text helps you make such a characterization?
