



Pudd'nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins (Barnes & Noble Classics Series)

Mark Twain

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Written during **Mark Twain's** so-called pessimistic period, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is a darkly comic masterpiece that exposes the wounds of racism in America and the absurdity of judging character based upon class or skin color.

Set in a small Mississippi River town in the state of Missouri before the Civil War, the novel begins when Roxana, a beautiful slave who can pass for white, switches the child of her master with her own infant son, now called Tom, who grows into a cruel and cowardly man. When Tom's uncle, Judge Driscoll, is found murdered after a botched robbery attempt, suspicion is cast upon two former sideshow performers, Luigi and Angelo Capello, a pair of good-looking and charming identical twins from Italy. Meanwhile, David "Pudd'nhead" Wilson is a wise but unorthodox lawyer who collects fingerprints as a hobby. Shunned as an eccentric, he ultimately wins the respect of the townspeople when he solves the murder mystery and reveals the true identity of the killer.

Often hilarious, sometimes appalling, and always fast-paced, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is ultimately a fierce condemnation of a racially prejudiced society that was predicated upon the institution of slavery.

This edition also includes Twain's related short story, "Those Extraordinary Twins."

Darryl Pinckney is the author of *High Cotton*, a novel, and, in the Alain Locke Lecture Series, *Out There: Mavericks of Black Literature*.

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