

Unknown, Stowe Harriet Beecher

Pictures and Stories from Uncle Tom's Cabin



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THIS LITTLE WORK

IS DESIGNED TO ADAPT

MRS. STOWE'S TOUCHING NARRATIVE

TO THE UNDERSTANDINGS
OF THE YOUNGEST READERS

AND TO FOSTER IN THEIR HEARTS

A GENEROUS SYMPATHY FOR THE

WRONGED NEGRO RACE OF AMERICA

The purpose of the Editor of this little Work, has been to adapt it for the juvenile family circle. The verses have accordingly been

written by the Authoress for the capacity of the youngest readers, and have been printed in a large bold type. The prose parts of the book, which are well suited for being read aloud in the family circle, are printed in a smaller type, and it is presumed that in these our younger friends will claim the assistance of their older brothers or sisters, or appeal to the ready aid of their mamma.

January, 1853.

UNCLE TOM'S PICTURE BOOK

THE SALE OF LITTLE HARRY

Come read my book good boys and girls
That live on freedom's ground,
With pleasant homes, and parents dear,
And blithesome playmates round;
And you will learn a woeful tale,
Which a good woman told,
About the poor black negro race,
How they are bought and sold.

Within our own America
Where these bad deeds are done,
A father and a mother lived
Who had a little son;
As slaves, they worked for two rich men,
Whose fields were fair and wide —
But Harry was their only joy,
They had no child beside.

Now Harry's hair was thick with curls
And softly bright his eyes,
And he could play such funny tricks
And look so wondrous wise,
That all about the rich man's house
Were pleased to see him play,

Till a wicked trader buying slaves
Came there one winter day.

The trader and the rich man sat
Together, at their wine,
When in poor simple Harry slipped
In hopes of something fine.
He shewed them how the dandy danced,
And how old Cudjoe walked,
Till loud they laughed and gave him grapes,
And then in whispers talked.

The young child knew not what they said,
But at the open door
Eliza, his poor mother, stood,
With heart all sick and sore.
Oh children dear, 'twas sad to hear,
That for the trader's gold,
To that hard-hearted evil man
Her own sweet boy was sold.

And he would take him far away,
To where the cotton grew,
And sell him for a slave to men
More hard and wicked too.
She knew that none would heed his woe,
His want, or sickness there,
Nor ever would she see his face,
Or hear his evening prayer.

So when the house was all asleep,
And when the stars were bright,
She took her Harry in her arms,
And fled through that cold night: —
Away through bitter frost and snow
Did that poor mother flee;
And how she fared, and what befell,
Read on, and you shall see.

Before setting out, Eliza took a piece of paper and a pencil, and wrote hastily the following note to her kind mistress, who had tried in vain to save little Harry from being sold: —

"Oh missus! dear missus! don't think me ungrateful; don't think hard of me. I am going to try to save my boy; you will not blame me! God bless and reward you for all your kindness!"

Hastily folding and directing this, she went to a drawer and made up a little package of clothing for her boy, which she tied firmly round her waist; and so fond is a mother's remembrance, that even in the terrors of that hour she did not forget to put up in the little package one or two of his favourite toys.

On the bed lay her slumbering boy, his long curls falling negligently around his unconscious face, his rosy mouth half open, his little fat hands thrown out over the bed-clothes, and a smile spread like a sunbeam over his whole face. "Poor boy! poor fellow!" said Eliza, "they have sold you, but your mother will save you yet."

It was some trouble to arouse the little sleeper; but after some effort he sat up, and began playing with his wooden bird, while his mother was putting on her bonnet and shawl.

"Where are you going, mother?" said he, as she drew near the bed with his little coat and cap.

His mother drew near, and looked so earnestly into his eyes, that he at once divined that something unusual was the matter.

"Hush, Harry," she said; "mustn't speak loud, or they will hear us. A wicked man was coming to take little Harry away from his mother, and carry him 'way off in the dark; but mother won't let him – she's going to put on her little boy's cap and coat, and run off with him, so the ugly man can't catch him."

Saying these words, she had tied and buttoned on the child's simple outfit, and taking him in her arms, she whispered to him to be very still; and, opening the door, she glided noiselessly out.

It was a sparkling, frosty, starlight night, and the mother wrapped the shawl close round her child, as, perfectly quiet with terror, he clung round her neck.

At first the novelty and alarm kept him waking; but after they had gone a considerable way, poor Harry said, as he found himself sinking to sleep —

"Mother I don't need to keep awake, do I?"

"No, my darling; sleep now, if you want to."

"But, mother, if I do get asleep, you won't let him get me?"

"No! so may God help me!" said his mother with a paler cheek, and a brighter light in her large dark eyes.

"You're *sure*, an't you, mother?"

"Yes, *sure*!" said the mother, in a voice that startled herself; for it seemed to her to come from a spirit within, that was no part of her; and the boy dropped his little weary head on her shoulder, and was soon asleep.

When morning came, as poor Harry complained of hunger and thirst, she sat down behind a large rock, which hid them from the road, and gave him a breakfast out of her little package. The boy wondered and grieved that she could not eat, and when putting his arms round her neck he tried to force some of his cake into her mouth, it seemed to her that the rising in her throat would choke her.

"No, no, Harry, darling! mother can't eat till you are safe! We must go on – on – till we come to the river." And she hurried again into the road and proceeded on her journey.

When the trader came to take away Harry, he was in a great rage, because neither the boy nor his mother could be found. The master who sold him was also very angry, and ordered two of his negroes, called Andy and Sam, to bring out two of the swiftest horses, and help the trader to pursue Eliza, and take Harry from her. Andy and Sam did not like that work, but being slaves, they dare not disobey. However, they did what they could to detain the trader; for, pretending to be in great haste, they squalled for this and that, and frightened the horses, till they ran off over hedges and ditches, with Andy and Sam after them, laughing till their sides ached as soon as they got out of sight. The trader all the

while stood cursing and swearing, like a wicked man as he was.

When the horses were caught, they were so tired with their race, that he was fain to let them stay and rest till dinner-time. But when dinner-time came, Chloe the cook, of whom you will hear more in the course of the story, spilled one dish, kept another long in baking; and so the trader did not get his dinner till it was late in the afternoon.

The horses were brought out at last, and he set off with Sam and Andy in pursuit of poor Harry and his mother. They had gone a great way by this time, and Eliza's feet were sore with walking all the night and day, and Harry was ready to lie down and sleep on the snow. As the sun was setting, they came in sight of the great river Ohio. There was no bridge over it. People crossed in boats in the summer time, and in winter on the thick ice, with which it was always covered. Now it was the month of February. The ice had broken, because spring was near. The river was swollen over all its banks, and no boatman would venture on it. There was a little inn hard by, and there poor Eliza hoped to get a little rest for herself and Harry, who was now fast asleep in her arms. She had just sat down by the fire, when, who should ride into the yard but the trader and his guides. The swift horses had brought them much quicker than she and Harry could walk, but the weary mother would not lose her child. She darted out with him that moment, and the verses will tell you by what means she escaped.

ELIZA CROSSING THE RIVER

From her resting-place by the trader chased,
Through the winter evening cold,
Eliza came with her boy at last,
Where a broad deep river rolled.

Great blocks of the floating ice were there,
And the water's roar was wild,
But the cruel trader's step was near,
Who would take her only child.

Poor Harry clung around her neck,
But a word he could not say,
For his very heart was faint with fear,
And with flying all that day.

Her arms about the boy grew tight,
With a loving clasp, and brave;
"Hold fast! Hold fast, now, Harry dear,
And it may be God will save."

From the river's bank to the floating ice
She took a sudden bound,
And the great block swayed beneath her feet
With a dull and heavy sound.

So over the roaring rushing flood,
From block to block she sprang,
And ever her cry for God's good help
Above the waters rang.

And God did hear that mother's cry,
For never an ice-block sank;
While the cruel trader and his men
Stood wondering on the bank.

A good man saw on the farther side,
And gave her his helping hand;
So poor Eliza, with her boy,
Stood safe upon the land.

A blessing on that good man's arm,
On his house, and field, and store;
May he never want a friendly hand
To help him to the shore!

A blessing on all that make such haste,
Whatever their hands can do!
For they that succour the sore distressed,
Our Lord will help them too.

When the two negroes saw Eliza's escape, they began to laugh and cheer; on which the trader chased them with his horsewhip, cursing and swearing as usual. But he could not get over the river,

and went in very bad temper to spend that night at the little inn, determined to get a boat, if possible, and catch Harry in the morning. The man who had helped Eliza up the river's bank, showed her a pretty white house at some distance, where a kind gentleman and his wife lived. The dark night had fallen, the tea-cups were on the table, and the fires were bright in kitchen and parlour, when the poor mother, all wet and weary, her feet cut by the sharp ice (for she had lost her shoes in the river), walked in, with Harry still in her arms. Before she could ask for shelter, she dropped down fainting on the floor. The good people of the house thought she was dead, and raised a terrible alarm. Mr. and Mrs. Bird ran into the kitchen to see what had happened. They were good, kind people, and great in that place, for Mr. Bird was a member of the American Parliament. He kept slaves himself, and tried to think it was no sin. He had even been trying that very night, in conversation with his wife, to defend a law lately passed, which forbade any one to give shelter to poor runaway slaves. But Mrs. Bird would listen to no defence of such a law, and said, "It is a shameful, wicked, and abominable law, and I'll break it for one the first time I have a chance, and I hope I shall have a chance too. I know nothing about politics, but I can read my Bible, and there I see that I must feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the desolate; and that Bible I mean to follow. No, no, John, said she, you may talk all night, but you would not do what you say. Would you now turn away a poor, shivering, hungry creature from your door because he was a runaway? Would you, now?"

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