

Henceforth he was clown of the encampment, and allowed to go about as he pleased.

After the negro had been some months among the Indians, and had learned to understand, and to make himself understood in their language, he went one day into the lodge occupied by Abigail and her mother. The former asked him how it was that he was Captain Johnson.

"Oh," he replied, "the Indians killed Captain Johnson, my master; and, as soon as he was dead, I became Captain Johnson," and, following up his speech with a variety of droll remarks and comical tricks, he greatly interested and amused the old squaw. Turning to Abigail, she said,

"I wonder what ever made the blacks! surely the Good Spirit never could have made them."

Not daring to express a different opinion, Abigail replied that she did not know.

Sambo, glancing at the old woman, as she sat on her camp-floor, with a grin that displayed all his ivory, said,

"I don't know what ever made the nigger, but I do know that it was the devil that made the Indians."

Instantly the old woman, springing to her feet, and seizing the poking-stick, attempted to strike him. Sambo, fleet as a young deer, fled from the lodge, screaming with well-dissembled terror, being pursued by the infuriated old squaw. The noise called the Indians from their camps, and, when they saw the cause of the tumult, they became delighted spectators of the unequal race. The unwieldy old woman, her face distorted with rage, putting forth all her strength in vain efforts to catch the nimble boy, who kept just out of her reach, and danced and whooped as if he were mad. The Indians, young and old, male and female, stood enjoying the sport, and laughing convulsively at the old squaw's unsuccessful attempts to chastise the insolent boy. Sambo's buffoonery had made him a privileged character and a general favorite.

Planting time was again approaching, and Abigail was still a captive. She had

often carefully contrived plans of escape, but hitherto opportunity for carrying any of them into effect had failed. Her Indian mother, however, had latterly manifested a better feeling towards her, causing her to be watched less vigilantly, and seeming to think she was now contented with her lot.

The old woman, in her occasional journeyings past the whites' settlements, had observed the ploughing of the ground, and the superiority of the corn raised on the ploughed land over that raised by the Indian mode of cultivation. Some French people had settled not many miles distant to the north-west of the Indian town, and she determined to get one of them to come and plough land in which to plant her corn. The arrangement was made, and the man having arrived, Abigail was directed to prepare his dinner, and take it out to him where he was ploughing. To this she modestly objected, saying she did not like to go out alone to the Frenchman where he was at work. But her Indian mother replied that she need not fear him, for he had a wife of his own, and she knew so much better than an Indian woman could how a white man liked his food prepared. She must cook his dinner, and carry it to him. Having prepared the meal, and mystified the old woman by her pretended unwillingness for the task, the damsel was sent *alone* to carry it to the ploughman.

While she was waiting for the dish out of which he was eating, observing that she was white, he inquired if she was not a captive. She replied in the affirmative. He then asked if she would not like to make her escape. She replied,

"I would, indeed, if I could feel assured that I would be successful."

He then told her that if she would trust to him, he would conduct her to a white settlement. The fulfilment of the long-cherished hopes which had sustained her in some of her darkest hours seemed approaching; then the fear of betrayal again chilled her heart.

"Will you solemnly pledge your honor that you will not betray me?" she asked.