

"Tell us about seeing one, William, do tell us," I coaxed.

"The first wan e'er I saw was whin I was a slip of a gossoon. It was the year of the scarcity, whin the pratees rotted in the ground, an' the people droppod loike dead laves and died wid the hunger. All the people in the country wor starvin', and we wor starvin' wid the rest. It's well for you, Miss Janetia, that you don't know what that manes. There was my father and mother, Nora an' Ellen, Jimsey, a wee dawshy crachure on the brust, an' meself. We had boiled nettles an' sourrocks to ate; we hadn't a bite or sup ov anythin' wholesome for days and days, an' we wor wake wid the fastin' an' sick wid the thrash that we ate, an' the hopelessness. My father wint away somewheres where there was road-makin' to be done, an' the laborers wor paid wid male.

"Whin he wint away, white an' wan he was himself, to work for a bite an' a sup for us, he says to my mother: 'Bear up, Mary achushla,' says he, 'for by the blessin' ov God, I'll not come home widout a lock ov male itself, anyway; an' ye'll have a bowl ov warm gruel for you an' the childer to put away the gwawin' ov the hunger.'

"Well, my mother was wakely wid the starvin, and Jimsey the crachure drawin' the heart's blood out ov her, in place ov the milk that wasn't there, an' Nora an' Ellen moanin' wid hunger; an' so she said we would creep into the rags ov bed clothes, an' try to kape warm, an' maybe slape till he'd come back again an' bring the male.

"Well, sure enough we did doze off into a kind ov hungry slape. Myself dramed that I was aitin' my fill ov floury potatoes, an' had lashins ov milk to thim, an' salt an' all, an' I cuddin't taste thim at all at all, for my teeth kep' comin' together as if nothin' was betwixt thim. We lived in a lonesome place among the hills where there was no comin' and goin'. My mother she dramed, ov all things, that the fairies wor cookin' her dinner. She dramed that she woke up an' saw two beautiful fairies lookin' in ov the cabin door, an' sayin' wan to the other, 'They're dyin' ov the hunger,' says one, 'We won't let thim die,' says another. 'Let us make them somethin' good,' says the both. Well I woke up hearin' my mother sayin' in a whisper, 'Lord keep us an' save us!' I was behind her in the bed, an' I lifted my head an' looked over her, an' there forninst me on the flure wor two illigant fairies, wid their gowns pinned up an' they as busy as bees. Before I wint to bed I built up a fire an' hung on the pot wid wather in it—full to the top—that all might be ready whin my father kim home wid the lock ov male an' we wudn't have long to wait on the gruel he promised us, an' I filled the wather can be fear it might boil away.

"Well, they had the roarin fire, and the pot was boilin' like mad, an' there was a divoine smell ov raal broth wid mate in it all over the cabin. The pot boiled an' boiled, an' they stirred an' stirred, an' tasted an' tasted, an' they niver let on to see us watchin' thim wid hungry eyes. One says to the other, 'It's done, so it is, an' the other said, 'It's raal good.' An' then they wint over to the dresser, an' they got a bowl an' a wooden ladle, an' they lifted out some ov the broth, an' thim they broke white bread into the bowl an' stirred an' tasted again before our hungry eyes. The weeny Nora could stand it no longer, an' she cried out:

"Give us some, av ye plaze; we're very hungry."

"An' they turned, both ov thim at wance, an' looked at us, an' the wan said to the other 'They're awake.'

"One ov thim came to the bed wid the bowl in her hand, an' my mother tuk heart wid the fear, an' she says 'Don't be angry at the girleen, she meant no harrum, but the hunger's on her, an' the good smell's too much for her.'

"The fairy put the bowl into my mother's hand an' she said to her, 'Ate that an' feed the girleen wid it. We give it to you because we borryed your fire an' your dishes.' An' they filled a bowl for me, an' for Ellen, an' filled my mother's again, full up, because she had Nora an' Jimsey to feed.

"An' then they put the lid on the pot agin, an' let down their gowns—tuk the pins out ov the skirts you know—an' put on their cloaks an' hats an' wor ready to go.

"Do you know who we are?" said they to my mother.

"Oh, you're the good people, shure enough," says she.

"How did you like the broth?" says wan.

"It was gran,' my lady,' says my mother, 'an' the blessin' ov the perishin's on ye, an' it'll do ye good, so it will, whoever you are.'

"Where's your husband?" says the other fairy.

"He's away workin' at the road to fetch us home a lock ov male," says my mother.

"Well," says she, "tuk the pot aff the crook an' don't take the lid aff till he comes home, an' give him what's in it then, to stringthin him. Don't disobey me, for fear the luck I brought will lave ye."

"Thank ye kindly," says my mother. 'I'll do as ye say, niver fear.'

"If ye think we belong to the good people," says the other lady, 'why don't you ask us for somethin'?'

"I do be afraid to ax yer ladyship for anythin', for fear ov makin' too bould an' givin' offence," says my mother, all ov a trimble.

"Ask," says she; 'try our power.'

"Well," says my mother, 'if you give me lave, I'll ask for help to feed the childer, that I mayn't see them die before me eyes ov starvation.'

"Do you know the clump of whins on the top ov the hill behind the cabin?" says she.

"Sure there's many a clump of whins up there," says my mother, 'an' how will I know the right one?'

"The clump I mane," says the fairy, 'is beside a big grey stone.'

"I know it well," says I, spakin' out; 'there's a stone-chicker's nest in it, my lady.'

"That's the very one, my boy," says she.

"Ivery mornin' whin the sun rises, if you or your mother goes up to the whins by the big stone you will find somethin' there, if you never tell any one.'

"I'll never brathe it to man or mortal," says my mother, 'you may depend upon that, my lady.'

"So they wint off wid themselves, in their grane gowns an' iverid cloaks, an' we niver saw thim more; but ivery mornin' at sunroise I wint to the whins by the grey stone, an' there was always somethin' there for us for many a day."

"Were they not splendid? Was your father glad when he came home and found the broth waiting for him, William?"

"He was that, Miss Janetia, an' the sup ov warrum broth was the beginnin' ov good luck to him. He got work wid the master here, God bless him. After a while I tuk sarvice wid the master too, an' I have been wid him iver since. I don't forget the time, though whin I wint to the whin bush ivery mornin' for somethin' for us to ate."

The story was hardly done when uncle and aunt came home, and I was so full of it that I could not keep from telling it to them.

"I am sorry to destroy illusions, Janetia, they're nice and comforting as William finds, but his fairies wer' related to you, and were neither more nor less than two harum-scarum young girls," said Uncle.

"Oh, Uncle!"—I could say no more.

"A long time ago," he went on mercilessly, "when your dear grandmother was alive we lived in Kerry. I was not married then. I had two young sisters, twins, named Sydney and Harriet, a great deal younger than I. They were very much indulged, for they were, except myself, all that were left to your grandmother out of a large family. They were pretty, golden-haired girls, very small of their age; they were thirteen at this time, and as like one another as twin cherries. They were kind-hearted girls, but as tricky as kittens. As William told you, it was a year of scarcity—a dreadful year of privation and suffering to the poor, and of hard self-denial to us who strove to help them. A rumor had come to the girls, through the servants I suppose, that a family up the mountains were dying of hunger. They stole away up the mountain to see if the story was true. They happened to be dressed that day in green French delaine dresses and short red mantles, their gipsy hats trimmed with ivy wreaths. I daresay that Sydney and Harriet made two very nice respectable fairies.

"Uncle!" I almost screamed, a new light breaking in on my mind, "you don't mean to say that mamma and Aunt Sydney were the fairies?"

"Wait, Miss Impatience, till I have told my story and then judge for yourself."

"Well go on, Uncle, please," I said.

"They found the cabin easy enough, and went in, for it was on the latch, and saw a pitiful sight. The poor creatures, wasted to skin and bone with sickness and want, were huddled up in a corner asleep under some rags. There was a fire burning on the hearth and a pot with water in it hanging on the crook over it. Filled with pity, they stole out softly and ran home. Your grandmother and I happened to be out. They could not wait, so leaving the necessity of the case to excuse them, they made a raid on the pantry and abstracted whatever came first to hand. There did not happen to be much in the pantry, but they seized on a dish of soup made the day before, jellied that they might have thrown it over the house, the remains of a leg-of-roast mutton, and a loaf of bread. They made haste back with their plunder, and pinning up their dresses turned cooks for the first time. When the pot was already on the fire, it was not difficult to make soup out of what they had brought with them. Do you wonder, Janetia, that when ignorant and superstitious people, weak with sickness and hunger, went to sleep famishing, with not a scrap of anything eatable in the house, and woke up to find food provided for them unexpectedly, and to them, miraculously, and were waited on by two pretty

girls, whom they had never seen before, and never saw again, that they thought them fairies, and what they received from them fairy gifts?

"Our fairies had to deny themselves many things to be able to leave the secret supply in the whin bush by the big stone every evening."

"Oh, they would be willing to do that, I know. Why, Uncle, only think, mamma and Aunt Sydney could say like the pretty text I learned, 'The blessing of him who was ready to perish came upon me!' They would not mind giving up when they had that. And do you really think, Uncle, that there are no fairies?"

"I never saw any but the two spoiled girls I have told you about now."

"I am ashamed of myself, Uncle, and yet I am ever so sorry that there are no real fairies."

"My dear Janetia, we do not mean to abolish Wonderland, but we will keep the fairies there and not try to bring them into everyday life, to the destruction of the cabbage garden. Good-nature, contentment, loving-kindness, cheerfulness, are four domestic fairies that should be at home round every hearth."

#### "UNCLE TOM."

(Continued.)

It was sometime before Josiah Henson recovered from the inhuman treatment he had received, and at the best the recovery was incomplete, for he was never afterwards able to raise his hands as high as his head.

He was married when about twenty-two years of age to a very efficient, and for a slave, well-taught girl. At this time he superintended the farming operations for his master and sold the produce in the neighboring markets of Washington and Georgetown. Although under his superintendence and careful management the land produced more than ever before, and better prices were realized in the markets, his master fell into difficulties through dissipation and was consequently ruined. The latter at this time fell into a most despondent condition and on one occasion went into Tom's cabin, where, moaning and wringing his hands, he drew out all the sympathy of his poor slave. He confessed that he had been ruined through an adverse law suit and in his distress threw his arms round his overseer, begged his forgiveness for past abuses, and asked his aid in bringing him out of his difficulties by taking the slaves to a brother in Kentucky.

Josiah after much urging, though fearful of the treatment he and his fellow slaves would receive further south, consented. He had little trouble with his companions, who marched along untrammelled. Often when stopping for the night they met negro-drivers with their droves, who were almost uniformly chained to prevent them from running away. The question was often asked Josiah by the drivers, "Whose niggers are those?" On being informed, the next enquiry usually was, "Where are they going?" "To Kentucky," "Who drives them?" "Well, I have charge of them," was his reply. "What a smart nigger!" was the usual exclamation, with an oath. "Will your master sell you? come in and stop with us." In this way he was often invited to pass the evening with them in the bar-room; their negroes in the meantime, lying chained in the pen, while his were scattered around at liberty.

When passing along the Ohio Shore a new trouble assailed him, he and his charge being repeatedly told that they were no longer slaves, but free men if they chose. At Cincinnati crowds of colored people surrounded them insisting on their remaining. The people under him began to grow insubordinate. But Josiah never thought of obtaining his liberty otherwise than by purchase, and having an ambition in fulfilling his difficult task to the letter, exercised all his authority over his fellows and arrived at his new home in Davis County, Kentucky, about the middle of April 1825.

On the plantation of Mr. Amos Riley, his old master's brother, he was also made superintendent, having under him from eighty to one hundred readers. Here he had better opportunities of attending preaching than ever before, and used his knowledge to the advantage of the negroes on the plantation, and in three years after his arrival at his new home was admitted as a preacher by a Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1828 his master sent an agent to Kentucky to sell all his slaves but Josiah and his family, and there occurred one of those heart-rending scenes, the most terrible of the infamous system of bondage, the sale of slaves and the consequent separation of families. As he looked at the scene—husbands and wives, parents and children, in whom were implanted affections as strong as in the white men, parted in all probability for ever—he regretted bitterly that when at Cincinnati he had not allowed them to escape, and for the first time in his life appears to have realized the "institution" of slavery in its enormity and nakedness.

During the summer of 1828, a Methodist preacher, a white man, urged upon Henson to make some effort to gain his freedom, and advised him to obtain Amos Riley's consent to see his old master in Maryland, and offered to put him in a way to free himself. When autumn came and Henson was no more needed in the fields he obtained the permission he desired, and was given as his passport a certificate allowing him to pass and repass between Kentucky and Maryland, as a servant of Amos Riley. In addition he carried a note of introduction from his Methodist friend to a brother preacher in Cincinnati. This latter on his arrival procured him a number of friends, and he was given an opportunity to preach in two or three pulpits of the city, where he pleaded his cause with such eloquence, and with the feeling of one on whose words depended the question of life or death, that he created a very great interest in himself, and in three days left the city with one hundred and sixty dollars in his pocket. He then attended the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Chillicothe, previously purchasing a good suit of clothes and an excellent horse, and preaching from town to town on his way. He began now to feel for the first time the sweets of liberty and to enjoy the sympathy which acknowledged him as a brother; but while these were dear to him, he clung to his determination to gain his freedom by one way only, that of purchase.

When he arrived at his old home he was the proud possessor of a good suit of clothes, two hundred and seventy-five dollars and a horse. It may be imagined that he put on no little "style" as he rode up through the village where he had been known as "Riley's head-nigger," or by those more familiar with him as "Sie." His master gave him a boisterous reception, and expressed great delight at seeing him. About his first expression was, "What have you been doing, Sie? You have turned into a regular black gentleman." At this time the slave was much better dressed than the master, and the latter, quickly growing envious of his servant's improved condition, changed his manner, speaking plainly though silently, "I'll take the gentleman out of you pretty soon." He asked for Henson's pass and, seeing that it was good for his return, gave it to his wife to lock up in her desk. Henson was sent to sleep in the kitchen. What a change that was from the experience of his three months' freedom! The crowded room, with its earth floor, its filth and stench, his loneliness—all the negroes were strangers, and in his absence his mother had died—caused bitter and gloomy reflections, and his desire for freedom was strengthened.

He knew of but one friend to whom he could appeal, the brother of his master's wife, called "Master Frank," whom he had befriended years before, when the boy was almost starved and otherwise brutally used. He obtained permission to visit him, through a little engineering obtained possession of his passport, and was successful in obtaining Frank's assistance in gaining his freedom. Through Master Frank's negotiation Henson was allowed to purchase his freedom for four hundred and fifty dollars, of which three hundred and fifty was to be in cash—which he made up through the sale of his horse—the balance in Henson's note of hand, and on March 9th, 1829 he received his manumission papers in due form of law.

At once he prepared to return to Kentucky, where his wife and children were. When getting ready his master accosted him in the most friendly manner and enquired interestedly about his plans, amongst other things saying, "You'll be a fool if you show your certificate of freedom on the road. Some slave-trader will get hold of it, and tear it up, and you'll be thrown into prison, sold for your jail fees, and be in his possession before any of your friends can help you. Don't show it at all,—your pass is enough. Let me enclose your papers for you under cover to my brother. Nobody will care to break a seal for that is a state-prison matter; and when you arrive in Kentucky you will have it with you all safe and sound."

Under the impression that this advice was disinterested, Henson was extremely grateful and accordingly permitted his papers to be enclosed in an envelope, sealed and directed to Amos Riley, Davis County, Kentucky. He was subjected to many delays on his journey and his progress was slow. On his arrival his first visit was to his own home where he learned to his astonishment that letters had reached the "great house," as the master's was always called, and through the children it had been learned that he had been preaching and bargaining for his freedom, and had raised much money to that end. His wife, who did not have a very exalted opinion of his preaching abilities, evidently had a suspicion that he had stolen the money and questioned him pretty closely as to the matter. Her fears on that score being quieted it was Josiah's turn to be astonished. He thus describes what followed:

(To be Continued.)