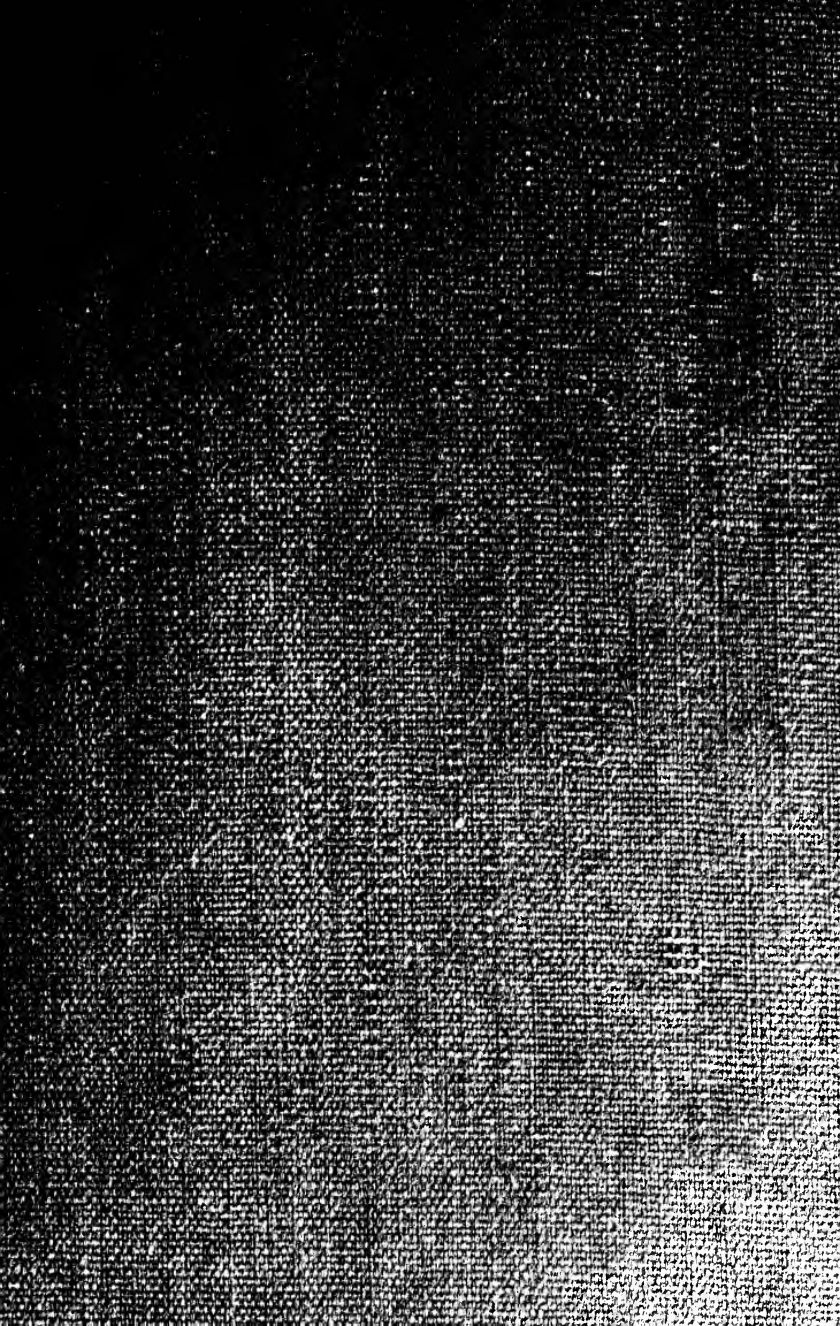

# DADDY JAKE
# THE RUNAWAY

JUDGE RABBIT AND THE FAT MAN.

# DADDY JAKE THE RUNAWAY

AND SHORT STORIES
TOLD AFTER DARK

BY

"UNCLE REMUS"
JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

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# DADDY JAKE
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# DADDY JAKE, THE RUNAWAY

## Chapter I

ONE fine day in September, in the year 1863, there was quite an uproar on the Gaston plantation, in Putnam County, in the State of Georgia. Uncle Jake, the carriage-driver, was missing. He was more than fifty years old, and it was the first time he had been missing since his mistress had been big enough to call him. But he was missing now. Here was his mistress waiting to order the carriage; here was his master fretting and fuming; and here were the two little children, Lucien and Lillian, crying because they did n't know where Uncle Jake was — "Daddy Jake," who had heretofore seemed always to be within sound of their voices, ready and anxious to amuse them in any and every way.

Then came the news that Daddy Jake had actually run away. This was, indeed, astounding

news, and although it was brought by the son of the overseer, none of the Gastons would believe it, least of all Lucien and Lillian. The son of the overseer also brought the further information that Daddy Jake, who had never had an angry word for anybody, had struck the overseer across the head with a hoe-handle, and had then taken to the woods. Dr. Gaston was very angry, indeed, and he told the overseer's son that if anybody was to blame it was his father. Mrs. Gaston, with her eyes full of tears, agreed with her husband, and Lucien and Lillian, when they found that Daddy Jake was really gone, refused to be comforted. Everybody seemed to be dazed. As it was Saturday, and Saturday was a holiday, the negroes stood around their quarters in little groups discussing the wonderful event. Some of them went so far as to say that if Daddy Jake had taken to the woods it was time for the rest of them to follow suit; but this proposition was hooted down by the more sensible among them.

Nevertheless, the excitement on the Gaston plantation ran very high when it was discovered that a negro so trusted and so trustworthy as Daddy Jake had actually run away; and it was not until all the facts were known that the other negroes became reconciled to Daddy Jake's ab-

sence. What were the facts? They were very simple, indeed; and yet, many lads and lasses who read this may fail to fully comprehend them.

In the first place, the year in which Daddy Jake became a fugitive was the year 1863, and there was a great deal of doubt and confusion in the South at that time. The Conscription Act and the Impressment Law were in force. Under the one, nearly all the able-bodied men and boys were drafted into the army; and under the other, all the corn and hay and horses that the Confederacy needed were pressed into service. This state of things came near causing a revolt in some of the States, especially in Georgia, where the laws seemed to bear most heavily. Something of this is to be found in the history of that period, but nothing approaching the real facts has ever been published. After the Conscription Act was passed the planters were compelled to accept the services of such overseers as they could get, and the one whom Dr. Gaston had employed lacked both experience and discretion. He had never been trained to the business. He was the son of a shoemaker, and he became an overseer merely to keep out of the army. A majority of those who made overseeing their business had gone to the war either as volunteers or substitutes, and

very few men capable of taking charge of a large plantation were left behind.

At the same time overseers were a necessity on some of the plantations. Many of the planters were either lawyers or doctors, and these, if they had any practice at all, were compelled to leave their farming interests to the care of agents; there were other planters who had been reared in the belief that an overseer was necessary on a large plantation; so that, for one cause and another, the overseer class was a pretty large one. It was a very respectable class, too; for, under ordinary circumstances, no person who was not known to be trustworthy would be permitted to take charge of the interests of a plantation, for these were as varied and as important as those of any other business.

But in 1863 it was a very hard matter to get a trustworthy overseer; and Dr. Gaston, having a large practice as a physician, had hired the first person who applied for the place, without waiting to make any inquiries about either his knowledge or his character; and it turned out that his overseer was not only utterly incompetent, but that he was something of a rowdy besides. An experienced overseer would have known that he was employed, not to exercise control over the house-

servants, but to look after the farm-hands; but the new man began business by ordering Daddy Jake to do various things that were not in the line of his duty. Naturally, the old man, who was something of a boss himself, resented this sort of interference. A great many persons were of the opinion that he had been spoiled by kind treatment; but this is doubtful. He had been raised with the white people from a little child, and he was as proud in his way as he was faithful in all ways. Under the circumstances, Daddy Jake did what other confidential servants would have done; he ignored the commands of the new overseer, and went about his business as usual. This led to a quarrel — the overseer doing most of the quarreling. Daddy Jake was on his dignity, and the overseer was angry. Finally, in his fury, he struck the old negro with a strap which he was carrying across his shoulders. The blow was a stinging one, and it was delivered full in Uncle Jake's face. For a moment the old negro was astonished. Then he became furious. Seizing an ax-handle that happened to be close to his hand, he brought it down upon the head of the overseer with full force. There was a tremendous crash as the blow fell, and the overseer went down as if he had been struck by a pile-

driver. He gave an awful groan, and trembled a little in his limbs, and then lay perfectly still. Uncle Jake was both dazed and frightened. He would have gone to his master, but he remembered what he had heard about the law. In those days a negro who struck a white man was tried for his life, and if his guilt could be proven, he was either branded with a hot iron and sold to a speculator, or he was hanged.

The certainty of these punishments had no doubt been exaggerated by rumor, but even the rumor was enough to frighten the negroes. Daddy Jake looked at the overseer a moment, and then stopped and felt of him. He was motionless and, apparently, he had ceased to breathe. Then the old negro went to his cabin, gathered up his blanket and clothes, put some provisions in a little bag, and went off into the woods. He seemed to be in no hurry. He walked with his head bent, as if in deep thought. He appeared to understand and appreciate the situation. A short time ago he was the happy and trusted servant of a master and mistress who had rarely given him an unkind word; now he was a fugitive — a runaway. As he passed along by the garden palings he heard two little children playing and prattling on the other side. They

were talking about him. He paused and listened.

"Daddy Jake likes me the best," Lucien was saying, "because he tells me stories."

"No," said Lillian, "he likes me the best, 'cause he tells me all the stories and gives me some gingercake, too."

The old negro paused and looked through the fence at the little children, and then he went on his way. But the youngsters saw Daddy Jake, and went running after him.

"Let me go, Uncle Jake!" cried Lucien. "Le' me go, too!" cried Lillian. But Daddy Jake broke into a run and left the children standing in the garden, crying.

It was not very long after this before the whole population knew that Daddy Jake had knocked the overseer down and had taken to the woods. In fact, it was only a few minutes, for some of the other negroes had seen him strike the overseer and had seen the overseer fall, and they lost no time in raising the alarm. Fortunately the overseer was not seriously hurt. He had received a blow severe enough to render him unconscious for a few minutes,—but this was all; and he was soon able to describe the fracas to Dr. Gaston, which he did with considerable animation.

"And who told you to order Jake around?" the doctor asked.

"Well, sir, I just thought I had charge of the whole crowd."

"You were very much mistaken, then," said Dactor Gaston, sharply; "and if I had seen you strike Jake with your strap, I should have been tempted to take my buggy-whip and give you a dose of your own medicine."

As a matter of fact, Doctor Gaston was very angry, and he lost no time in giving the new overseer what the negroes called his "walking-papers." He paid him up and discharged him on the spot, and it was not many days before everybody on the Gaston plantation knew that the man had fallen into the hands of the Conscription officers of the Confederacy, and that he had been sent on to the front.

At the same time, as Mrs. Gaston herself remarked, this fact, however gratifying it might be, did not bring Daddy Jake back. He was gone, and his absence caused a great deal of trouble on the plantation. It was found that half-a-dozen negroes had to be detailed to do the work which he had voluntarily taken upon himself — one to attend to the carriage-horses, another to look after the cows, another to feed the hogs and sheep,

"THE YOUNGSTERS SAW DADDY JAKE, AND WENT RUNNING AFTER HIM."

and still others to look after the thousand and one little things to be done about the "big house." But not one of them, nor all of them, filled Daddy Jake's place.

Many and many a time Doctor Gaston walked up and down the veranda wondering where the old negro was, and Mrs. Gaston, sitting in her rocking-chair, looked down the avenue day after day, half expecting to see Daddy Jake make his appearance, hat in hand and with a broad grin on his face. Some of the neighbors, hearing that Uncle Jake had become a fugitive, wanted to get Bill Locke's "track-dogs" and run him down, but Doctor Gaston and his wife would not hear to this. They said that the old negro was n't used to staying in the woods, and that it would n't be long before he would come back home.

Doctor Gaston, although he was much troubled, looked at the matter from a man's point of view. Here was Daddy Jake's home; if he chose to come back, well and good; if he did n't, why, it could n't be helped, and that was an end of the matter. But Mrs. Gaston took a different view. Daddy Jake had been raised with her father; he was an old family servant; he had known and loved her mother, who was dead; he had nursed Mrs. Gaston herself when she was a baby; in

short, he was a fixture in the lady's experience, and his absence worried her not a little. She could not bear to think that the old negro was out in the woods without food and without shelter. If there was a thunderstorm at night, as there sometimes is in the South during September, she could hardly sleep for thinking about the old negro.

Thinking about him led Mrs. Gaston to talk about him very often, especially to Lucien and Lillian, who had been in the habit of running out to the kitchen while Daddy Jake was eating his supper and begging him to tell a story. So far as they were concerned, his absence was a personal loss. While Uncle Jake was away they were not only deprived of a most agreeable companion, but they could give no excuse for not going to bed. They had no one to amuse them after supper, and, as a consequence, their evenings were very dull. The youngsters submitted to this for several days, expecting that Daddy Jake would return, but in this they were disappointed. They waited and waited for more than a week, and then they began to show their impatience.

"I used to be afraid of runaways," said Lillian one day, "but I 'm not afraid now, 'cause Daddy

Jake is a runaway." Lillian was only six years old, but she had her own way of looking at things.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Lucien, who was nine, and very robust for his age; "I never was afraid of runaways. I know mighty well they would n't hurt me. There was old Uncle Fed; he was a runaway when Papa bought him. Would he hurt anybody?"

"But there might be some bad ones," said Lillian, "and you know Lucinda says Uncle Fed is a real, sure-enough witch."

"Lucinda!" exclaimed Lucien, scornfully. "What does Lucinda know about witches? If one was to be seen she would n't stick her head out of the door to see it. She 'd be scared to death."

"Yes, and so would anybody," said Lillian, with an air of conviction. "I know I would."

"Well, of course,— a little girl," explained Lucien. "Any little girl would be afraid of a witch, but a great big double-fisted woman like Lucinda ought to be ashamed of herself to be afraid of witches, and that, too, when everybody knows there are n't any witches at all, except in the stories."

"Well, I heard Daddy Jake telling about a

witch that turned herself into a black cat, and then into a big black wolf," said Lillian.

"Oh, that was in old times," said Lucien, "when the animals used to talk and go on like people. But you never heard Daddy Jake say he saw a witch,— now, did you?"

"No," said Lillian, somewhat doubtfully; "but I heard him talking about them. I hope no witch will catch Daddy Jake."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Lucien. "Daddy Jake carried his rabbit-foot with him, and you know no witch can bother him as long as he has his rabbit-foot."

"Well," said Lillian, solemnly, "if he 's got his rabbit-foot and can keep off the witches all night, he won't come back any more."

"But he *must* come," said Lucien. "I 'm going after him. I 'm going down to the landing to-morrow, and I 'll take the boat and go down the river and bring him back."

"Oh, may I go, too?" asked Lillian.

"Yes," said Lucien, loftily, "if you 'll help me get some things out of the house and not say anything about what we are going to do."

Lillian was only too glad to pledge herself to secrecy, and the next day found the two children busily preparing for their journey in search of Daddy Jake.

The Gaston plantation lay along the Oconee River in Putnam County, not far from Roach's Ferry. In fact, it lay on both sides of the river, and, as the only method of communication was by means of a bateau, nearly everybody on the plantation knew how to manage the boat. There was not an hour during the day that the bateau was not in use. Lucien and Lillian had been carried across hundreds of times, and they were as much at home in the boat as they were in a buggy. Lucien was too young to row, but he knew how to guide the bateau with a paddle while others used the oars.

This fact gave him confidence, and the result was that the two children quietly made their arrangements to go in search of Daddy Jake. Lucien was the "provider," as he said, and Lillian helped him to carry the things to the boat. They got some meal-sacks, two old quilts, and a good supply of biscuits and meat. Nobody meddled with them, for nobody knew what their plans were, but some of the negroes remarked that they were not only unusually quiet, but very busy—a state of things that is looked upon by those who are acquainted with the ways of children as a very bad sign, indeed.

The two youngsters worked pretty much all day, and they worked hard; so that when night

came they were both tired and sleepy. They were tired and sleepy, but they managed to cover their supplies with the meal-sacks, and the next morning they were up bright and early. They were up so early, indeed, that they thought it was a very long time until breakfast was ready; and, at last, when the bell rang, they hurried to the table and ate ravenously, as became two travelers about to set out on a voyage of adventure.

It was all they could do to keep their scheme from their mother. Once Lillian was on the point of asking her something about it, but Lucien shook his head, and it was not long before the two youngsters embarked on their journey. After seating Lillian in the bateau, Lucien unfastened the chain from the stake, threw it into the boat, and jumped in himself. Then, as the clumsy affair drifted slowly with the current, he seized one of the paddles, placed the blade against the bank, and pushed the bateau out into the middle of the stream.

It was the beginning of a voyage of adventure, the end of which could not be foretold; but the sun was shining brightly, the mocking-birds were singing in the water-oaks, the blackbirds were whistling blithely in the reeds, and the children were light-hearted and happy. They were go-

ing to find Daddy Jake and fetch him back home, and not for a moment did it occur to them that the old negro might have gone in a different direction. It seemed somehow to those on the Gaston plantation that whatever was good, or great, or wonderful had its origin "down the river." Rumor said that the biggest crops were grown in that direction, and that there the negroes were happiest. The river, indeed, seemed to flow to some far-off country where everything was finer and more flourishing. This was the idea of the negroes themselves, and it was natural that Lucien and Lillian should be impressed with the same belief. So they drifted down the river, confident that they would find Daddy Jake. They had no other motive—no other thought. They took no account of the hardships of a voyage such as they had embarked on.

Lazily, almost reluctantly as it seemed, the boat floated down the stream. At first, Lucien was inclined to use the broad oar, but it appeared that when he paddled on one side the clumsy boat tried to turn its head up stream on the other side, and so, after a while, he dropped the oar in the bottom of the boat.

The September sun was sultry that morning, but, obeying some impulse of the current, the

boat drifted down the river in the shade of the water-oaks and willows that lined the eastern bank. On the western bank the Gaston plantation lay, and as the boat floated lazily along the little voyagers could hear the field-hands singing as they picked the opening cotton. The song was strangely melodious, though the words were ridiculous.

My dog 's a 'possum dog,
*Here, Rattler! here!*
He cross de creek upon a log,
*Here, Rattler! here!*

He run de 'possum up a tree,
*Here, Rattler! here!*
He good enough fer you an' me,
*Here, Rattler! here!*

Kaze when it come his fat'nin time,
*Here, Rattler! here!*
De 'possum eat de muscadine,
*Here, Rattler! here!*

He eat till he kin skacely stan',
*Here, Rattler! here!*
An' den we bake him in de pan,
*Here, Rattler! here!*

"THE FIELD-HANDS WERE SINGING AS THEY PICKED THE OPENING COTTON."

It was to the quaint melody of this song that the boat rocked and drifted along. One of the negroes saw the children and thought he knew them, and he called to them, but received no reply; and this fact was so puzzling that he went back and told the other negroes that there was some mistake about the children. "Ef dey 'd 'a' bin our chillun," he said, "dey 'd 'a' hollered back at me, sho'." Whereupon the field-hands resumed their work and their song, and the boat, gliding southward on the gently undulating current, was soon lost to view.

To the children it seemed to be a very pleasant journey. They had no thought of danger. The river was their familiar friend. They had crossed and recrossed it hundreds of times. They were as contented in the bateau as they would have been in their mother's room. The weather was warm, but on the river and in the shade of the overhanging trees the air was cool and refreshing. And after a while the current grew swifter, and the children, dipping their hands in the water, laughed aloud.

Once, indeed, the bateau, in running over a long stretch of shoals, was caught against a rock. An ordinary boat would have foundered, but this boat, clumsy and deep-set, merely obeyed the current.

It struck the rock, recoiled, touched it again, and then slowly turned around and pursued its course down the stream. The shoals were noisy but harmless. The water foamed and roared over the rocks, but the current was deep enough to carry the bateau safely down. It was not often that a boat took that course, but Lucien and Lillian had no sense of fear. The roaring and foaming of the water pleased them, and the rushing and whirling of the boat, as it went dashing down the rapids, appeared to be only part of a holiday frolic. After they had passed the shoals, the current became swifter, and the old bateau was swept along at a rapid rate. The trees on the river bank seemed to be running back toward home, and the shadows on the water ran with them.

Sometimes the boat swept through long stretches of meadow and marsh lands, and then the children were delighted to see the sandpipers and killdees running along the margin of the water. The swallows, not yet flown southward, skimmed along the river with quivering wing, and the kingfishers displayed their shining plumage in the sun. Once a moccasin, fat and rusty, frightened by the unexpected appearance of the young voyagers, dropped into the boat; but, before Lucien could strike him with the unwieldy oar, he

tumbled overboard and disappeared. Then the youngsters ate their dinner. It was a very dry dinner; but they ate it with a relish. The crows, flying lazily over, regarded them curiously.

"I reckon they want some," said Lucien.

"Well, they can't get mine," said Lillian, "'cause I *jest* about got enough for myself."

They passed a white man who was sitting on the river bank, with his coat off, fishing.

"Where under the sun did you chaps come from?" he cried.

"Up the river," replied Lucien.

"Where in the nation are you going?"

"Down the river."

"Maybe he knows where Daddy Jake is," said Lillian. "Ask him."

"Why, he would n't know Daddy Jake from a side of sole leather," exclaimed Lucien.

By this time the boat had drifted around a bend in the river. The man on the bank took off his hat with his thumb and forefinger, rubbed his head with the other fingers, drove away a swarm of mosquitoes, and muttered, "Well, I 'll be switched!" Then he went on with his fishing.

Meanwhile the boat drifted steadily with the current. Sometimes it seemed to the children that the boat stood still, while the banks, the trees,

and the fields moved by them like a double panorama. Queer-looking little birds peeped at them from the bushes; fox-squirrels chattered at them from the trees; green frogs greeted them by plunging into the water with a squeak; turtles slid noiselessly off the banks at their approach; a red fox that had come to the river to drink disappeared like a shadow before the sun; and once a great white crane rose in the air, flapping his wings heavily.

Altogether it was a very jolly journey, but after a while Lillian began to get restless.

"Do you reckon Daddy Jake will be in the river when we find him?" she asked.

Lucien himself was becoming somewhat tired, but he was resolved to go right on. Indeed, he could not do otherwise.

"Why, who ever heard of such a thing?" he exclaimed. "What would Daddy Jake be doing in the water?"

"Well, how are we's to find him?"

"Oh, we 'll find him."

"But I want to find him right now," said Lillian, "and I want to see Mamma, and Papa, and my dollies."

"Well," said Lucien with unconscious humor, "if you don't want to go, you can get out and walk back home." At this Lillian began to cry.

"Well," said Lucien, "if Daddy Jake was over

there in the bushes and was to see you crying because you did n't want to go and find him, he 'd run off into the woods and nobody would see him any more."

Lillian stopped crying at once, and, as the afternoon wore on, both children grew more cheerful; and even when twilight came, and after it the darkness, they were not very much afraid. The loneliness — the sighing of the wind through the trees, the rippling of the water against the sides of the boat, the hooting of the big swamp-owl, the cry of the whippoorwill, and the answer of its cousin, the chuck-will's-widow — all these things would have awed and frightened the children. But, shining steadily in the evening sky, they saw the star they always watched at home. It seemed to be brighter than ever, this familiar star, and they hailed it as a friend and fellow-traveler. They felt that home could n't be so far away, for the star shone in its accustomed place, and this was a great comfort.

After a while the night grew chilly, and then Lucien and Lillian wrapped their quilts about them and cuddled down in the bottom of the boat. Thousands of stars shone overhead, and it seemed to the children that the old bateau, growing tired of its journey, had stopped to rest; but it continued to drift down the river.

## Chapter II

YOU may be sure there was trouble on the Gaston place when night came and the children did not return. They were missed at dinner-time; but it frequently happened that they went off with some of the plantation wagons, or with some of the field-hands, and so nothing was thought of their absence at noon; but when night fell and all the negroes had returned from their work, and there was still no sign of the children, there was consternation in the big house and trouble all over the plantation. The field-hands, returned from their work, discussed the matter at the doors of their cabins and manifested considerable anxiety.

At first the house-servants were sent scurrying about the place hunting for the truants. Then other negroes were pressed into service, until, finally, every negro on the place was engaged in the search, and torches could be seen bobbing up and down in all parts of the plantation. The


"THE FIELD-HANDS DISCUSSED THE MATTER."

negroes called and called, filling the air with their musical halloos, but there was no reply save from the startled birds, or from the dogs, who seemed to take it for granted that everybody was engaged in a grand 'possum hunt, and added the strength of their own voices to the general clamor.

While all this was going on, Mrs. Gaston was pacing up and down the long veranda wringing her hands in an agony of grief. There was but one thought in her mind — the *river*, the RIVER! Her husband in the midst of his own grief tried to console her, but he could not. He had almost as much as he could do to control himself, and there was in his own mind — the RIVER!

The search on the plantation and in its vicinity went on until nearly nine o'clock. About that time Big Sam, one of the plough-hands, who was also a famous fisherman, came running to the house with a frightened face.

"Marster," he exclaimed, "de boat gone — she done gone!"

"Oh, I knew it!" exclaimed Mrs. Gaston — "the river, the river!"

"Well!" said Doctor Gaston, "the boat must be found. Blow the horn!"

Big Sam seized the dinner-horn and blew a

blast that startled the echoes for miles around. The negroes understood this to be a signal to return, and most of them thought that the children had been found, so they came back laughing and singing, and went to the big house to see the children.

"Wh'abouts you fine um, marster?" asked the foreman.

"They have n't been found, Jim," said Dr. Gaston. "Big Sam says that the boat is gone from the landing, and that boat must be found to-night."

"Marster," said a negro, coming forward out of the group, "I seed a boat gwine down stream dis mornin'. I wuz way up on de hill —"

"And you did n't come and tell me?" asked Dr. Gaston in a severe tone.

"Well, suh, I hollered at um, an' dey ain't make no answer, an' den it look like ter me 't wuz dem two Ransome boys. Hit mos' drap out'n my min'. An' den you know, suh, our chillun ain't never had no doin's like dat — gittin' in de boat by dey own-alone se'f an' sailin' off dat a-way."

"Well," said Dr. Gaston, "the boat must be found. The children are in it. Where can we get another boat?"

"I got one, suh," said Big Sam.

"Me, too, marster," said another negro.

"Then get them both, and be quick about it!"

"Ah-yi, suh," was the response, and in a moment the group was scattered, and Big Sam could be heard giving orders in a loud and an energetic tone of voice. For once he was in his element. He could be foreman on the Oconee if he could n't in the cotton-patch. He knew every nook and cranny of the river for miles up and down; he had his fish-baskets sunk in many places, and the overhanging limbs of many a tree bore the marks of the lines of his set-hooks. So for once he appointed himself foreman, and took charge of affairs. He and Sandy Bill (so-called owing to the peculiar color of his hair) soon had their boats at the landing. The other negroes were assembled there, and the most of them had torches.

"Marster," said Big Sam, "you git in my boat, an' let little Willyum come fer ter hol' de torch. Jesse, you git in dar wid Sandy Bill. Fling a armful er light'ood in bofe boats, boys, kaze we got ter have a light, and dey ain't no tellin' how fur we gwine."

The fat pine was thrown in, everything made ready, and then the boats started. With one sweep of his broad paddle, Big Sam sent his boat

into the middle of the stream, and, managed by his strong and willing arms, the clumsy old bateau became a thing of life. Sandy Bill was not far behind him.

The negroes used only one paddle in rowing, and each sat in the stern of his boat, using the

rough but effective oar first on one side and then the other.

From a window, Mrs. Gaston watched the boats as they went speeding down the river. By her side was Charity, the cook.

"Is n't it terrible!" she exclaimed, as the boats passed out of sight. "Oh, what shall I do?"

"'T would be mighty bad, Mist'iss, *ef* dem chillun wuz los'; but dey ain't no mo' los' dan I is, an' I 'm a-standin' right yer in de cornder by dish yer cheer."

"Not lost! Why, of course they are lost. Oh, my darling little children!"

"No 'm, dey ain't no mo' los' dan you is. Dey tuck dat boat dis mornin', an' dey went atter ole man Jake — dat 's whar dey er gone. Dey ain't gone nowhar else. Dey er in dat boat right now; dey may be asleep, but dey er in dar. Ain't I year um talkin' yistiddy wid my own years? Ain't I year dat ar Marse Lucien boy 'low ter he sister dat he gwine go fetch ole man Jake back? Ain't I miss a whole can full er biscuits? Ain't I miss two er dem pies w'at I lef' out dar in de kitchen? Ain't I miss a great big hunk er light-bread? An' who gwine dast ter take um less'n it 's dem ar chillun? Dey don't fool me, mon. I 'm one er de oldest rats in de barn — I is dat!"

Charity's tone was emphatic and energetic. She was so confident that her theory was the right one that she succeeded in quieting her mistress somewhat.

"An' mo' 'n dat," she went on, seeing the effect of her remarks, "dem chillun 'll come home yer all safe an' soun'. Ef Marster an' dem niggers don't fetch um back, dey 'll come dey-se'f; an' old man Jake 'll come wid um. You min' wa't I tell you. You go an' go ter bed, honey, an' don't pester yo'se'f 'bout dem chillun. I 'll set up yer in the cornder an' nod, an' keep my eyes on w'at 's gwine on outside."

But Mrs. Gaston refused to go to bed. She went to the window, and away down the river she could see the red light of the torches projected against the fog. It seemed as if it were standing still, and the mother's heart sank within her at the thought. Perhaps they had found the boat—empty! This and a thousand other cruel suggestions racked her brain.

But the boats were not standing still; they were moving down the river as rapidly as four of the stoutest arms to be found in the county could drive them. The pine torches lit up both banks perfectly. The negroes rowed in silence a mile or more, when Big Sam said:

"Marster, kin we sing some?"

"Does it seem to be much of a singing matter, Sam?" Dr. Gaston asked, grimly.

"No, suh, it don't; but singin' he'ps 'long

might'ly w'en you workin', mo' speshually ef you er doin' de kind er work whar you kin sorter hit a lick wid the chune—kinder keepin' time, like."

Dr. Gaston said nothing, and Big Sam went on:

"'Sides dat, Marster, we-all useter sing ter dem chillun, an' dey knows our holler so well dat I boun' you ef dey wuz ter year us singin' an' gwine on, dey 'd holler back."

"Well," said Dr. Gaston, struck by the suggestion, "sing."

"Bill," said Big Sam to the negro in the other boat, "watch out for me; I 'm gwine away."

"You 'll year fum me w'en you git whar you gwine," Sandy Bill replied.

With that Big Sam struck up a song. His voice was clear and strong, and he sang with a will.

Oh, Miss Malindy, you er lots too sweet for me;
I cannot come to see you
Ontil my time is free—
Oh, den I 'll come ter see you,
An' take you on my knee.

Oh, Miss Malindy, now don't you go away;
I cannot come to see you
Ontil some yuther day—
Oh, den I 'll come ter see you—
Oh, den I 'll come ter stay.

Oh, Miss Malindy, you is my only one;
I cannot come ter see you
Ontil de day is done —
Oh, den I 'll come ter see you,
And we 'll have a little fun.

Oh, Miss Malindy, my heart belongs ter you;
I cannot come ter see you
Ontil my work is thoo'.
Oh, den I 'll come ter see you,
I 'll come in my canoe.

The words of the song, foolish and trivial as they are, do not give the faintest idea of the melody to which it was sung. The other negroes joined in, and the tremulous tenor of little Willyum was especially effective. The deep dark woods on either side seemed to catch up and echo back the plaintive strain. To a spectator on the bank, the scene must have been an uncanny one—the song with its heart-breaking melody, the glistening arms and faces of the two gigantic blacks, the flaring torches, flinging their reflections on the swirling waters, the great gulfs of darkness beyond—all these must have been very impressive. But these things did not occur to those in the boats, least of all to Dr. Gaston.

In the minds of all there was but one thought—the children.

The negroes rowed on, keeping time to their songs. Their arms appeared to be as tireless as machinery that has the impulse of steam. Finally Big Sam's boat grounded.

"Hol' on dar, Bill!" he shouted. "Watch out!" He took the torch from the little negro and held it over his head, and then behind him, peering into the darkness beyond. Then he laughed.

"De Lord he'p my soul!" he exclaimed; "I done clean fergit 'bout Moccasin Shoals! Back yo' boat, Bill." Suiting the action to the word, he backed his own, and they were soon away from the shoals.

"Now, den," he said to Bill, "git yo' boat in line wid mine, an' hol' yo' paddle in yo' lap." Then the boats, caught by the current, moved toward the shoals, and one after the other touched a rock, turned completely around, and went safely down the rapids, just as the children's boat had done in the forenoon. Once over the shoals, Big Sam and Sandy Bill resumed their oars and their songs, and sent the boats along at a rapid rate.

A man, sitting on the river bank, heard them

coming, and put out his torch by covering it with sand. He crouched behind the bushes and watched them go by. After they had passed he straightened himself, and remarked:

"Well, I 'll be switched!" Then he relighted his torch, and went on with his fishing. It was the same man that Lucien and Lillian had seen.

The boats went on and on. With brief intervals the negroes rowed all night long, but Dr. Gaston found no trace of his children. In sheer desperation, however, he kept on. The sun rose, and the negroes were still rowing. At nine o'clock in the morning the boats entered Ross's mill-pond. This Dr. Gaston knew was the end of his journey. If the boat had drifted into this pond, and been carried over the dam, the children were either drowned or crushed on the rocks below. If their boat had not entered the pond, then they had been rescued the day before by some one living near the river.

It was with a heavy heart that Dr. Gaston landed. And yet there were no signs of a tragedy anywhere near. John Cosby, the miller, fat and hearty, stood in the door of the mill, his arms akimbo, and watched the boats curiously. His children were playing near. A file of geese was marching down to the water, and a flock of pigeons was

THE MILLER AND HIS CHILDREN.

sailing overhead, taking their morning exercise. Everything seemed to be peaceful and serene. As he passed the dam on his way to the mill, Dr. Gaston saw that there was a heavy head of water, but possibly not enough to carry a large bateau over; still — the children were gone!

The puzzled look on the miller's face disappeared as Dr. Gaston approached.

"Well, the gracious goodness!" he exclaimed. "Why, howdy, Doc. — howdy! Why, I 'm right down glad to see you. Whichever an' whichaway did you come?"

"My little children are lost," said Dr. Gaston, shaking the miller's hand. The jolly smile on John Cosby's face disappeared as suddenly as if it had been wiped out with a sponge.

"Well, now, that 's too bad — too bad," he exclaimed, looking at his own rosy-cheeked little ones standing near.

"They were in a bateau," said Dr. Gaston, "and I thought maybe they might have drifted down here and over the mill-dam."

The miller's jolly smile appeared again. "Oh, no, Doc. — no, no! Whichever an' whichaway they went, they never went over that dam. In time of a freshet, the thing might be did; but not now. Oh, no! Ef it lies betwixt goin' over that

dam an' bein' safe, them babies is jest as safe an' soun' as mine is."

"I think," said Dr. Gaston, "that they started out to hunt Jake, my carriage-driver, who has run away."

"Jake run away!" exclaimed Mr. Cosby, growing very red in the face. "Why, the impident scoundull! Hit ain't been three days sence the ole rascal wuz here. He come an' 'lowed that some of your wagons was a-campin' out about two mile from here, an' he got a bushel of meal, an' said that if you did n't pay me the money down I could take it out in physic. The impident ole scoundull! An' he was jest as 'umble-come-tumble as you please—a-bowin', an' a-scrapin', an' a-howdy-doin'."

But the old miller's indignation cooled somewhat when Dr. Gaston briefly told him of the incident which caused the old negro to run away.

"Hit sorter sticks in my gizzard," he remarked, "when I hear tell of a nigger hittin' a white man; but I don't blame Jake much."

"And now," said Dr. Gaston, "I want to ask your advice. You are a level-headed man, and I want to know what you think. The children got in the boat, and came down the river. There is no doubt in my mind that they started on a wild-

goose chase after Jake; but they are not on the river now, nor is the boat on the river. How do you account for that?"

"Well, Doc., if you want my naked beliefs about it, I 'll give 'em to you, fa'r an' squar'. It 's my beliefs that them youngsters have run up agin old Jake somewhar up the river, an' that they are jest as safe an' soun' as you is. Them's my beliefs."

"But what has become of the boat?"

"Well, I 'll tell you. Old Jake is jest as cunning as any other nigger. He took an' took the youngsters out, an' arterwards he drawed the boat out on dry land. He rightly thought there would be pursuit, an' he did n't mean to be ketched."

"Then what would you advise me to do?" asked Dr. Gaston.

The old man scratched his head.

"Well, Doc., I 'm a-talkin' in the dark, but it 's my beliefs them youngsters 'll be at home before you can get there to save your life. Jake may not be there, but if he 's found the boy an' gal, he 'll carry 'em safe home. Now you mind what I tell you."

Dr. Gaston's anxiety was too great to permit him to put much confidence in the old miller's prediction. What he said seemed reasonable enough, but a thousand terrible doubts had possession of

the father's mind. He hardly dared go home without the children. He paced up and down before the mill, a most miserable man. He knew not where to go or what to do.

Mr. Cosby, the miller, watched him awhile, and shook his head. "If Doc. don't find them youngsters," he said to himself, "he 'll go plum deestracted." But he said aloud:

"Well, Doc., you an' the niggers must have a breathing-spell. We 'll go up to the house an' see ef we can't find somethin' to eat in the cubberd, an' arterwards, in the time you are restin', we 'll talk about findin' the youngsters. If there's any needcessity, I 'll go with you. My son John can run the mill e'en about as good as I can. We 'll go up yan to 'Squire Ross's an' git a horse or two, an' we 'll scour the country on both sides of the river. But you 've got to have a snack of somethin' to eat, an' you 've got to take a rest. Human natur' can't stand the strain."

Torn as he was by grief and anxiety, Dr. Gaston knew this was good advice. He gratefully accepted John Cosby's invitation to breakfast, as well as his offer to aid in the search for the lost children. After Doctor Gaston had eaten, he sat on the miller's porch and tried to collect his thoughts so as to be able to form some plan of

search. While the two men were talking, they heard Big Sam burst out laughing. He laughed so loud and heartily that Mr. Cosby grew angry, and went into the back yard to see what the fun was about. In his heart the miller thought the negroes were laughing at the food his wife had set before them, and he was properly indignant.

"Well, well," said he, "what 's this I hear? Two high-fed niggers a-laughin' beca'se their master's little ones are lost and gone! And has it come to this? A purty pass, a mighty purty pass!" Both the negroes grew very serious at this.

"Mars' John, we-all was des projickin' wid one an'er. You know how niggers is w'en dey git nuff ter eat. Dey feel so good dey 'bleege ter holler."

Mr. Cosby sighed, and turned away. "Well," said he, "I hope niggers 's got souls, but I know right p'int-blank that they ain't got no hearts."

Now, what was Big Sam laughing at?

He was laughing because he had found out where Lucien and Lillian were. How did he find out? In the simplest manner imaginable. Sandy Bill and Big Sam were sitting in Mr. Cosby's back yard eating their breakfast, while little Willyum was eating his in the kitchen. It

was the first time the two older negroes had had an opportunity of talking together since they started from home the day before.

"Sam," said Sandy Bill, "did you see whar de chillun landed w'en we come 'long des a'ter sun-up dis mornin'?"

"Dat I did n't," said Sam, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand — "dat I did n't, an' ef I had I 'd a hollered out ter Marster."

"Dat w'at I wuz feared un," said Sandy Bill.

"Feared er what?" asked Big Sam.

"Feared you 'd holler at Marster ef you seed whar dey landed. Dat how come I ter run foul er yo' boat."

"Look yer, nigger man, you ain't done gone 'stracted, is you?"

"Shoo, chile! don't talk ter me 'bout gwine 'stracted. I got ez much sense ez Ole Zip Coon."

"Den why n't you tell Marster? Ain't you done see how he troubled in he min'?"

"I done see dat, en it makes me feel bad; but t'er folks got trouble, too, lots wuss'n Marster."

"Is dey los' der chillun?"

"Yes — Lord! dey done los' eve'ybody. But Marster ain't los' no chillun yit."

"Den wat we doin' way down yer?" asked Big Sam in an angry tone.

"AN' OLE MAN JAKE, HE DAR TOO."

"Le' me tell you," said Sandy Bill, laying his hand on Big Sam's shoulder; "le' me tell you. Right cross dar fum whar I run foul er yo' boat is de biggest cane-brake in all creation."

"I know 'im," said Big Sam. "Dey calls 'im Hudson's cane-brake."

"Now you talkin'," said Sandy Bill. "Well, ef you go dar you 'll fin' right in the middle er dat cane-brake a heap er niggers dat you got 'quaintance wid — Randall Spivey, an' Crazy Sue, an' Cupid Mitchell, an' Isaiah Little — dey er all dar; an' ole man Jake, he dar too."

"Look yer, nigger," Sam exclaimed, "how you know?"

"I sent 'im dar. He come by me in de fiel' an' tole me he done kilt de overseer, an' I up an' tell 'im, I did, 'Make fer Hudson's cane-brake,' an' dar 's right whar he went."

It was at this point that Big Sam's hearty laughter attracted the attention of Dr. Gaston and Mr. Cosby.

"Now, den," said Sandy Bill, after the miller had rebuked them and returned to the other side of the house, "now, den, ef I 'd 'a' showed Marster whar dem chillun landed, en tole 'im whar dey wuz, he 'd 'a' gone 'cross dar, en seed dem niggers, an' by dis time nex' week ole Bill Locke's

nigger-dogs would 'a' done run um all in jail. You know how Marster is. He think kaze he treat his niggers right dat eve'ybody else treat der'n des dat a-way. But don't you worry 'bout dem chillun."

Was it possible for Sandy Bill to be mistaken?

## Chapter III

LUCIEN and Lillian nestled together in the bottom of their boat were soon fast asleep. In dreams of home their weariness and their troubles were all forgotten. Sometimes in the starlight sometimes in the dark shadows of the overhanging trees the boat drifted in and out with the morning. It was caught in an eddy and turned nearer the bank where the current was almost imperceptible. Here the dumpy lily pads nodded and swung sometimes away from it and sometimes back again.

As the night faded away into the dim gray of morning the bushes above the boat were thrust softly aside and a black face looked down upon the children. Then the black face disappeared as suddenly as it came. After awhile it appeared again. It was not an attractive face. In the dim light it seemed to look down on the sleeping children with a leer that was almost a snarl. It was the face of a woman. Around her head was a

faded red handkerchief, tied in a fantastic fashion, and as much of her dress as could be seen was ragged, dirty, and greasy. She was not pleasant to look upon, but the children slept on unconscious of her presence.

Presently the woman came nearer. On the lower bank a freshet had deposited a great heap of sand, which was now dry and soft. The woman sat down on this, hugging her knees with her arms, and gazed at the sleeping children long and earnestly. Then she looked up and down the river, but nothing was to be seen for the fog that lay on the water. She shook her head and muttered :

" Hit 's p'izen down yer for dem babies. Yit how I gwine git um out er dar ? "

She caught hold of the boat, turned it around, and, by means of the chain, drew it partially on the sand-bank. Then she lifted Lillian from the boat, wrapping the quilt closer about the child, carried her up the bank, and laid her beneath the trees where no dew had fallen. Returning, she lifted Lucien and placed him beside his sister. But the change aroused him. He raised himself on his elbow and rubbed his eyes. The negro woman, apparently by force of habit, slipped behind a tree.

"Where am I?" Lucien exclaimed, looking around in something of a fright. He caught sight of the frazzled skirt of the woman's dress. "Who is there behind that tree?" he cried.

"Nobody but me, honey — nobody ner nothin' but po' ole Crazy Sue. Don't be skeerd er me. I ain't nigh ez bad ez I looks ter be."

It was now broad daylight, and Lucien could see that the hideous ugliness of the woman was caused by a burn on the side of her face and neck.

"Was n't I in a boat?"

"Yes, honey; I brung you up yer fer ter keep de fog fum pizenin' you."

"I dreamed the Bad Man had me," said Lucien, shivering at the bare recollection.

"No, honey; 't want nobody ner nothin' but po' ole Crazy Sue. De boat down dar on de sand-bank, an' yo' little sissy layin' dar soun' asleep. Whar in de name er goodness wuz you-all gwine, honey?" asked Crazy Sue, coming nearer.

"We were going down the river hunting for Daddy Jake. He 's a runaway now. I reckon we 'll find him after a while."

"Is you-all Marse Doc. Gaston' chillun?" asked Crazy Sue, with some show of eagerness.

"Why, of course we are," said Lucien.

Crazy Sue's eyes fairly danced with joy. She clasped her hands together and exclaimed:

"Lord, honey, I could shout,— I could des holler and shout; but I ain't gwine do it. You stay right dar by yo' little sissy till I come back; I want ter run an' make somebody feel good. Now, don't you move, honey. Stay right dar."

With that Crazy Sue disappeared in the bushes. Lucien kept very still. In the first place, he was more than half frightened by the strangeness of his surroundings, and, in the second place, he was afraid his little sister would wake and begin to cry. He felt like crying a little himself, for he knew he was many miles from home, and he felt very cold and uncomfortable. Indeed, he felt very lonely and miserable; but just when he was about to cry and call Daddy Jake, he heard voices near him. Crazy Sue came toward him in a half-trot, and behind her — close behind her — was Daddy Jake, his face wreathed in smiles and his eyes swimming in tears. Lucien saw him and rushed toward him, and the old man stooped and hugged the boy to his black bosom.

"Why, honey," he exclaimed, "whar de name er goodness you come f'um! Bless you! ef my

"LUCIEN SAW HIM AND RUSHED TOWARD HIM."

eyes wuz sore de sight un you would make um well. How you know whar yo' Daddy Jake is?"

"Me and sister started out to hunt you," said Lucien, whimpering a little, now that he had nothing to whimper for, "and I think you are mighty mean to run off and leave us all at home."

"Now you talkin', honey," said Daddy Jake, laughing in his old fashion. "I boun' I 'm de meanes' ole nigger in de Nunited State. Yit, ef I 'd 'a' know'd you wuz gwine ter foller me up so close, I 'd 'a' fotch you wid me, dat I would! An' dar 's little Missy," he exclaimed, leaning over the little girl, "an' she 's a-sleepin' des ez natchul ez ef she wuz in her bed at home. What I tell you-all?" he went on, turning to a group of negroes that had followed him,— Randall, Cupid, Isaiah, and others,— "What I tell you-all? Ain't I done bin' an' gone an' tole you dat deze chillun wuz de out-doin'est chillun on de top-side er de roun' worl'?"

The negroes — runaways all — laughed and looked pleased, and Crazy Sue fairly danced. They made so much fuss that they woke Lillian, and when she saw Daddy Jake she gave one little cry and leaped in his arms. This made Crazy Sue dance again, and she would have kept it up for a long time, but Randall suggested to

Daddy Jake that the boat ought to be hauled ashore and hidden in the bushes. Crazy Sue stayed with the children while the negro men went after the boat. They hauled it up the bank by the chain, and then they lifted and carried it several hundred yards away from the river, and hid it in the thick bushes and grass.

"Now," said Daddy Jake, when they had returned to where they left the children, "we got ter git away f'um yer. Dey ain't no tellin' w'at gwine ter happen. Ef deze yer chillun kin slip up on us dis away w'at kin a grown man do?"

The old man intended this as a joke, but the others took him at his word, and were moving off. "Wait!" he exclaimed. "De chillun bleeze ter go whar I go. Sue, you pick up little Missy dar, an' I 'll play hoss fer dish yer chap."

Crazy Sue lifted Lillian in her arms, Daddy Jake stooped so that Lucien could climb up on his back, and then all took up their march for the middle of Hudson's cane-brake. Randall brought up the rear in order, as he said, to "stop up de holes."

It was a narrow, slippery, and winding path in which the negroes trod — a path that a white man would have found difficult to follow. It seemed to lead in all directions; but, finally, it stopped on a knoll high and dry above the surrounding

swamp. A fire was burning brightly, and the smell of frying meat was in the air. On this knoll the runaway negroes had made their camp, and for safety they could not have selected a better place.

It was not long before Crazy Sue had warmed some breakfast for the children. The negroes had brought the food they found in the boat, and Crazy Sue put some of the biscuits in a tin bucket, hung the bucket on a stick, and held it over the fire. Then she gave them some bacon that had been broiled on a stone, and altogether they made a hearty breakfast.

During the morning most of the negro men stayed in the cane-brake, some nodding and some patching their clothes, which were already full of patches. But after dinner, a feast of broiled fish, roasted sweet potatoes, and ash-cake, they all went away, leaving Crazy Sue to take care of the children. After the men had all gone, the woman sat with her head covered with her arms. She sat thus for a long time. After a while Lucien went to her and put his hand on her shoulder.

"What 's the matter?" he asked.

"Nothin', honey; I wuz des a-settin' yer a-studyin' an' a-studyin'. Lots er times I gits took dat a-way."

"What are you studying about?" said Lucien.

"'Bout folks. I wuz des a-studyin' 'bout folks, an' 'bout how come I whar I is, w'en I oughter be somers else. W'en I set down dis a-way, I gits dat turrified in de min' dat I can't stay on de groun' sca'cely. Look like I want ter rise up in de elements an' fly."

"What made you run away?" Lucien asked with some curiosity.

"Well, you know, honey," said Crazy Sue, after a pause, "my marster ain't nigh ez good ter his niggers ez yo' pa is ter his'n. 'T ain't dat my marster is any mo' strick, but look like hit fret 'im ef he see one er his niggers settin' down anywheres. Well, one time, long time ago, I had two babies, an' dey wuz twins, an' dey wuz des 'bout ez likely little niggers ez you ever did see. De w'ite folks had me at de house doin' de washin' so I could be where I kin nurse de babies. One time I wuz settin' in my house nursin' un um, an' while I settin' dar I went fast ter sleep. How long I sot dar 'sleep, de Lord only knows, but w'en I woked up, Marster wuz stan'in in de do', watchin' me. He ain't say nothin, yit I knowed dat man wuz mad. He des turn on his heel an' walk away. I let you know I put dem babies down an' hustled out er dat house mighty quick.

POOR OLD SUE TELLS HER STORY.

"Well, sir, dat night de foreman come 'roun' an' tole me dat I mus' go ter de fiel' de nex' mornin'. Soon ez he say dat, I up an' went ter de big house an' ax Marster w'at I gwine do wid de babies ef I went ter de fiel'. He stood an' look at me, he did, an' den he writ a note out er his pocket-book, an' tol' me ter han' it ter de overseer. Dat w'at I done dat ve'y night, an' de overseer, he took an' read de note, an' den he up an' say dat I mus' go wid de hoe-han's, way over ter de two-mile place.

"I went, kaze I bleeze ter go; yit all day long, whiles I wuz hoein' I kin year dem babies cryin'. Look like sometimes dey wuz right at me, an' den ag'in look like dey wuz way off yander. I kep' on a-goin' an' I kep' on a-hoein', an' de babies kep' on a-famishin'. Dey des fade away, an' bimeby dey died, bofe un um on the same day. On dat day I had a fit an' fell in de fier, an' dat how come I burnt up so.

"Look like," said the woman, marking on the ground with her bony forefinger — "look like I kin year dem babies cryin' yit, an' dat de reason folks call me Crazy Sue, kaze I kin year um cryin' an' yuther folks can't. I 'm mighty glad dey can't, kaze it 'ud break der heart."

"Why did n't you come and tell Papa about it?" said Lucien, indignantly.

"Ah, Lord, honey!" exclaimed Crazy Sue, "yo' pa is a mighty good man, an' a mighty good doctor, but he ain't got no medicine wa't could 'a' kyored me an' my marster."

In a little while Daddy Jake put in an appearance, and the children soon forgot Crazy Sue's troubles, and began to think about going home.

"Daddy Jake," said Lucien, "when are you going to take us back home?"

"I want to go right now," said Lillian.

Daddy Jake scratched his head and thought the matter over.

"Dey ain't no use talkin'," said he, "I got ter carry you back an' set you down in sight er de house, but how I gwine do it an' not git kotched? Dat w'at troublin' me."

"Why, Papa ain't mad," said Lucien. "I heard him tell that mean old overseer he had a great mind to take his buggy whip to him for hitting you."

"Ain't dat man dead?" exclaimed Daddy Jake in amazement.

"No, he ain't," said Lucien. "Papa drove him off the place."

"Well, I be blest!" said the old man with a chuckle. "W'at kinder head you reckon dat w'ite man got? — Honey," he went on, growing

serious again, "is you *sholy sho* dat man ain't dead?"

"Did n't I see him after you went away? Did n't I hear Papa tell him to go away? Did n't I hear Papa tell Mamma he wished you had broken his neck? Did n't I hear Papa tell Mamma that you were a fool for running away?" Lucien flung these questions at Daddy Jake with an emphasis that left nothing to be desired.

"Well," said Daddy Jake, "dat mus' be so, an' dat bein' de case, we 'll des start in de mornin' an' git home ter supper. We 'll go over yander ter Marse Meredy Ingram's an' borry his carriage an' go home in style. I boun' you, dey 'll all be glad to see us."

Daddy Jake was happy once more. A great burden had been taken from his mind. The other negroes when they came in toward night seemed to be happy, too, because the old man could go back home; and there was not one but would have swapped places with him. Randall was the last to come, and he brought a big, fat chicken.

"I wuz comin' 'long cross de woods des now," he said, winking his eye and shaking his head at Daddy Jake, "an', bless gracious, dis chicken flew'd right in my han'. I say ter myse'f, I did,

'Ole lady, you mus' know we got comp'ny at our house,' an' den I clamped down on 'er, an' yer she is. Now, 'bout dark, I 'll take 'er up yander an' make Marse Ingram's cook fry 'er brown fer deze chillun, an' I 'll make 'er gimme some milk."

Crazy Sue took the chicken, which had already been killed, wet its feathers thoroughly, rolled it around in the hot embers, and then proceeded to pick and clean it.

Randall's programme was carried out to the letter. Mr. Meredith Ingram's cook fried the chicken for him, and put in some hot biscuit for good measure, and the milker gave him some fresh milk, which she said would not be missed.

The children had a good supper, and they would have gone to sleep directly afterward, but the thought of going home with Daddy Jake kept them awake. Randall managed to tell Daddy Jake, out of hearing of the children, that Dr. Gaston and some of his negroes had been seen at Ross's mill that morning.

"Well," said Daddy Jake, "I bleeze ter beat Marster home. Ef he go back dar widout de chillun, my mistiss 'll drap right dead on de flo'." This was his only comment.

Around the fire the negroes laughed and joked, and told their adventures. Lillian felt comforta-

ble and happy, and as for Lucien, he himself felt a hero. He had found Daddy Jake, and now he was going to carry him back home.

Once, when there was a lull in the talk, Lillian asked why the frogs made so much fuss.

"I speck it 's kaze dey er mad wid Mr. Rabbit," said Crazy Sue. "Dey er tryin' der best ter drive 'im outen de swamp."

"What are they mad with the Rabbit for?" asked Lucien, thinking there might be a story in the explanation.

"Hit 's one er dem ole-time fusses," said Crazy Sue. "Hit 's most too ole ter talk about."

"Don't you know what the fuss was about?" asked Lucien.

"Well," said Crazy Sue, "one time Mr. Rabbit an' Mr. Coon live close ter one anudder in de same neighborhoods. How dey does now, I ain't a-tellin' you; but in dem times dey wa'n't no hard feelin's 'twix' um. Dey des went 'long like two ole cronies. Mr. Rabbit, he wuz a fisherman, and Mr. Coon, he wuz a fisherman —"

"And put 'em in pens," said Lillian, remembering an old rhyme she had heard.

"No, honey, dey ain't no Willium-Come-Trimbletoe in dis. Mr. Rabbit an' Mr. Coon wuz

bofe fishermans, but Mr. Rabbit, he kotch fish, an' Mr. Coon, he fished fer frogs. Mr. Rabbit, he had mighty good luck, an' Mr. Coon, he had mighty bad luck. Mr. Rabbit, he got fat an' slick, an' Mr. Coon, he got po' an' sick.

"Hit went on dis a-way tell one day Mr. Coon meet Mr. Rabbit in de big road. Dey shook han's, dey did, an' den Mr. Coon, he 'low:

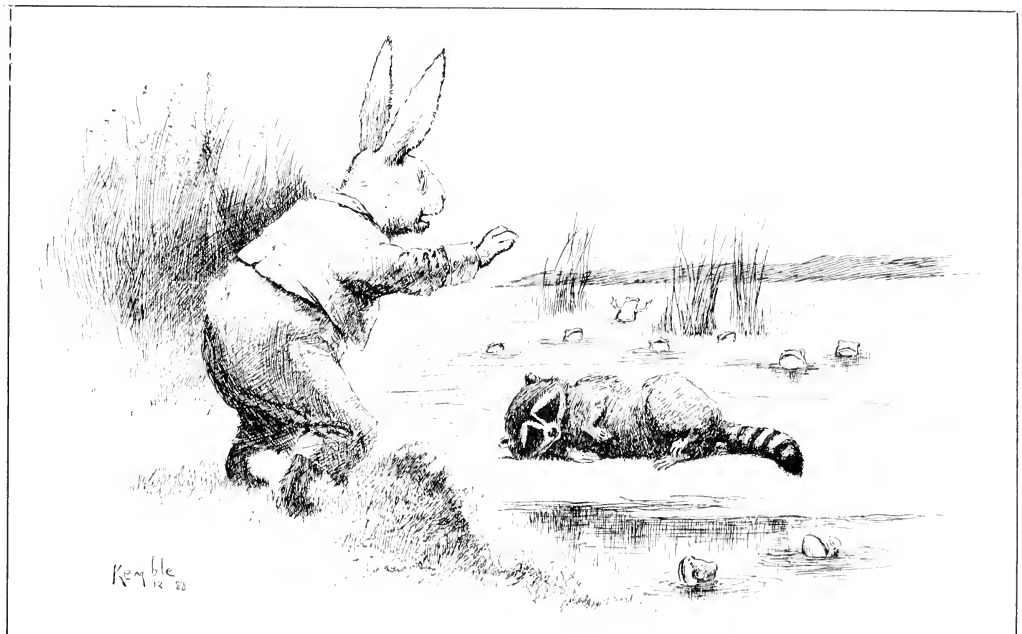
"'Brer Rabbit, whar you git sech a fine chance er fish?'

"Mr. Rabbit laugh an' say: 'I kotch um outen de river, Brer Coon. All I got ter do is ter bait my hook,' sezee.

"Den Mr. Coon shake his head an' 'low: 'Den how come I ain't kin ketch no frogs?'

"Mr. Rabbit sat down in de road an' scratched fer fleas, an' den he 'low: 'Hit 's kaze you done make um all mad, Brer Coon. One time in de dark er de moon, you slipped down ter de branch an' kotch de ole King Frog; an' ever sence dat time, w'enever you er passin' by, you kin year um sing out, fus' one an' den anudder — *Yer he come! Dar he goes! Hit 'im in de eye; hit 'im in de eye! Mash 'im an' smash 'im; mash 'im an' smash 'im!* Yasser, dat w'at dey say. I year um constant, Brer Coon, an' dat des w'at dey say.'

"Den Mr. Coon up an' say: 'Ef dat de way




"MR. RABBIT SQUALL OUT, 'COON DE. D!'"

dey gwine on, how de name er goodness kin I ketch um, Brer Rabbit? I bleeze ter have sump'n ter eat fer me an' my fambly connection.'

"Mr. Rabbit sorter grin in de cornder er his mouf, an' den he say: 'Well, Brer Coon, bein' ez you bin so sociable 'long wid me, an' ain't never showed yo' toofies w'en I pull yo' tail, I 'll des whirl in an' he'p you out.'

"Mr. Coon, he say: 'Thanky, thanky-do, Brer Rabbit.'

"Mr. Rabbit hung his fish on a tree lim', an' say: 'Now, Brer Coon, you bleeze ter do des like I tell you.'

"Mr. Coon 'lowed dat he would ef de Lord spared 'im.

"Den Mr. Rabbit say: 'Now, Brer Coon, you des rack down yander, an' git on de big san'-bar 'twix' de river an' de branch. W'en you git dar you mus' stagger like you sick, and den you mus' whirl roun' an' roun' an' drap down like you dead. After you drap down, you must sorter jerk yo' legs once er twice, an' den you mus' lay right still. Ef fly light on yo' nose, let 'im stay dar. Don't move; don't wink yo' eye; don't switch yo' tail. Des lay right dar, an' 't won't be long 'fo' you year f'um me. Yit don't you move till I give de word.'

"Mr. Coon, he paced off, he did, an' done des like Mr. Rabbit tol' 'im. He staggered roun' on de san'-bank, an' den he drapped down dead. Atter so long a time, Mr. Rabbit come lopin' 'long, an' soon 's he git dar, he squall out, 'Coon dead!' Dis rousted de frogs, an' dey stuck dey heads up fer ter see w'at all de rippit wuz 'bout. One great big green un up an' holler, *W'at de matter? W'at de matter?* He talk like he got a bad col'.

"Mr. Rabbit 'low: 'Coon dead!'

"Frog say: *Don't believe it! Don't believe it!*

"N'er frog say: *Yes, he is! Yes, he is!* Little bit er one say: *No, he ain't! No, he ain't!*

"Dey kep' on 'sputin' an' 'sputin', tell bimeby hit look like all de frogs in de neighborhoods wuz dar. Mr. Rabbit look like he ain't a-yearin' ner a-keerin' wa't dey do er say. He sot dar in de san' like he gwine in mournin' fer Mr. Coon. De Frogs kep' gittin' closer an' closer. Mr. Coon, he ain't move. W'en a fly 'd git on 'im Mr. Rabbit he 'd bresh 'im off.

"Bimeby he 'low: 'Ef you want ter git 'im outen de way, now 's yo' time, Cousin Frogs. Des whirl in an' bury him deep in de san'.'

"Big ole Frog say: *How we gwine ter do it? How we gwine ter do it?*

"Mr. Rabbit 'low: 'Dig de san' out fum under 'im an' let 'im down in de hole.'


"DEN DE FROGS DEY WENT TO WORK SHO NUFF."

"Den de Frogs dey went ter work sho nuff. Dey mus' 'a' bin a hunderd un um, an' dey make dat san' fly, mon. Mr. Coon, he ain't move. De Frogs, dey dig an' scratch in de san' tell atter while dey had a right smart hole, an' Mr. Coon wuz down in dar.

"Bimeby big Frog holler: *Dis deep nuff? Dis deep nuff?*

"Mr. Rabbit 'low: 'Kin you jump out?'

"Big Frog say: '*Yes, I kin! Yes, I kin!*

"Mr. Rabbit say: 'Den 't ain't deep nuff.'

"Den de Frogs dey dig an' dey dig, tell, bimeby, Big Frog say: *Dis deep nuff? Dis deep nuff?*

Mr. Rabbit 'low: 'Kin you jump out?'

"Big Frog say: *I dess kin! I dess kin!*

"Mr. Rabbit say: 'Dig it deeper.'

"De Frogs keep on diggin' tell bimeby, big Frog holler out: *Dis deep nuff? Dis deep nuff?*

"Mr. Rabbit 'low: 'Kin you jump out?'

"Big Frog say: *No, I can't! No, I can't! Come he'p me! Come he'p me!*

"Mr. Rabbit bust out laughin', and holler out:

"'RISE UP, SANDY, AN' GIT YO' MEAT!' an' Mr. Coon riz."

Lucien and Lillian laughed heartily at this queer story, especially the curious imitation of

frogs both big and little that Crazy Sue gave. Lucien wanted her to tell more stories, but Daddy Jake said it was bedtime; and the children were soon sound asleep.

The next morning Daddy Jake had them up betimes. Crazy Sue took Lillian in her arms, and Daddy Jake took Lucien on his back. As they had gone into the cane-brake, so they came out. Randall and some of the other negroes wanted to carry Lillian, but Crazy Sue would n't listen to them. She had brought the little girl in, she said, and she was going to carry her out. Daddy Jake, followed by Crazy Sue, went in the direction of Mr. Meredith Ingram's house. It was on a hill, more than a mile from the river, and was in a grove of oak-trees. As they were making their way through a plum orchard, not far from the house, Crazy Sue stopped.

"Brer Jake," she said, "dis is all de fur I 'm gwine. I 'm 'mos' too close ter dat house now. You take dis baby an' let dat little man walk. 'T ain't many steps ter whar you gwine." Crazy Sue wrung Daddy Jake's hand, stooped and kissed the children, and with a "God bless you all!" disappeared in the bushes, and none of the three ever saw her again.

Mr. Meredith Ingram was standing out in his

"THE OLD NEGRO PUT HIS HANDS TO HIS MOUTH AND CALLED."

front yard, enjoying a pipe before breakfast. He was talking to himself and laughing when Daddy Jake and the children approached.

"Howdy, Mars' Meredy," said the old negro, taking off his hat and bowing as politely as he could with the child in his arms. Mr. Ingram looked at him through his spectacles and over them.

"Ain't that Gaston's Jake?" he asked, after he had examined the group.

"Yasser," said Daddy Jake, "an' deze is my marster's little chillun."

Mr. Ingram took his pipe out of his mouth.

"Why, what in the world! — Why, what under the sun! — Well, if this does n't beat — why, what in the nation!" — Mr. Ingram failed to find words to express his surprise.

Daddy Jake, however, made haste to tell Mr. Ingram that the little ones had drifted down the river in a boat, that he had found them, and wished to get them home just as quickly as he could.

"My marster bin huntin' fer um, suh," said the old negro, and I want ter beat him home, kaze ef he go dar widout deze chillun, my mistiss 'll be a dead 'oman — she cert'n'y will, suh."

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed Mr. Ingram.

"If this don't beat — why, of course, I 'll send them home. I 'll go with 'em myself. Of course I will. Well, if this does n't — George! hitch up the carriage. Fetch out Ben Bolt and Rob Roy, and go and get your breakfast. Jake, you go and help him, and I 'll take these chaps in the house and warm 'em up. Come on, little ones. We 'll have something to eat and then we 'll go right home to Pappy and Mammy." They went in, Mr. Ingram muttering to himself, "Well, if this does n't beat —"

After breakfast Mr. Ingram, the children, Daddy Jake, and George, the driver, were up and away, as the fox-hunters say. Daddy Jake sat on the driver's seat with George, and urged on the horses. They traveled rapidly, and it is well they did, for when they came in sight of the Gaston place, Daddy Jake saw his master entering the avenue that led to the house. The old negro put his hands to his mouth and called so loudly that the horses jumped. Doctor Gaston heard him and stopped, and in a minute more had his children in his arms, and that night there was a happy family in the Gaston house. But nobody was any happier than Daddy Jake.

## HOW A WITCH WAS CAUGHT

THE little boy sat in a high chair and used his legs as drumsticks, much to the confusion of Uncle Remus, as it appeared. After a while the old man exclaimed:

"Well, my goodness en de gracious! how you ever in de roun' worl' er anywheres else speck me fer ter make any headway in tellin' a tale wiles all dish yer racket gwine on? I don't want ter call nobody's pa, kase he mos' allers talks too loud, en if I call der ma 't won't make so mighty much difference, kase she done got so usen ter it dat she dunner w'en dey er makin' any fuss. I believe dat ef everything wuz ter git right good en still on deze premises des one time, you' ma would in about die wid de headache. Anyway, she 'd be mighty sick, bekaze she ain't usen ter not havin' no fuss, en she des could n't git 'long widout it.

"I tell you right now, I 'd be afeard fer ter tell any tale roun' yer, kaze de fust news I know'd

I 'd git my eyes put out, er my leg broke, er sump'n' n'er. I knows deze yer w'ite chillun, mon! dat I does; I knows um. Dey 'll git de upper hand er de niggers ef de Lord spar's um. En he mos' inginner'lly spar's um.

"Well, now, ef you want ter hear dish yer tale w'at I bin tu'nin' over in my min' you des got ter come en set right yer in front er me, whar I kin keep my two eyes on you; kaze I ain't gwine ter take no resks er no foolishness. Now, den, you des better behave, bekaze hit don't cost me nothin' fer ter cut dis tale right short off.

"One time der wuz a miller man w'at live by a river en had a mill. He wuz a mighty smart man. He tuck so much toll dat he tuck 'n buyed 'im a house, en' he want ter rent dat 'ar house out ter folks, but de folks dey 'lowed dat de house wuz ha'nted. Dey 'd come 'en rent de house, dey would, en move in dar, en den go upsta'rs en go ter bed. Dey 'd go ter bed, dey would, but dey could n't sleep, en time it got day dey 'd git out er dat house.

"De miller man, he ax'd um w'at de matter wuz, but dey des shuck der head en' 'low de house wuz ha'nted. Den he tuck 'n try ter fine out w'at kind er ha'nt she wuz dat skeer folks. He sleep in de house, but he ain't see nothin', en de mos'

w'at he year wuz a big ole gray cat a-promenadin' roun' en hollerin'. Bimeby hit got so dat dey want no fun in havin' de ha'nted house, en w'en folks 'd come 'long de miller man, he 'd des up en tell um dat de house 'uz ha'nted. Some 'ud go up en some would n't, but dem w'at went up did n't stay, kaze des 'bout bedtime dey 'd fetch a yell en des come a-rushin' down, en all de money in de Nunited States er Georgy would n't git um fer ter go back up dar.

" Hit went on dis away twel one time a preacher man com' 'long dar en say he wanted some'rs ter stay. He was a great big man, en he look like he wuz good accordin'. De miller man say he hate mighty bad for to discommerdate 'im, but he des pintedly ain't got no place whar he kin put 'im 'cep' dat 'ar ha'nted house. De preacher man say he des soon stay dar ez anywhar's, kase he bin livin' in deze low-groun's er sorrer too long fer ter be sot back by any one-hoss ha'nts. De miller man 'lowed dat he wuz afeard de ha'nts 'ud worry 'im might'ly, but de preacher man 'low, he did, dat he use ter bein' worried, en he up en tell de miller man dat he 'd a heap rather stay in de house wid de ha'nt, no matter how big she is, dan ter stay out doors in de rain.

" So de miller man, he 'low he ain't got no mo'

'pology fer ter make, bekaze ef de preacher man wuz ready fer ter face de ha'nts and set up dar en out blink um, dey would n't be nobody in de roun' worl' no gladder dan 'im. Den de miller man showed de preacher man how ter git in de house en had 'im a great big fier built. En atter de miller man wuz done gone, de preacher man drawed a cheer up ter de fier en waited fer de ha'nts, but dey ain't no ha'nts come. Den w'en dey ain't no ha'nts come, de preacher man tuck 'n open up he satchel en got 'im out some spar' ribs en sot um by de fier fer ter cook, en den he got down en said he pra'rs, en den he got up en read he Bible. He wuz a mighty good man, mon, en he prayed en read a long time. Bimeby, w'en his spar' ribs git done, he got some bread out'n he satchel, en fixed fer ter eat his supper.

"By de time he got all de meat off'n one er de ribs, de preacher man listened, en he year'd a monst'us scramblin' en scratchin' on de wall. He look aroun', he did, en dar wuz a great big black cat a-sharpenin' 'er claws on de door facin'. Folks, don't talk! dat 'ar cat wuz er sight! Great long w'ite toofs en great big yaller eye-balls a-shinin' like dey wuz lit up way back in 'er head. She stood dar a minit, dat ole black cat did, en den she 'gun ter sidle up like she wuz gwine ter

"SHE STOOD DAR A MINIT, DAT OLE BLACK CAT DID."

mount dat preacher man right dar en den. But de preacher man, he des shoo'd at 'er, en it seem like dis sorter skeer'd 'er, kaze she went off.

"But de preacher man, he kep' his eye open, en helt on ter his spar' rib. Present'y he year de ole black cat comin' back, en dis time she fotch wid 'er a great big gang er cats. Dey wuz all black des like she wuz, en der eye-balls *shineded* en der lashes wuz long en w'ite. Hit look like de preacher man wuz a-gwine ter git surroundered.

"Dey come a-sidlin' up, dey did, en de ole black cat made a pass at de preacher man like she wuz a-gwine ter t'ar he eyes out. De preacher man dodged, but de nex' pass she made de preacher man fotch 'er wipe with his spar' rib en cut off one er 'er toes. Wid dat de ole black cat fotch a yell dat you might a yeard a mile, en den she gin 'erself a sort er a twis' en made her disappearance up de chimbley, en w'en she do dat all de yuther cats made der disappearance up de chimbley. De preacher man he got up, he did, en looked und' de bed fer ter see ef he kin fine any mo' cats, but dey wuz all done gone.

"Den he tuck 'n pick up de cat toe w'at he done knock off wid de spar' rib, en wrop it up in a piece er paper en put it in he pocket. Den he

say his pra'rs some mo', en went ter bed en slep' right straight along twel broad daylight, en nuthin' ain't dast ter bodder 'im.

"Nex' mornin' de preacher man got up, he did, en say his pra'rs en eat his breakkus, en den he 'low ter hisse'f dat he 'll go by en tell de miller man dat he mighty much erblige. 'Fo' he start, hit come 'cross he min' 'bout de cats w'at pester 'im de night befo', and he tuck 'n feel in he pockets fer de big black cat toe w'at he done cut off wid de spar' rib. But it seems like de toe done grow in de night, en bless goodness! w'en he unwrop it 't want nuthin' less dan a great big finger wid a ring on it.

"So de preacher man tuck 'n fix up all his contrapments, en den call on de miller man en tol' 'im he wuz mighty much erblige kaze he let 'im stay in de house. De miller man wuz 'stonish' fer ter see de preacher man, kaze he knew dat w'en folks stay all night in dat house dey ain't come down no mo'. He wuz 'stonish', but he did n't say much. He des stan' still en wunder.

"But de preacher man, he up 'n ax 'bout de miller man's wife, en say he wants ter see 'er en tell 'er good-bye, bein' ez how dey 'd all bin so good. So de miller man, he tuck 'n kyar de preacher inter de room whar his wife wuz layin'

in bed. De ole 'oman had de counterpin drawed up und' 'er chin, but she look mighty bad roun' de eyes. Yit, she tuck 'n' howdied de preacher man en tole 'im he wuz mighty welcome.

"Dey talk en talk, dey did, en atter w'ile de preacher man hol' out his han' fer ter tell de 'oman good-bye; but de 'oman, she helt out 'er lef' han', she did, like she want dat fer ter git shucken. But de preacher man would n't shake dat un. He say dat ain't nigh gwine ter do, bekaze w'en folks got any perliteness lef' dey don't never hol' out de lef' han'. De 'oman she say her right wuz cripple, but her ole man 'low he ain't never hear 'bout dat befo', en den he tuck 'n make 'er pull it out from und' de kivver, en den dey seed dat one er 'er fingers wuz done clean gone. De miller man he up 'n 'low:

"'How come dis?'

"De 'oman she 'low, 'I cut it off.'

"De miller man he 'low, 'How you cut it off?'

"De 'oman she 'low, 'I knock it off?'

"De miller man he 'low, 'Wharbouts you knock it off?'

"De 'oman she 'low, 'I broke it off.'

"De miller man he 'low, 'When you break it off?'

"Den de 'oman she ain't say nuthin'. She des

lay dar, she did, en pant en look skeered. De preacher man he study a little en den he say he speck he kin kyo' dat han', en he tuck de finger out 'n he pocket en tried it on de 'oman's han', en it fit! Yassar! it fit in de place right smick smack smoove. Den de preacher man he up en tell de miller man dat de 'oman wuz a witch, en wid dat de 'oman fetched a yell en kivvered 'er head wid de counterpin.

"Yit dis ain't do 'er no good, kaze de preacher man say he done look in de books en de onliest way fer ter kyo' a witch is ter bu'n 'er; en it ain't look so bad, nuther, kaze when dey tied 'er she tuck 'n tu'n ter be a great big black cat, en dat 's de way she wuz w'en she wuz burnt."

## THE LITTLE BOY AND HIS DOGS

UNCLE REMUS'S little patron seemed to be so shocked at the burning of the woman that the old man plunged at once into a curious story about a little boy and his two dogs.

"One time," said Uncle Remus, scratching his head as if by that means to collect his scattered ideas, "dere wuz a 'oman livin' 'longside er de big road, en dish yer 'oman she had one little boy. Seem like ter me dat he mus' 'a' bin des 'bout yo' size. He mout 'a' bin a little broader in de shoulder en a little longer in de leg, yit, take 'im up one side en down de udder, he wuz des 'bout yo' shape en size. He wuz a mighty smart little boy, en his mammy sot lots by 'im. Seem like she ain't never have no luck 'cept'n 'long wid dat boy, kaze dey wuz one time w'en she had a little gal, en, bless yo' soul! somebody come 'long en tote de little gal off, en w'en dat happen de 'oman ain't have no mo' little gal, en de little boy ain't have no mo' little sister. Dis make bofe er um

mighty sorry, but look like de little boy wuz de sorriest, kaze he show it de mosest.

"Some days he 'd take a notion fer ter go en hunt his little sister, en den he 'd go down de big road en clam a big pine-tree, en git right spang in de top, en look all roun' fer ter see ef he can't see his little sister some'rs in de woods. He could n't see 'er, but he 'd stay up dar in de tree en swing in de win' en 'low ter hisself dat maybe he mout see 'er bimeby.

"One day, w'iles he wuz a-settin' up dar, he see two mighty fine ladies walkin' down de road. He clam down out 'n de tree, he did, en run en tol' his mammy. Den she up en ax:

"'How is dey dress, honey?'

"'Mighty fine, mammy, mighty fine, puffy-out petticoats en long green veils.'

"'How des dey look, honey?'

"'Spick span new, mammy.'

"'Dey ain't none er our kin, is dey, honey?'

"'Dat dey ain't, mammy — dey er mighty fine ladies.'

"De fine ladies, dey come on down de road, dey did, en stop by de 'oman's house, en beg 'er fer ter please en gi' um some water. Dey little boy, he run en fetch 'em a gourd full, en dey put de gourd und' der veils, en drunk, en drunk, en

drunk des like dey wuz mighty nigh perish fer water. De little boy watch um. 'Reckly he holler out:

"'Mammy, mammy! W'at you recken? Dey er lappin' de water.' De woman hollered back:

"'I recken dat 's de way de quality folks does, honey.'

"Den de ladies beg fer some bread, en de little boy tuck um a pone. Dey eat it like dey wuz mighty nigh famish fer bread. Bimeby de little boy holler out en say:

"'Mammy, mammy! W'at you recken? Dey er got great long tushes.' De 'oman, she holler back:

"'I recken all de quality folks is got um, honey.'

"Den de ladies ax fer some water fer to wash der han's, en de little boy brung um some. He watch um, en bimeby he holler out:

"'Mammy, mammy! W'at you recken? Dey got little bit er hairy han's en arms.' De 'oman, she holler back:

"'I recken all de quality folks is got um, honey.'

"Den de ladies beg de 'oman fer ter please en let de little boy show um whar de big road forks. But de little boy don't want ter go. He holler out:

"'Mammy, folks don't hatter be showed whar de road forks'; but de 'oman she 'low:

"'I recken de quality folks does, honey.'

"De little boy, he 'gun ter whimple en cry kaze he don't want ter go wid de ladies, but de 'oman say he oughter be 'shame er hisse'f fer ter be gwine on dat away 'fo' de quality folks, en mo' 'n dat, he mout run upon his little sister en fetch 'er home.

"Now dish yer little boy had too mighty bad dogs. One er um wuz name Minnyminny Morack, en de t'er one wuz name Follerlinsko, en dey wuz so bad dey hatter be tied in de yard day en night, 'cep' w'en dey wuzent a-huntin'. So de little boy, he went en got a pan er water en sot 'im down in de middle er de flo', en den he went en got 'im a willer lim', en he stuck it in de groun'. Den he 'low:

"'Mammy, w'en de water in dish yer pan tu'ns ter blood, den you run out en tu'n loose Minnyminny Morack en Follerlinsko, en den w'en you see dat dar willer lim' a-shakin', you run en sick um on my track.'

"De 'oman, she up an' say she 'd tu'n de dogs loose, en den de little boy he stuck his han's in he pockets en went on down de road a wisserlin' des same ez enny yuther little boy, 'cep' dat he

wuz lots smarter. He went on down de road, he did, en de fine quality ladies dey come on behin'.

"De furder he went de faster he walk. Dis make de quality ladies walk fas', too, en 't want so mighty long 'fo' de little boy year um makin' a mighty kuse fuss, en w'en he t'un 'roun', bless gracious! dey wuz a-pantin', kaze dey wuz so tired en hot. De little boy 'low ter hisse'f dat it mighty kuse how ladies kin pant same es a wil' varment, but he say he speck dat de way de quality ladies does w'en dey gits hot en tired, en he make like he can't year um, kaze he want ter be nice en perlite.

"Atter a w'ile, w'en de quality ladies t'ink de little boy want lookin' at um, he seed one er um drap down on 'er all-fours en trot 'long des like a varmint, en 't want long 'fo' de yuther one drapt down on 'er all-fours. Den de little boy 'lowed:

"*Shoo!* Ef dat de way quality ladies res' der-se'f w'en dey git tired I reckon a little chap 'bout my size better be fixin fer ter res' hisse'f.'

"So he look 'roun', he did, en he tuck 'n pick 'im out a great big pine-tree by de side er de road, en 'gun to clam it. Den w'en dey see dat, one er de quality ladies 'low:

"'My goodness! W'at in de worl' you up ter now?' Little boy he say, sezee:

"'I 'm des a-clamin' a tree fer ter res' my bones.' Ladies, dey 'low:

"'Why n't you res' um on de groun'?' Little boy say, sezee:

"'Bekaze I like ter git up whar it cool en high.'

"De quality ladies, dey tuck 'n walk 'roun' en 'roun' de tree like dey wuz medjun it fer ter see how big it is. Bimeby, atter w'ile dey say, sezee:

"'Little boy, little boy! you better come down frum dar en show us de way ter de forks er de road.' Den de little boy 'low:

"'Des keep right on, ladies — you 'll fin' de forks er de road; you can't miss um. I 'm afeard fer ter come down, kaze I might fall en hurt some er you all.' De ladies dey say, sezee:

"'You better come down yer 'fo' we run en tell yo' mammy how bad you is.' De little boy 'low:

"'W'iles you er tellin' 'er please um' tell 'er how skeerd I is.'

"Den de quality ladies got mighty mad. Dey walked 'roun' dat tree en fairly snorted. Dey pulled off der bonnets, en der veils, en der dresses, en, lo en beholes! de little boy seen dey wuz two great big pant'ers. Dey had great big eyes, en big sharp tushes, en great long tails, en dey look

up at de little boy en growl en grin at 'im twel he come mighty nigh havin' a chill. Dey tried ter clam de tree, but dey had done trim der claws so dey could git on gloves, en dey could n't clam no mo'.

"Den one er um sot down in de road en made a kuse mark in de san', en der great long tails tu'n'd ter axes, en no sooner is der tails tu'n ter axes den dey 'gun ter cut de tree down. I ain't dast ter tell you how sharp dem axes wuz, kase you would n't nigh b'lieve me. One er um stood on one side er de tree, en de yuther one stood on de yuther side, en dey whack at dat tree like dey wuz takin' a holiday. Dey whack out chips ez big ez yo' hat, en 't want so mighty long 'fo' de tree wuz ready fer ter fall.

"But w'iles de little boy wuz settin' up dar, skeerd mighty nigh ter def, hit come inter his min' dat he had some eggs in his pocket w'at he done brung wid 'im fer ter eat w'enever he git hongry. He tuck out one er de eggs en broke it, en say: 'Place, fill up!' en, bless yo' soul! de place fill up sho 'nuff, en de tree look des 'zackly like nobody ain't bin a-cuttin' on it.

"But dem ar pant'ers dey wuz werry vig'rous. Dey des spit on der han's en cut away. W'en dey git de tree mighty nigh cut down de little boy

he pull out 'n'er egg en broke it, en say, 'Place, fill up!' en by de time he say it de tree wuz done made soun' agin. Dey kep' on dis away twel de little boy 'gun ter git skeerd agin. He done broke all he eggs, 'ceptin' one, en dem ar creeturs wuz des a-cuttin' away like dey wuz venomous, w'ich dey mos' sholy wuz.

"Des 'bout dat time de little boy mammy happen ter stumble over de pan er water w'at wuz settin' down on de flo', en dar it wuz all done tu'n ter blood. Den she tuck 'n run en unloose Minnyminny Morack en Follerlinsko. Den w'en she do dat she see de willer lim' a-shakin', en den she put de dogs on de little boy track, en away dey went. De little boy year um a-comin', en he holler out:

"'Come on, my good dogs. Here, dogs, here.'

"De pant'ers dey stop choppin' en lissen. One ax de yuther one w'at she year. Little boy say:

"'You don' year nothin'. Go on wid yo' choppin'.'

"De pant'ers dey chop some mo', en den dey think dey year de dogs a-comin'. Den dey try der bes fer ter git away, but 't want no use. Dey ain't got time fer ter change der axes back inter

tails, en co'se dey can't run wid axes draggin' behin' um. So de dogs cotch um. De little boy, he 'low:

"'Shake um en bite um. Drag um 'roun' en 'roun' twel you drag um two mile.' So de dogs dey drag um 'roun' two mile. Den de little boy say, sezee:

"'Shake um en t'ar um. Drag um 'roun' en 'roun' twel you drag um ten mile.' So dey drag um ten mile, en by de time dey got back, de pant'-ers wuz col' en stiff.

"Den de little boy clum down out 'n de tree, en sot down fer ter res' 'hisse'f. Bimeby atter w'ile, he 'low ter hisse'f dat bein' he hav so much fun, he b'lieve he takes his dogs en go way off in de woods fer ter see ef he can't fin' his little sister. He call his dogs, he did, en went off in de woods, en dey ain't bin gone so mighty fur 'fo' he seed a house in de woods away off by itse'f.

"De dogs dey went up en smelt 'roun', dey did, en come wid der bristles up, but de little boy 'low he 'd go up dar anyhow en see w'at de dogs wuz mad 'bout. So he call de dogs en went todes de house, en w'en he got close up he saw a little gal totin' wood en water. She wuz a mighty purty little gal, kaze she had a milk-white skin, en great long yaller hair; but 'er cloze wuz all in rags, en

she wuz cryin' kaze she hatter work so hard. Minnyminny Morack en Follerlinsko wagged der tails w'en dey seed de little gal, en de little boy know'd by dat dat she wuz his sister.

"So he went up en ax er w'at 'er name is, en she say she dunner w'at 'er name is, kaze she so skeerd she done fergit. Den he ax 'er w'at de name er goodness she cryin' 'bout, en she say she cryin' kaze she hatter work so hard. Den he ax 'er who de house belong ter, en she 'low it b'long ter a great big ole black B'ar, en dis old B'ar make 'er tote wood en water all de time. She say de water is ter go in te big wash-pot, en de wood is fer ter make de pot bile, en de pot wuz ter cook folks w'at de great big ole B'ar brung home ter he chilluns.

"De little boy did n't tell de little gal dat he wuz 'er br'er, but he 'low dat he was gwine ter stay en eat supper wid de big ole B'ar. De little girl cried en 'low he better not, but de little boy say he ain't feared fer ter eat supper wid a B'ar. So dey went in de house, en w'en de little boy got in dar, he seed dat de B'ar had two great big chilluns, en one er um wuz squattin' on de bed, en de yuther one wuz squattin down in de h'ath. De chilluns, dey wuz bofe er um name Cubs, fer short, but de little boy want skeerd er um, kaze dar wuz

his dogs fer ter make way wid um ef dey so much ez roll der eye-ball.

"De ole B'ar wuz a mighty long time comin' back, so de little gal she up 'n fix supper, anyhow, en de little boy he tuck 'n scrouge Cubs fus on one side en den on yuther, en him en de little gal got much ez dey want. Atter supper de little boy tole de little gal dat he 'd take en comb 'er ha'r des ter w'ile away de time; but de little gal ha'r ain't bin comb fer so long, en it am got in such a tankle, dat it make de po' creetur cry fer ter hear anybody talkin' 'bout combin' un it. Den de little boy 'low he ain't gwine ter hurt 'er, en he tuck 'n warm some water in a pan en put it on 'er ha'r, en den he comb en curlt it des ez nice as you mos' ever see.

"W'en de ole B'ar git home he wuz mighty tuck 'n back w'en he seed he had com'ny, en w'en he see um all settin' down like dey come den fer ter stay. But he wuz mighty perlite, en he shuck han's all 'roun', en set down by de fier en dry his boots, en ax 'bout de craps, en 'low dat de wedder would be monstus fine ef dey could git a little season er rain.

"Den he tuck 'n make a great 'miration over de little gal's ha'r, en he ax de little boy how in de roun' worl' kin he curl it en fix it so nice. De

little un 'low it 's easy enough. Den de ole B'ar say he b'lieve he like ter git his ha'r curlt up dat way, en de little boy say:

"'Fill de big pot wid water.'

"De ole B'ar filled de pot wid water. Den de little boy say:

"'Buil' a fier und' de pot en heat de water hot.'

"W'en de water got scaldin' hot, de little boy say:

"'All ready, now. Stick yo' head in. Hit 's de onliest way fer ter make yo' ha'r curl.'

"Den de ole B'ar stuck he head in de water, en dot wuz de las' er him, bless gracious! De scaldin' water curlt de ha'r twel it come off, en I speck dat whar dey get de idee 'bout puttin' b'ar grease on folks' ha'r. De young b'ars dey cry like ever'ting w'en dey see how der daddy bin treated, en dey want bite and scratch de little boy en his sister, but dem dogs — dat Minnyminny Morack en dat Follerlinsko — dey des laid holt er dem dar b'ars, en dey want enough lef' er um ter feed a kitten."

"What did they do then?" asked the little boy who had been listening to the story. The old man took off his spectacles and cleaned the glasses on his coat-tail.

"Well, sir," he went on, "de little boy tuck 'n

'ALL READY, NOW. STICK YO' HEAD IN."

kyard his sister home, an' his mammy says she ain't never gwine ter set no sto' by folks wid fine cloze, kaze dey so 'ceitful; no, never, so long as de Lord mout spar' 'er. En den, atter dat, dey tuck 'n live terge'er right straight 'long, en ef it had n't but a bin fer de war, dey 'd a bin a-livin' dar now. Bekaze war is a mighty dangersome business."

## HOW BLACK SNAKE CAUGHT THE WOLF

"ONE time," said Uncle Remus, putting the "noses" of the chunks together with his cane, so as to make a light in his cabin, "Brer Rabbit en ole Brer Wolf wuz gwine down de road terge'er, en Brer Wolf, he 'low dat times wuz mighty hard en money skace. Brer Rabbit, he 'gree 'long wid 'im, he did, dat times wuz mighty tight, en he up en say dat 't wuz in about much ez he kin do fer ter make bofe en's meet. He 'low, he did:

"'Brer Wolf, you er gittin' mighty ga'nt, en 't won't be so mighty long 'fo' we 'll hatten be tuck up en put in de po'-house. W'at make dis?' says Brer Rabbit, sezee: 'I be bless ef I kin tell, kaze yer er all de creeturs gittin' ga'nt w'iles all de reptules is a-gittin' seal fat. No longer 'n yistiddy, I wuz comin' along throo de woods, w'en who should I meet but ole Brer Snake, en he wuz dat put dat he ain't kin skacely pull he tail 'long atter he head. I 'low ter mese'f, I did, dat dish yer coun-

try gittin' in a mighty bad way w'en de creeturs is got ter go 'roun' wid der ribs growin' terge'er w'iles de reptules layin' up in de sun des nat'ally fattenin' on der own laziness. Yessar, dat w'at I 'lowed.'

"Brer Wolf, he say, he did, dat if de reptules wuz gittin' de 'vantage er de creeturs dat away, dat hit wuz 'bout time fer ter clean out de reptules er leaf de country, en he 'low, fuddermo', dat he wuz ready fur ter jine in wid de patter-rollers en drive um out.

"But Brer Rabbit, he 'low, he did, dat de bes' way fer ter git 'long wuz ter fin' out whar'bouts de reptules hed der smoke-'house en go in dar en git some er de vittles w'at by good rights b'long'd ter de creeturs. Brer Wolf say maybe dis de bes' way, kaze ef de reptules git word dat de patter-rollers is a-comin' dey 'll take en hide de ginger-cakes, en der simmon beer, en der w'atzis-names, so dat de creeturs can't git um. By dis time dey come ter de forks er de road, en Brer Rabbit he went one way, en Brer Wolf he went de yuther.

"Whar Brer Wolf went," Uncle Remus went on, with increasing gravity, "de goodness knows, but Brer Rabbit, he went on down de road todes he own house, en w'iles he wuz lippitin' long,

nibblin' a bite yer en a bite dar, he year a mighty kuse fuss in de woods. He lay low, Brer Rabbit did, en lissen. He look sharp, he did, en bimeby he ketch a glimp' er ole Mr. Black Snake gwine 'long thoo de grass. Brer Rabbit, he lay low en watch 'im. Mr. Black Snake crope 'long, he did, des like he wuz greased. Brer Rabbit say ter hisse'f:

"'Hi! dar goes one er de reptules, en ez she slips she slides 'long.'

"Yit, still he lay low en watch. Mr. Black Snake crope 'long, he did, en bimeby he come whar dey wuz a great big poplar-tree. Brer Rabbit, he crope on his belly en follow 'long atter. Mr. Black Snake tuck 'n circle all 'roun' de tree, en den he stop en sing out:

"'Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!
Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!'

"En den, mos' 'fo' Brer Rabbit kin wink he eye, a door w'at wuz in de tree flew'd open, en Mr. Black Snake tuck 'n crawl in. Brer Rabbit 'low, he did:

"'Ah-yi! Dar whar you stay! Dar whar you

keeps yo' simmon beer! Dar whar you hides yo' backbone en spar' ribs. Ah-yi!'

"W'en Mr. Black Snake went in de house, Brer Rabbit crope up, he did, en lissen fer ter see w'at he kin year gwine on in dar. But he ain't year nothin'. Bimeby, w'iles he settin' 'roun' dar, he year de same song:

"'Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario, wo!
Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!'

"En mos' 'fo' Brer Rabbit kin hide in de weeds, de door hit flew'd open, en out Mr. Black Snake slid. He slid out, he did, en slid off, en atter he git out er sight, Brer Rabbit, he tuck 'n went back ter de poplar-tree fer ter see ef he kin git in dar. He hunt 'roun' en he hunt 'roun', en yit ain't fin' no door. Den he sat up on he behin' legs, ole Brer Rabbit did, en low:

"'Hey! w'at kinder contrapshun dish yer? I seed a door dar des now, but dey ain't no door dar now.'

"Ole Brer Rabbit scratch he head, he did, en bimeby hit come inter he min' dat maybe de song

got sump'n 'n'er ter do wid it, en wid dat he chuned up, he did, en sing:

"'*Watsilla, watsilla,*
*Bandario, wo-haw!*'

"Time he say fus' part, de door sorter open, but w'en he say de las' part hit slammed shet ag'in. Den he chune up some mo':

"'Watsilla, watsilla,
Bandario, wo-haw!'

"Time he say de fus' part de door open little ways, but time he say de las' part hit slammed shet ag'in. Den Brer Rabbit 'low he 'd hang 'roun' dar en fin' out w'at kind er hinges dat er door wuz a-swingin' on. So he stays 'roun' dar, he did, twel bimeby Mr. Black Snake came 'long back. Brer Rabbit crope up, he did, en he year 'im sing de song:

"'Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!
Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!'

"Den de door open, en Mr. Black Snake, he slid in, en Brer Rabbit, he lipped off in de bushes

en sung de song by hisse'f. Den he went home en tuck some res', en nex' day he went back; en w'en Mr. Black Snake come out en went off, Brer Rabbit, he tuck 'n sing de song, en de door flewed open, en in he went. He went in, he did, en w'en he got in dar, he fin' lots er goodies. He fin' cakes en sausages, en all sort er nice doin's. Den he come out, en de nex' day he went he tole Ole Brer Wolf, en Brer Wolf, he 'low dat, bein' ez times is hard, he b'lieve he 'll go 'long en sample some er Mr. Black Snake's doin's.

"Dey went, dey did, en soon ez dey fin' dat Mr. Black Snake is gone, Brer Rabbit he sing de song, en de door open, en in he went. He went in dar, he did, en he gobbled up his belly-ful, en w'iles he doin' dis Brer Wolf he gallop 'roun' en 'roun', tryin' fer ter git in. But de door done slam shet, en Brer Wolf ain't know de song. Bimeby Brer Rabbit he come out, he did, lickin' he chops en wipin' he mustash, en Brer Wolf ax 'im w'at de name er goodness is de reason he ain't let 'im go in 'long wid 'im.

"Brer Rabbit, he vow, he did, dat he 'spected any gump 'ud know dat somebody got ter stay outside en watch w'iles de yuther one wuz on de inside. Brer Wolf say he ain't thunk er dat, en den he ax Brer Rabbit fer ter let 'im in, en please

be so good ez ter stay out dar en watch w'iles he git some er de goodies.

"Wid dat Brer Rabbit, he sung de song:

"'Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!
Watsilla, watsilla,
Consario wo!'

"He sung de song, he did, en de door flew'd open, en Brer Wolf he lipt in, en gun ter gobble up de goodies. Brer Rabbit, he stayed outside, en make like he gwine ter watch. Brer Wolf, he e't en e't, en he keep on a-eatin'. Brer Rabbit, he tuck en stan' off in de bushes, en bimeby he year Mr. Black Snake a-slidin' thoo de grass. Brer Rabbit, he ain't say nothin'. He 'low ter hisse'f, he did, dat he was dar ter watch, en dat w'at he gwine ter do ef de good Lord spar' 'im. So he set dar en watch, en Mr. Black Snake, he come a-slidin' up ter de house en sing de song, en den de door flew'd open en in he went.

"Brer Rabbit set dar en watch so hard, he did, dat it look like he eyes gwine to pop out. 'T want long 'fo' he year sump'n 'n'er like a scuffle gwine on in de poplar-tree, en, fus' news you know, Brer Wolf come tumberlin' out. He come tumberlin'

"EN EVE'Y TIME HE SWUNG MR. BLACK SNAKE TUCK 'N LASH 'IM WID HE TAIL."

out, he did, en down he fell, kaze Mr. Black Snake got 'im tie hard en fas' so he ain't kin run.

"Den, atter so long a time, Mr. Black Snake tuck 'n tie Brer Wolf up ter a lim', en dar dat creetur swung 'twixt de hevin en de yeth. He swung en swayed, en eve'y time he swung Mr. Black Snake tuck 'n lash 'im wid he tail, en eve'y time he lash 'im Brer Rabbit holler out, he did:

"'Sarve 'im right! sarve 'im right!'

"En I let you know," said the old man, refilling his pipe, "dat w'en Mr. Black Snake git thoo wid dat creetur, he ain't want no mo' goodies."

## WHY THE GUINEAS STAY AWAKE

ONE night when the little boy was waiting patiently for Uncle Remus to tell him a story, the guineas began to scream at a great rate, and they kept it up for some time.

"Ah, Lord!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, blowing the ashes from a sweet potato that had been roasting in the embers. "Ah, Lord! dem ar creeturs is mighty kuse creeturs. I boun' you ef you go up dar whar dey is right now, you 'll fin' some kind er varmint slippin' 'roun' und' de bushes. Hit mout be ole Brer Fox. I won't say p'intedly dat it 's Brer Fox," the old man continued, with the air of one who is willing to assert only what he can prove, "yit it mout be. But ne'er min' 'bout dat; Brer Fox er no Brer Fox, dem guinea hens ain't gwine ter be kotch. De varments kin creep up en slip up ez de case may be, but dey ain't gwine to slip up en ketch dem creeturs asleep."

"Don't the guineas ever sleep, Uncle Remus?" the little boy inquired. His curiosity was whetted.

"Oh, I 'speck dey does sleep," replied the old man. "Yasser, dey er bleege ter sleep, but dey ain't bin kotch at it — leastways, dey aint bin kotch at it not sence Brer Fox crope up on um long time ago. He kotch um a-snorin' den, but he ain't kotch um sence, en he ain't gwine kotch um no mo'.

"You may go ter bed now," Uncle Remus went on, in a tone calculated to carry conviction with it, "you may go ter bed en go ter sleep right now, but wake up w'enst you will en you 'll year dem guineas a-cacklin' en a confabbin' out dar des same ez ef 't wuz broad daylight. Seem like dey ain't gwine ter fergit de time w'en Brer Fox crope up on um, en kotch um 'sleep."

"When was that, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked, as he settled himself in the split-bottom chair in anticipation of a story.

"Well," said the old man, noticing the movement, "you nee'n ter primp yo'se'f fer no great long tale, honey, kaze dish yer tale ain't skacely long nuff fer ter tie a snapper on. Yit sech es 't is you er mo' dan welcome.

"One time 'way long back yander dem guineas wuz des ez drowsy w'en night come ez any er de

yuther folks. Dey 'd go ter roos', dey would, en dey 'd drap off ter sleep time der head totch de piller."

"The pillow, Uncle Remus!" exclaimed the little boy.

"Well," said the old man, rubbing his hand over his weatherbeaten face to hide a smile, "hit 's all de same. In dem days dey could 'a' had pillers ef dey 'd a-wanted um, en bolsters, too, fer dat matter, en likewise fedder-beds, kaze dey would n't 'a' had ter go no fur ways fer de fedders.

"But ne'er mind 'bout dat; no sooner did dey git up on de roos' dan dey drap off ter sleep, en dey kep' on dat away twel bimeby one time Brer Fox made up he min' dat he better be kinder sociable en pay um a call atter dey done gone ter bed.

"Dar wuz times," continued Uncle Remus, as if endeavoring to be perfectly fair and square to all the parties concerned, "w'en Brer Fox tuck a notion fer ter walk 'bout in de daytime, but mos' allers inginer'lly he done he pomernadin' 'twix' sundown en sun-up. I dunner w'at time er night hit wuz w'en Brer Fox call on de guineas, but I speck 't wuz long todes de shank er de evenin', ez you may say.

"Yit, soon er late, w'en he got ter whar de guineas live at, he foun' um all soun' asleep.

Now, some folks w'en dey go anywhars fer ter make deyse'f sociable, en fin' eve'ybody fas' asleep, would 'a' tu'n 'roun' en made der way back home; but Brer Fox ain't dat kind er man. Dem guineas roos' so low en dey look so fine en fat dat it make Brer Fox feel like dey wuz his fus' cousin.

"He sot down on his hunkers, Brer Fox did, en he look at um en grin. Den he 'low ter hisse'f:

"'I 'll des shake han's wid one un um en den I 'll go.'

"Well," continued Uncle Remus, "Brer Fox went up en shuck han's wid one un um, en he must 'a' squoze mighty hard, kaze de guinea make a mighty flutterment; en he mus' 'a' helt on wid a mighty tight grip, kaze w'en he tuck off his hat en bowed good-by de guinea went 'long wid 'im.

"Well, suh," said the old man solemnly, "you never is year tell er sech a racket ez dem guineas kicked up w'en dey 'skiver dat Brer Fox done make off wid one un um. Dey squall en dey squall twel dey rousted up de whole neighborhoods. De dogs got ter barkin', de owls got ter hootin', de hosses got ter kickin', de cows got ter lowin', en de chickens got ter crowin'.

"En mo' dan dat," Uncle Remus continued,

"de guineas wuz dat skeered dat dey tu'n right pale on de neck en on de gills, en ef you don't b'lieve me you kin go up dar in de gyarden en look at um fer yo'se'f."

But the little boy had no idea of going. He saw by Uncle Remus's air of preoccupation that the story was not yet concluded.

"En mo' dan dat," said the old man, after a short pause, "dey got skeerd so bad dat from dat day ter dis dey don't sleep soun' at night. Dey may squat 'roun' in de shade en nod in de daytime, dough I ain't kotch um at it, en dey may sort er nod atter dey go ter roos' at night; but ef a betsey bug flies by um, er yit ef a sparrer flutters in de bushes, dey er wide awake; dey mos' sholy is.

"Hit seem like ter me," Uncle Remus continued, "dat dey mus' be ha'nted in der dreams by ole Brer Fox, kaze all times er night you kin year um gwine on:

"'*L-o-o-o-o-k, look, look! Dar he is, dar he is! Go 'way, go 'way!*'

"Some folks say dat dey holler, '*Pot-rack! pot-rack!*' but dem w'at talk dat away is mostly w'ite folks, en dey ain't know nuthin' 't all 'bout dem ole times. Mars John en Miss Sally mout know, but ef dey does I ain't year um sesso."

## HOW THE TERRAPIN WAS TAUGHT TO FLY

UNCLE REMUS had the weakness of the genuine story-teller. When he was in the humor, the slightest hint would serve to remind him of a story, and one story would recall another. Thus, when the little boy chanced to manifest some curiosity in regard to the whippoorwill, which, according to an old song, had performed the remarkable feat of carrying the sheep's corn to mill, the old man took great pains to describe the bird, explaining, in his crude way, how it differed from the chuckwill's-widow, which is frequently mistaken for the whippoorwill, especially in the South. Among other things, he told the child how the bird could fly through the darkness and flap its wings without making the slightest noise.

The little boy had a number of questions to ask about this, and the talk about flying reminded Uncle Remus of a story. He stopped short in

his explanations and began to chuckle. The little boy asked him what the matter was.

"Shoo, honey!" said the old man, "w'en you git ole ez I is, en yo' 'membunce cropes up en tickles you, you 'll laugh too, dat you will. Talkin' all 'bout dish yer flyin' business fotch up in my min' de time w'en ole Brer Tarrypin boned ole Brer Buzzard fer ter l'arn him how ter fly. He got atter 'im, en he kep' atter 'im; he begged en 'swaded, en 'swaded en he begged. Brer Buzzard tole 'im dat dey wuz mos' too much un 'im in one place, but Brer Tarrypin, he des kep on atter 'im, en bimeby Brer Buzzard 'low dat ef nothin' else ain't gwine do 'im, he 'll des whirl in en gin 'im some lessons in flying fer ole 'quaintance sakes.

"Dis make ole Brer Tarrypin feel mighty good, en he say he ready fer ter begin right now, but Brer Buzzard say he ain't got time des den, but he 'll be sho' en come 'roun' de nex' day en gin ole Brer Tarrypin de fus' lesson.

"Ole Brer Tarrypin, he sot dar en wait, he did, en dough he nodded yer en dar thro' de night, hit look like ter 'im dat day ain't never gwine ter come. He wait en he wait, he did, but bimeby de sun riz, en 't want so mighty long atter dat 'fo' yer come Brer Buzzard sailin' 'long. He

sailed 'roun' en 'roun', en eve'y time he sail 'roun' he come lower, en atter w'ile he lit.

"He lit, he did, en pass de time er day wid Brer Tarrypin en ax 'im is he ready. Brer Tarrypin 'low he been ready too long ter talk 'bout, en w'en Brer Buzzard year dis, he tuck 'n squot in de grass en ax Brer Tarrypin fer ter crawl upon he back. But Brer Buzzard back mighty slick, en de mo' Brer Tarrypin try fer ter crawl up, de mo' wa'l he slip back. But he tuck 'n crawl up atter w'ile, en w'en he git sorter settled down, he 'low, he did:

"'You kin start now, Brer Buzzard, but you 'll hatter be mighty keerful not ter run over no rocks en stumps, kaze ef dish yer waggin gits ter joltin', I 'm a goner,' sezee.

"Brer Buzzard, he tuck 'n start off easy, en he move so slick en smoove en swif' dat Brer Tarrypin laugh en 'low dat he ain't had no sech sweet ridin' sence he crossed de river in a flat. He sail 'roun' en 'roun', he did, en gun Brer Tarrypin a good ride, en den bimeby he sail down ter de groun' en let Brer Tarryin slip off 'n he back.

"Nex' day he come 'roun' agin, ole Brer Buzzard did, en gun Brer Tarrypin 'n'er good ride, en de nex' day he done de same, en he keep on

doin' dis away, twel atter w'ile Brer Tarrypin got de consate dat he kin do some fly'n' on he own hook. So he up en ax Brer Buzzard for call 'roun' one mo' time, en gin 'im a good start."

Here Uncle Remus paused to chuckle a moment, and then went on —

"Gentermens! It tickles me eve'y time it come in my min', dat it do! Well, sir, ole Brer Buzzard wuz dat full er rascality dat he ain't got no better sense dan ter come, en de nex' day he sail up, he did, bright en yearly. He lit on de grass, en ole Brer Tarrypin, he crope up on he back, en den Brer Buzzard riz. He riz up in de elements, now, en w'en he git up dar he sorter fetched a flirt en a swoop en slid out from under Brer Tarrypin.

"Ole Brer Tarrypin, he flapped he foots en wagged he head en shuck he tail, but all dis ain't done no good. He start off right-side up, but he ain't drap fur, 'fo' he 'gun ter turn somersets up dar, en down he come on he back — *kerblam* — *m* — *m*— *!* En ef it had n't but er bin fer de strenk er he shell, he 'd er got bust wide open. He lay dar, ole Brer Tarrypin did, en try ter ketch he breff, en he groan en he pant like eve'y minnit gwine ter be nex'.

"Ole Brer Buzzard, he sail 'roun', he did, en

"BRER TARRYPIN, HOW YOU FEEL?"

look at Brer Tarrypin, en bimeby he lit fer ter make inquirements.

"'Brer Tarrypin, how you feel?' sezee.

"'Brer Buzzard, I 'm teetotally ruint,' sezee.

"'Well, Brer Tarrypin, I tole you not ter try ter fly,' sezee.

"'Hush up, Brer Buzzard!' sezee; 'I flew'd good ez anybody, but you fergot ter l'arn me how ter light. Flyin' is easy as fallin', but I don't speck I kin l'arn how ter light, en dat 's whar de trouble come in,' sezee."

Uncle Remus laughed as heartily at the result of Brother Terrapin's attempts to fly as if he had heard of them for the first time; but before the little boy could ask him any questions, he remarked:

"Well, de goodness en de gracious! dat put me in min' er de time w'en ole Brer Rabbit make a bet wid Brer Fox."

"How was that, Uncle Remus?" the child inquired.

"Ef I ain't make no mistakes," responded Uncle Remus, with the air of one who was willing to sacrifice everything to accuracy, "ole Brer Rabbit bet Brer Fox dat he kin go de highest up in de elements, en not clam no holler tree nudder. Brer Fox, he tuck 'im up, en dey 'pinted de day fer de trial ter come off.

"W'iles dey wuz makin' all der 'rangerments, Brer Fox year talk dat Brer Rabbit have done gone en hire Brer Buzzard fer ter tote 'im 'way 'bove de tops er de trees. Soon 's he year dis, Brer Fox went ter Brer Buzzard, he did, en tole 'im dat he gin 'im a pot er gol' ef he 'd whirl in en kyar Brer Rabbit clean out 'n de county. Brer Buzzard 'low dat he wuz de ve'y man fer ter do dat kind er bizness.

"So den w'en de time come fer de trial, Brer Fox, he wuz dar, en Brer Rabbit, he wuz dar, en Brer Buzzard, he wuz dar, en lots er de yuther creeturs. Dey flung cross en piles fer ter see w'ich gwine ter start fus', en it fell ter Brer Fox. He look 'roun', old Brer Fox did, 'en wink at Brer Buzzard, an Brer Buzzard, he wink back good ez he kin. Wid dat, Brer Fox tuck a runnin' start en clam a leanin' tree. Brer Rabbit say dat better dan he 'spected Brer Fox kin do, but he 'low he gwine ter beat dat. Den he tuck 'n jump on Brer Buzzard back, en Brer Buzzard riz en sail off wid 'im. Brer Fox laugh w'en he see dis, en 'low, sezee:

"'Folks, ef you all got any intruss in ole Brer Rabbit, you des better tell 'im good-by, kaze you won't see 'im no mo' in dese diggin's.'

"Dis make all de yuther creeturs feel mighty

good, kaze in dem days ole Brer Rabbit wuz a tarrifier, dat he wuz. But dey all sot dar, dey did, en keep der eye on Brer Buzzard, w'ich he keep on gittin' higher en higher, en littler en littler. Dey look en dey look, en bimeby dey sorter see Brer Buzzard flop fus' one wing, en den de yuther. He keep on floppin' dis away, en eve'y time he flop, he git nigher en nigher de groun'. He flop en fall, en flop en fall, en circle 'roun', en bimeby he come close ter de place whar he start fum, en him en Brer Rabbit come down *ker-flip!* En Brer Rabbit ain't no sooner hit de groun' dan he rush off in de bushes, en sot dar fer ter see w'at gwine ter happen nex'."

"But, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "why did n't Brother Buzzard carry Brother Rabbit off, and get the pot of gold?"

"Bless yo' soul, honey, dey wuz some mighty good reasons in de way! W'en ole Brer Buzzard got 'way up in de elements, he 'low, he did:

"'We er gwine on a mighty long journey, Brer Rabbit.'

"Brer Rabbit he laugh like a man w'at's a-drivin' a plow-hoss wid a badoon bit.

"You may be a-gwine on a long journey, Brer Buzzard; I don't 'spute dat,' sezee, 'but it'll be atter you done kyar'd me back whar we start fum.'

"Den Brer Buzzard he up en tell Brer Rabbit 'bout de bargain he done make wid Brer Fox. Dis make Brer Rabbit laugh wuss 'n befo'.

"'Law, Brer Buzzard', sezee, 'w'en it come ter makin' dat kinder bargain, you oughter make it wid me, kaze I 'm a long ways a better trader dan w'at Brer Fox is.'

"Brer Buzzard he don't 'spon' ter dat, but he keep on flyin' higher en higher, en furder en furder away. Bimeby Brer Rabbit 'gun ter git kinder oneasy, en he 'low:

"'Look like ter me we done got fur 'nuff, Brer Buzzard,' sezee, 'en I 'll be mighty much erbleege ef you kyar me back.'

"Brer Buzzard keep on flyin' furder. Bimeby Brer Rabbit ax 'im ag'in, but Brer Buzzard keep on flyin' furder. Den ole Brer Rabbit he 'low, sezee:

"'Ef I got ter des nat'ally *make* you go back, I speck I better start in right now,' sezee.

"Wid dat Brer Rabbit retch down, he did, en bit Brer Buzzard under de wing."

The little boy clapped his hands and laughed at this, and Uncle Remus laughed in sympathy.

"Yesser," the old man went on, "ole Brer Rabbit retch down en bit Brer Buzzard under de wing, right spang in he most ticklish en tender-

some spot. Co'se dis make Brer Buzzard shet he wing quick, en w'en he shet he wing, he bleedge ter fall some. Den w'en he open de wing out en ketch hisse'f, Brer Rabbit holler out:

"'Is you gwine back, Brer Buzzard?'

"Brer Buzzard ain't say nuthin', en den Brer Rabbit retch down en bit 'im under de yuther wing. It keep on dis away twel it got so dat Brer Rabbit kin guide Brer Buzzard along des same ez ef he done bin broke ter harness, en dat 's de way he made 'im kyar 'im back."

The little boy enjoyed these stories very much, and was very sorry to see that Uncle Remus was not in the humor for telling any more. Perhaps his store was exhausted. At any rate, the old man flatly refused to cudgel his memory for another legend.

## THE CREATURE WITH NO CLAWS

"W'EN you git a leetle bit older dan w'at you is, honey," said Uncle Remus to the little boy, "you 'll know lots mo' dan you does now."

The old man had a pile of white oak splits by his side, and these he was weaving into a chair-bottom. He was an expert in the art of "bottoming chairs," and he earned many a silver quarter in this way. The little boy seemed to be much interested in the process.

"Hit 's des like I tell you," the old man went on; "I done had de speunce un it. I done got so now dat I don't b'lieve w'at I see, much less w'at I year. It got ter be whar I kin put my han' on it en fumble wid it. Folks kin fool deyse'f lots wuss dan yuther folks kin fool um, en ef you don't b'lieve w'at I 'm a-tellin' un you, you kin des ax Brer Wolf de nex' time you meet 'im in de big road."

"What about Brother Wolf, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked, as the old man paused to refill his pipe.

"Well, honey, 't ain't no great long rigamarole; hit 's des one er deze yer tales w'at goes in a gallop twel hit gits ter de jumpin'-off place.

"One time Brer Wolf wuz gwine 'long de big road feelin' mighty proud en high-strung. He wuz a mighty high-up man in dem days, Brer Wolf wuz, en mos' all de yuther creeturs wuz feard un 'im. Well, he wuz gwine 'long lickin' his chops en walkin' sorter stiff-kneed, w'en he happen ter look down 'pon de groun' en dar he seed a track in de san'. Brer Wolf stop, he did, en look at it, en den he 'low:

"'Heyo! w'at kind er creetur dish yer? Brer Dog ain't make dat track, en needer is Brer Fox. Hit 's one er deze yer kind er creeturs w'at ain't got no claws. I 'll des 'bout foller 'im up, en ef I ketch 'im he 'll sholy be my meat.'

"Dat de way Brer Wolf talk. He followed 'long atter de track, he did, en he look at it close, but he ain't see no print er no claw'. Bimeby de track tuck 'n tu'n out de road en go up a dreen whar de rain done wash out. De track wuz plain dar in de wet san', but Brer Wolf ain't see no sign er no claws.

"He foller en foller, Brer Wolf did, en de track git fresher en fresher, but still he ain't see no print er no claw. Bimeby he come in sight er de creetur, en Brer Wolf stop, he did, en look at 'im. He stop stock-still en look. De creetur wuz mighty quare lookin', en he wuz cuttin' up some mighty quare capers. He had big head, sharp nose, en bob tail, en he wuz walkin' 'roun' en 'roun' a big dog-wood tree, rubbin' his sides ag'in it. Brer Wolf watch 'im a right smart while, en den he 'low:

"'Shoo! dat creetur done bin in a fight en los' de bes' part er he tail, en mo' 'n dat, he got de eatch, kaze ef he ain't got de eatch w'at make he scratch hisse'f dat away? I lay I 'll let 'im know who he foolin' 'long wid.'

"Atter while, Brer Wolf went up a leetle nigher de creetur, en holler out:

"'Heyo, dar! w'at you doin' scratchin' yo' scaly hide on my tree, en tryin' fer ter break hit down?'

"De creetur ain't make no answer. He des walk 'roun' en 'roun' de tree scratchin' he sides en back. Brer Wolf holler out:

"'I lay I 'll make you year me ef I hatter come dar whar you is.'

"De creetur des walk 'roun' en 'roun' de tree,

en ain't make no answer. Den Brer Wolf hail 'im ag'in, en talk like he mighty mad:

"'Ain't you gwine ter min' me, you imperdent scoundul? Ain't you gwine ter mozey outer my woods en let my tree 'lone?'

"Wid dat, Brer Wolf march todes des creetur des like he gwine ter squ'sh 'im in de groun'. De creetur rub hisse'f ag'in de tree en look like he feel mighty good. Brer Wolf keep on gwine todes 'im, en bimeby w'en he git sorter close de creetur tuck 'n sot up on his behime legs des like you see squir'ls do. Den Brer Wolf, he 'low, he did:

"'Ah-yi! you beggin', is you? But 't ain't gwine ter do you no good. I mout er let you off ef you 'd a-minded me w'en I fus' holler atter you, but I ain't gwine ter let you off now. I 'm a-gwine ter l'arn you a lesson dat 'll stick by you.'

"Den de creetur sorter wrinkle up his face en mouf, en Brer Wolf 'low:

"'Oh, you neenter swell up en cry, you 'ceitful vilyun. I 'm a-gwine ter gi' you a frailin' dat I boun' yer won't forgit.'

"Brer Wolf make like he gwine ter hit de creetur, en den——"

Here Uncle Remus paused and looked all

around the room and up at the rafters. When he began again his voice was very solemn.

——"Well, suh, dat creetur des fotch one swipe dis away, en 'n'er swipe dat away, en mos' 'fo' you kin wink yo' eye-balls, Brer Wolf hide wuz mighty nigh teetotally tor'd off 'n 'im. Atter dat de creetur sa'ntered off in de woods, en 'gun ter rub hisse'f on 'n'er tree."

"What kind of a creature was it, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Well, honey," replied the old man in a confidential whisper, "hit wa'n't nobody on de topside er de yeth but ole Brer Wildcat."

## UNCLE REMUS'S WONDER STORY

THERE was one story that the little boy whom Uncle Remus delighted to entertain asked for with great regularity, perhaps because it has in it an element of witchcraft, and was as marvelous as it was absurd. Sometimes Uncle Remus pretended to resent this continued demand for the story, although he himself, like all the negroes, was very superstitious, and believed more or less in witches and witchcraft.

"Dat same ole tale," he would say. "Well! well! well! W'en is we gwine ter year de las' un it? I done tole you dat tale so much dat it make my flesh crawl, kaze I des know dat some er deze yer lonesome nights I 'll be a-settin' up yer by de fier atter you done gone. I 'll be a-settin' up yer dreamin' 'bout gwine ter bed, en sumpin' 'n'er 'll come a-clawin' at de do', en I 'll up en ax, 'Who dat?' En dey 'll up en 'spon', 'Lemme in.' En I 'll ondo de do', en dat ole creetur 'll walk in, en dat 'll be de las' er po' ole Remus' En den w'en

dat come ter pass, who gwine take time fer ter tell you tales? Dat w'at I like ter know.'

The little boy, although he well knew that there were no witches, would treat this statement with gravity, as the story to him was as fascinating as one of the "Thousand and One Nights."

"Well, Uncle Remus," he would say, "just tell it this time!" Whereupon the old negro, with the usual preliminary flourishes, began:

"One time, 'way back yander, w'en de moon wuz lots bigger dan w'at she is now, dar wuz er ole Witch-Wolf livin' 'way off in de swamp, en dish yer ole Witch-Wolf wuz up to ter all sorts er contrariness. Look like she wuz cross-ways wid de whole er creation. W'en she wa'n't doin' devilment, she wuz studyin' up devilment. She had a mighty way, de ole Witch-Wolf did, dat w'en she git hungry she 'd change 'erse'f ter be a 'oman. She could des shet 'er eye en smack 'er mouf, en stiddier bein' a big black wolf, wid long claws en green eye-balls, she 'd come ter be the likelies' lookin' gal dat you mos' ever seed.

"It seem like she love ter eat folks, but 'fo' she kin eat um she hatter marry um; en w'en she take a notion, she des change 'erse'f ter be a likely lookin' gal, en sails in en git married. Den w'en she do dat, she des take en change 'erse'f back

ter be a wolf, en eat um up raw. Go whar you kin, en whar you mout, en yit I don't 'speck you kin fin' any wuss creetur dan w'at dis ole Witch-Wolf wuz.

"Well, sir, at de same time w'en dis ole Witch-Wolf gwine on dis away, dey wuz a man livin' in de neighborhood w'at she took a mighty notion fer ter marry. De man had lan', but she ain't want de lan'; de man had hosses, but she ain't want de hosses; de man had cows, but she ain't want de cows. She des nat'ally want de man hisse'f, kaze he mighty fat en nice."

"Did she want to marry him, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked, as though the tale were true, as indeed it seemed to be while Uncle Remus was telling it and acting it.

"Tooby sho', honey! Dat 'zactly w'at she want. She want ter marry 'im, en eat 'im up. Well, den, w'en she git eve'ything good en ready, she des tuck 'n back 'er years, en bat 'er eyes, en smack 'er mouf, and dar she wuz—a likely young gal! She up en got ter de lookin'-glass, she did, en swinge 'er ha'r wid de curlin'-tongs, en tie ribbons on 'er cloze, en fix up 'er beau-ketchers. She look nice, fit ter kill, now. Den she tuck 'n pass by de man house, en look back en snicker, en hol' 'er head on one side, en sorter shake out

'er cloze, en put 'er han' up fer ter see ef de ha'r-pins in der place. She pass by dis away lots er times, en bimeby de man kotch a glimp' un 'er; en no sooner is he do dis dan she wave her hankcher. De man he watch 'er en watch er, en bimeby, atter she kep' on whippin' by, he come out en hail 'er. En den she tuck 'n stop, en nibble at 'er fan en fumble wid 'er hankcher, en dey tuck 'n stan' dar, dey did, en pass de time er day. Atter dat de sun never riz en set widout she hol' some confab wid de man; en 't want long 'fo' de man took a notion dat she de very gal fer a wife, w'at he bin a-huntin' fer. Wid dat dey des got right down ter ole-fashion courtin'. Dey 'd laugh, dey 'd giggle, dey 'd 'spute, dey 'd pout. You ain't never seen folks a-courtin', is you, honey?"

The little boy never had, and he said so.

"Well, den," Uncle Remus would continue, "you ain't none de wuss off fer dat, kaze dey ain't nuthin' in de roun' worl' dat 'll turn yo' stomach quicker. But dar dey wuz, en de ole Witch-Wolf make sho' she wuz gwine ter git de man; let lone dat, de man he make sho' he wuz gwine ter git de gal. Yit de man he helt back, en ef de Witch-Wolf had n't er bin afeard she 'd drap de fat in de fier, she 'd er des come right out en pop de question den en dar. But de man he helt

back en helt back, en bimeby he say ter hisse'f, he did, dat he 'speck he better make some inquirements 'bout dis yer gal. Yit who sh'll he go ter?

"He study en study, en atter w'ile hit come 'cross he min' dat he better go en ax ole Jedge Rabbit 'bout 'er, bein' ez he bin livin' 'roun' dar a mighty long time.

"Ole Jedge Rabbit," Uncle Remus would explain, "done got ole in age en gray in de min'. He done sober up en settle down, en I let you know dey want many folks in dem diggin's but w'at went ter ole Jedge Rabbit w'en dey git in trouble. So de man he went ter Jedge Rabbit house en rap at de do'. Jedge Rabbit, he 'low, he did, 'Who dat?'

"Man he up en 'spon', 'Hit 's me.'

"Den Jedge Rabbit 'gin ter talk like one er deze yer town lawyers. He 'low, he did, 'Mighty short name fer grown man. Gimme de full entitlements.'

"Man he gun um ter 'im, en den ole Jedge Rabbit open de do' en let 'im in. Dey sot dar by de fier, dey did, twel bimeby 't want long 'fo' de man 'gun ter tell 'im 'bout dish yer great gal w'at he bin courtin' 'long wid. Bimeby Jedge Rabbit ax 'im, sezee, 'W'at dish yer great gal name?'

"Man he 'low, 'Mizzle-Mazzle.'

"Jedge Rabbit look at de man sort er like he takin' pity on 'im, en den he tuk he cane en make a mark in de ashes. Den he ax de man how ole is dish yer great gal. Man tol' 'im. Jedge Rabbit make 'n'er mark in de ashes. Den he ax de man is she got cat eyes. Man sort er study 'bout dis, but he say he 'speck she is. Jedge Rabbit make 'n'er mark. Den he ax is 'er years peaked at de top. Man 'low he disremember, but he speck dey is. Jedge Rabbit make 'n'er mark in de ashes. Den he ax is she got yaller ha'r. Man say she is. Jedge Rabbit make 'n'er mark. Den he ax is 'er toofs sharp. Man say dey is. Jedge Rabbit make 'n'er mark. Atter he done ax all dis, Jedge Rabbit got up, he did, en went 'cross de room ter de lookin'-glass. W'en he see hisse'f in dar, he tuck 'n shet one eye, *s-l-o-w*. Den he sot down en leant back in de cheer, en 'low, sezee:

"'I done had de idee in my head dat ole Mizzle-Mazzle done moof out 'n de country, en yit yer she is gallopin' 'roun' des ez natchul ez a dead pig in de sunshine!'

"Man look 'stonish, but he ain't say nuthin'. Jedge Rabbit keep on talkin'.

"'You ain't never bin trouble' wid no trouble yit, but ef you wan' ter be trouble' wid trouble dat 's double en thribble trouble, you des go en

marry ole Mizzle-Mazzle,' sezee. 'You nee'nter b'lieve me less 'n you wan' ter,' sezee. 'Des go 'long en marry 'er,' sezee.

"Man he look skeerd. He up en 'low, he did, 'W'at de name er goodness I gwine do?'

"Ole Jedge Rabbit look sollumcolly. 'You got any cows?' sezee.

"Man say he got plenty un um.

"'Well, den,' sez ole Jedge Rabbit, sezee, 'ax 'er ef she kin keep house. She 'll say yasser. Ax 'er ef she kin cook. She 'll say yasser. Ax er ef she kin scour. She 'll say yasser. Ax 'er ef she kin wash cloze. She 'll say yasser. Ax 'er ef she kin milk de red cow. Den see w'at she say.'

"Man, he 'low, he did, dat he mighty much erbleege ter ole Jedge Rabbit, en wid dat he make he bow en tuck he leaf. He went home, he did, en w'en he git dar, sho' 'nuff dar wuz dish yer nice-lookin' gal a pommynadin' up en down de road, en shakin' 'er hankcher. Man, he hail 'er, he did, en ax 'er how she come on. She 'low she purty well, en how do he do. Man say he feelin' sort er po'ly. Den she up en ax 'im w'at de matter. Man say he 'speck he feel po'ly kaze he so powerful lonesome. Den dish yer nice-lookin' gal, she ax 'im w'at make he so

powerful lonesome. Man he say he 'speck he so powerful lonesome kase he want ter marry.

"Time de man come out so flat-footed 'bout marryin', de gal, she 'gun ter work wid 'er fan, en chaw at 'er hankcher. Den, atter w'ile, she up en ax 'im who he wan' ter marry. Man 'low he ain't no ways 'tickler, kase he des want somebody fer ter take keer er de house w'en he gone, en fer ter set down by de fier, en keep 'im comp'ny w'en he at home. Den he up en ax de gal kin she keep house. De gal she 'low, 'Yasser!' Den he ax 'er ef she kin cook. She 'low, 'Yasser!' Den he ax 'er ef she kin scour. She 'low, 'Yasser!' Den he ax 'er ef she kin wash cloze. She 'low, 'Yasser!' Den he ax 'er ef she kin milk de red cow. Wid dat she flung up 'er han's, en fetched a squall dat make de man jump.

"'Law!' sez she, 'does you speck I 'm a-gwine ter let dat cow hook me?'

"Man, he say de cow des ez gentle ez a dog.

"'Does you speck I 'm a-gwine ter let dat cow kick me crank-sided?' sez she.

"Man, he 'low, he did, dat de cow won't kick, but dat ar gal she tuck 'n make mo' skuses dan dey is frogs in de spring branch, but bimeby she say she kin try. But she 'low dat fus' 'fo' she try dat she 'll show 'im how she kin keep house. So

the nex' mornin' yer she come, en I let you know she sailed in dar, en sot dat house ter rights 'fo' some wimmen folks kin tu'n 'roun'. Man, he say, he did, dat she do dat mighty nice.

"Nex' day, de gal sot in en got dinner. Man say, he did, dat dey ain't nobody w'at kin beat dat dinner. Nex' day, she sot in en scoured, en she make that flo' shine same ez a lookin'-glass. Man, he say dey ain't nobody in dat neighborhoods kin beat dat scourin'. Nex' day, she come fer ter milk de red cow, en de man, he 'low ter hisse'f, he did, dat he gwine ter see w'at make she don't like ter milk dat cow.

"De gal come, she did, en git de milk-piggin', en scald it out, en den she start fer de cow-lot. Man, he crope 'long atter de gal fer ter watch 'er. Gal went on, en w'en she come ter de lot dar wuz de red cow stan'in' in de fence-cornder wallopin' 'er cud. Gal, she sorter shuck de gate, she did, en holler, 'Sook, cow! Sook, cow!' Cow, she pearten up at dat, kaze she know w'en folks call 'er dat away, she gwine ter come in fer a bucket er slops.

"She pearten up, de red cow did, en start todes de gate, but, gentermens! time she smell dat gal, she 'gun a blate like she smell blood, en paw'd de groun' en shuck 'er head des like she fixin' fer ter

make fight. Man, he 'low ter hisse'f dat dish yer kinder business mighty kuse, en he keep on watchin'. Gal, she open de gate, but stiddier de cow makin' fight, she 'gun ter buck. Gal, she say, 'So, cow! so, cow, so!' but de cow she hist her tail in de elements, en run 'roun' dat lot like de dogs wuz atter 'er. Gal, she foller on, en hit sorter look like she gwine ter git de cow hemmed up in a cornder, but de cow ain't got no notion er dis, en bimeby she whirl en make a splunge at de gal, en ef de gal had n't er lipt de fence quick es she did de cow would er got 'er. Ez she lipt de fence, de man seed 'er foots, en, lo en beholes, dey wuz wolf foots! Man, he holler out:

"'You oughter w'ar shoes w'en you come a-milkin' de red cow!' en wid dat, de ole Witch-Wolf gun a twist, en fetched a yell, en made 'er disappearance in de elements."

Here Uncle Remus paused awhile. Then he shook his head, and exclaimed:

"'T ain't no use! Dey may fool folks, but cows knows wil' creeturs by der smell."

# THE RATTLESNAKE AND THE POLECAT

"I LAY 't won't be long," said Uncle Remus, as the little boy drew his chair closer to the broad fireplace, "'fo' I 'll hatter put on a back-log en pile up de chunks. Dem w'at gits up 'bout de crack er day like I does is mighty ap' fer ter fin' de a'r sorter fresh deze mornin's. Fus' news you know old Jack Frost 'll be a-blowin' his horn out dar in de woods, en he 'll blow it so hard dat he 'll jar down de hick'ry-nuts, de scalybarks, de chinkapins, en de bullaces, en den ole Brer 'Possum will begin fer ter take his promenades, en ef I don't ketch 'im hit 'll be kaze I 'm too stiff in my j'ints fer ter foller 'long atter de dogs.

"Dish yer kinder freshness in de a'r w'at make yo' breff smoke w'en you blow it outen yo' mouf," continued Uncle Remus, "puts me in de min' er de time w'en Brer Polecat wuz a-huntin' fer a new house. De wedder wuz gittin' kinder shivery, en Brer Polecat he sot out ter fin' a good warm place whar he kin stay w'en de freeze come on.

"He mozey 'long, Brer Polecat did, twel he come ter Brer Rattlesnake house, w'ich it wuz in a holler tree. Brer Polecat knock at de do'. Brer Rattlesnake 'low, 'Who dat?'

"Brer Polecat 'spon', 'Hit 's me; open de do'.'

"Brer Rattlesnake say, 'W'at you want?'

"Brer Polecat say, 'Hit mighty cool out yer.'

"Brer Rattlesnake 'low, 'Dat w'at I year folks say.'

"Brer Polecat up en 'spon', sezee, 'Hit too col' fer ter stan' out yer.'

"'Dat w'at I year tell,' says Brer Rattlesnake, sezee.

"'I wanter come in dar whar hit 's warm,' says Brer Polecat, sezee.

"Brer Rattlesnake 'low dat two in dat house would be a big crowd.

"Brer Polecat say he got de name er bein' a mighty good housekeeper.

"Brer Rattlesnake say hit mighty easy fer anybody fer ter keep tother folks' house.

"Brer Polecat say he gwine come in anyhow.

"Brer Rattlesnake 'low, 'Dey ain't no room in yer fer you.'

"Brer Polecat laugh en say: 'Shoo, Brer Rattlesnake! eve'ybody gives me room. I go 'long de road, I does, en meet Mr. Man. I walks

right todes 'im, en he bleege ter gi' me room. I meet all de critturs, en dey bleege ter gi' me room.'

"Brer Rattlesnake say, 'Dat w'at I year tell.'

"Brer Polecat 'low, 'Don't you pester yo'se'f 'bout room. You des lemme git in dar whar you is, en *I 'll make room!*'

"Wid dat Brer Rattlesnake shot de do' er his house en sprung de latch, en atter so long a time Brer Polecat went pacin' off some'rs else."

# HOW THE BIRDS TALK

UNCLE REMUS was not a "field hand"; that is to say, he was not required to plow and hoe and engage in the rough work on the plantation.

It was his business to keep matters and things straight about the house, and to drive the carriage when necessary. He was the confidential family servant, his attitude and his actions showing that he considered himself a partner in the various interests of the plantation. He did no great amount of work, but he was never wholly idle. He tanned leather, he made shoes, he manufactured horse-collars, fish-baskets, foot-mats, scouring-mops, and ax-handles for sale; he had his own watermelon- and cotton-patches; he fed the hogs, looked after the cows and sheep, and, in short, was the busiest person on the plantation.

He was reasonably vain of his importance, and the other negroes treated him with great consideration. They found it to their advantage to

do so, for Uncle Remus was not without influence with his master and mistress. It would be difficult to describe, to the satisfaction of those not familiar with some of the developments of slavery in the South, the peculiar relations existing between Uncle Remus and his mistress, whom he called "Miss Sally." He had taken care of her when she was a child, and he still regarded her as a child.

He was dictatorial, overbearing and quarrelsome. These words do not describe Uncle Remus's attitude, but no other words will do. Though he was dictatorial, overbearing and quarrelsome, he was not even grim. Beneath everything he said there was a current of respect and affection that was thoroughly understood and appreciated. All his quarrels with his mistress were about trifles, and his dictatorial bearing was inconsequential. The old man's disputes with his "Miss Sally" were thoroughly amusing to his master, and the latter, when appealed to, generally gave a decision favorable to Uncle Remus.

Perhaps an illustration of one of Uncle Remus's quarrels will give a better idea than any attempt at description. Sometimes, after tea, Uncle Remus's master would send the house-girl for him, under pretense of giving him orders for the next

day, but really for the purpose of hearing him quarrel. The old man would usually enter the house by way of the dining-room, leaving his hat and his cane outside. He would then go to the sitting-room and announce his arrival, whereupon his master would tell him what particular work he wanted done, and then Uncle Remus would say, very humbly:

"Miss Sally, you ain't got no cold vittles, nor no piece er pie, nor nuthin', layin' 'roun' yer, is you? Dat ar Tildy gal say you all have a mighty nice dinner ter-day."

"No, there 's nothing left. I gave the last to Rachel."

"Well, I dunner w'at business dat ar nigger got comin' up yer eatin' Mars John out er house en home. I year tell she l'arnin' how to cook, en goodness knows, ef eatin' gwine ter make anybody cook good, she de bes' cook on dis hill."

"Well, she earns what she eats, and that 's more than I can say for some of the others."

"I lay ef ole miss' wuz 'live, she 'd sen' dat ar nigger ter de cotton-patch. She would, mon; she 'd sen' er dar a-whirlin'. Nigger w'at wrop up 'er ha'r wid a string ain't never seed de day w'en dey kin go on de inside er ole miss' kitchen, let 'lone mommuck up de vittles. Now, I boun' you dat!"

"Well, there 's nothing here for you, and if there was you would n't get it."

" No, 'm, dat 's so. I done know dat long time ago. All day long, en half de night, hit 's 'Remus, come yer,' en 'Remus, go dar,' 'ceppin' w'en it 's eatin'-time, en w'en dat time come, dey ain't nobody dast ter name de name er Remus. Dat Rachel nigger new ter de business, yet she mighty quick fer ter l'arn how ter tote off de vittles, en how ter make all de chillun on de place do 'er er'ns."

" John," to her husband, " I put some cold potatoes for the children on the sideboard in the dining-room. Please see if they are still there."

" Nummine 'bout gittin' up, Mars John. All de taters is dar. Old Remus ain't never 'grudge w'at dem po' little chillun gits. Let 'lone dat; dey comes down ter my house, en dey looks so puny en lonesome dat I 'vides my own vittles wid um. Goodness knows, I don't 'grudge de po' creeturs de little dey gits. Good-night, Mars John! Good-night, Miss Sally!"

" Take the potatoes, Remus," said Mars John.

" I'm mighty much erbleege ter you," said Uncle Remus, putting the potatoes in his pocket, " en thanky too; but I ain't gwine ter have folks sayin' dat ole Remus tuck 'n sneaked up yer en tuck de vittles out er deze yer chillun's mouf, dat I ain't."

The tone in which Uncle Remus would carry on his quarrels was inimitable, and he generally succeeded in having his way. He would sometimes quarrel with the little boy to whom he told the stories, but either by dint of coaxing, or by means of complete silence, the youngster usually managed to restore the old man's equanimity.

"Uncle Remus," said the boy, "it 's mighty funny that the birds and the animals don't talk like they used to."

"Who say dey don't?" the old man cried, with some show of indignation. "Who say dey don't? Now, dat 's des w'at I 'd like ter know."

Uncle Remus's manner implied that he was only waiting for the name of the malicious person to go out and brain him on the spot.

"Well," replied the child, "I often listened at them, but I never hear them say a word."

"Ah-yi!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, in a tone of exultation; "dat 's diffunt. Now, dat 's diffunt. De creeturs talk des 'bout like dey allus did, but folks ain't smart ez dey used ter wuz. You kin year de creeturs talkin', but you dunner w'at dey say. Yit I boun' you ef I wuz ter pick you up, en set you down in de middle er de Two-Mile Swamp, you 'd year talkin' all night long."

The little boy shivered at the suggestion.

"Uncle Remus, who talks out there in the swamp?"

"All de creeturs, honey, all de creeturs. Mo' speshually ole man Owl, en all he famberly connexion."

"Have you ever heard them, Uncle Remus?"

"Many 's en many 's de time, honey. W'en I gits lonesome wid folks, I des up en takes down my walkin' cane, I does, en I goes off dar whar I I kin year um, en I sets dar en feels dez es familious ez w'en I 'm a-settin' yer jawin' 'long er you."

"What do they say, Uncle Remus?"

"It seems like ter me," said the old man, frowning, as if attempting to recall familiar names, "dat one er um name Billy Big-Eye, en t'er one name Tommy Long-Wing. One er um sets in a poplar-tree on one side er de swamp, en t'er one sets in a pine on t'er side," Uncle Remus went on, as the child went a little closer to him. "W'en night come, good en dark, Billy Big-Eye sorter cle'r up he th'oat en 'low:

"'*Tom!* Tommy *Long*-Wing! *Tom!* Tommy *Long*-Wing!'"

Uncle Remus allowed his voice to rise and fall, giving it a far-away but portentous sound, the intonation being a weirdly-exact imitation of the

hooting of a large swamp-owl. The italicized words will give a faint idea of this intonation.

"Den," Uncle Remus went on, "ole Tommy Long-Wing he 'd wake up en holler back:

"'*Who*—who dat a-*call*in'? *Who*—who dat a-*call*in'?'

"'*Bill*—Billy *Big*-Eye! *Bill*—Billy *Big*-Eye!'

"'*Why n't* you come *down*—come *down* ter *my* house?'

"'I *cood n't*—I *cood n't* come down to *yo'* house!'

"'*Tom*—Tommy *Long*-Wing! Why *cood n't* you?'

"'Had *coom*penny, *Bill*—Billy *Big*-Eye! Had *coom*penny!'

"'*Who*—who wuz de *coom*penny?'

"'*Heel* Tap 'n *his* wife, *Deel* Tap 'n *his* wife, en I don't know *who*-all, *who*-all, *who*-all!'

"Ez ter Heel Tap en Deel Tap," Uncle Remus continued, noticing a puzzled expression on the child's face, "I dunno ez I ever bin know anybody edzackly wid dat name. Some say dat 's de name er de Peckerwoods en de Yallerhammers, but I speck w'en we git at de straight un it, dey er all in de Owl famberly."

"Who heard them talking that way, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

BILLY BIG-EYE AND TOMMY LONG-WING.

"Goodness en de gracious, honey!" exclaimed Uncle Remus, "you don't 'speckt er ole nigger like I is fer ter note all deze yer folks' name in he head, does you? S'pose'n de folks w'at year um done gone and move off, w'at good it gwine do you fer ter git der name? S'pose'n dey wuz settin' right yer 'long side er you, w'at good dat gwine do? De trufe 's de trufe, en folks' name ain't gwine make it no trufer. Yit w'en it come ter dat, I kin go ter de do' dar, en fetch a whoop, en fin' you lots er niggars w'at done bin year dat Owl famberly gwine on in de swamp dar. En you ne'en ter go no fudder dan Becky's Bill, nudder. W'en dat niggar wuz growin' up, he went frolickin' 'roun', en one night he come froo de Two-Mile Swamp.

"He come froo dar," Uncle Remus went on, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation by a severe frown, "des ez soople in de min' ez w'at you is dis blessid minnit. He come 'long, he did, en de fus' news you know a great big ole owl flew'd up in a tree en snap he bill des like somebody crackin' a whip. Becky's Bill make like he ain't take no notice, but he sorter men' he gait. Present'y, ole Mr. Owl flew'd up in 'n'er tree little ways ahead, en smack he mouf. Den he holler out:

"'*Who* cooks — *who* cooks — *who* cooks fer *you*-all?'

"Becky's Bill move on — he make like he ain't year nothing. Ole Mr. Owl holler out:

"'*Who* cooks — *who* cooks — *who* cooks fer *you*-all?'

"By dat time Becky's Bill done git sorter skeerd, en he stop en say:

"'Well, sir, endurin' er de week, mammy, she cooks, but on Sundays, en mo' speshually ef dey got comp'ny, den ole Aunt Dicey, she cooks.'

"Ole Mr. Owl, he ruffle up he fedders, he did, en smack he mouf, en look down at Becky's Bill, en 'low:

"'*Who* cooks — *who* cooks — *who* cooks fer *you*-all?'

"Becky's Bill, he take off he hat, he did, en 'low, sezee:

"'Well, sir, hit 's des like I tell you. Mo' inginer'lly endurin' er de week, mammy, she cooks, but on Sundays, mo' speshually w'en dey got comp'ny, ole Aunt Dicey, she cooks.'

"Ole Mr. Owl, he keep axin', en Becky's Bill keep on tellin' twel, bimeby, Becky's Bill, he got skeerd, en tired, en mad, en den he le'pt out fum dar en he run home like a quarter-hoss; en now ef you git 'im in dat swamp you got ter go 'long wid 'im."

The little boy sat and gazed in the fire after Uncle Remus had paused. He evidently had no more questions to ask. After a while the old man resumed:

"But 't ain't des de owls dat kin talk. I des want you ter git up in de mornin' en lissen at de chickens. I kin set right yer en tell you des zackly w'at you 'll year um say."

The little boy laughed, and Uncle Remus looked up into the rafters to hide a responsive smile.

"De old Dominicker Hen, she 'll fly off 'n 'er nes' in de hoss-trough, en squall out:

"'*Aigs* I *lay* eve'y *day* en yer dey *come* en *take* um '*way!* I *lay*, I *lay*, I *lay*, en yit I hatter go *bare*-footed, *bare*-footed, *bare*-footed! Ef I *lay*, en lay twel *dooms*day, I know I 'll hatter go *bare*-footed, *bare*-footed, *bare*-footed!'"

Uncle Remus managed to emphasize certain words so as to give a laughably accurate imitation of a cackling hen. He went on:

"Now, den, w'en de rooster year de Dominicker Hen a-cacklin', I boun' you he gwine ter jine in. He 'll up en say, sezee:

"'Yo' foot so *big*, yo' foot so *wide*, yo' foot so *long*. I can't git a shoe *ter*-fit-it, *ter*-fit-it, *ter*-fit-it!'

"En den dar dey 'll have it, up en down, qua'llin' des like sho'-nuff folks."

The little boy waited for Uncle Remus to go on, but the old man was done. He leaned back in his chair and began to hum a tune.

After a while the youngster said:

"Uncle Remus, you know you told me that you 'd sing me a song every time I brought you a piece of cake."

"I 'speckt I did, honey—I 'speckt I did. Ole ez I is, I got a mighty sweet toofe. Yit I ain't see no cake dis night."

"Here it is," said the child, taking a package from his pocket.

"Yasser!" exclaimed the old man, with a chuckle, "dar she is! En all wrop up, in de bargain. I 'm mighty glad you helt 'er back, honey, kaze now I can take dat cake en chune up wid 'er en sing you one er dem ole-time songs, en folks gwine by 'll say we er kyar'n on a camp-meetin'."

## THE FOOLISH WOMAN

"W'EN you see dese yer niggers w'at wrop de ha'r wid a string," said Uncle Remus to the little boy one day, apropos of nothing in particular except his own prejudices, "you des keep yo' eye on um. You des watch um, kaze ef you don't dey 'll take en trip you up — dey will dat, dez ez sho' ez de worl'. En ef you don't b'lieve me, you kin des' ax yo' mammy. Many's en many's de time is Miss Sally driv niggers out 'n de big house yard kaze dey got der ha'r wrop up wid a string. I bin lookin' en peepin', en lis'nin' en eavesdrappin' in dese low groun's a mighty long time, en I ain't ne'er sot eyes on no nigger w'at wrop der ha'r wid a string but w'at dey wuz de meanes' kind er nigger. En if you ax anybody w'at know 'bout niggers dey 'll tell you de same."

"But, Uncle Remus," said the little boy protestingly, "does n't Aunt Tempy wrap her hair with a string?"

"Who? Sis Tempy? Shoo!" exclaimed the

old man scornfully. "Why, whar yo' eyes, honey? Nex' time you see Sis Tempy, you take en look at 'er right close, en ef 'er ha'r ain't platted den I 'm a Chinee. Now, dat 's what!"

"Well, they don't bother me," said the little boy.

"Dat dey don't!" exclaimed Uncle Remus enthusiastically. "Dey don't dast ter, kaze dey know ef dey do, dey 'll have old Remus atter um, en mean ez dey is, dey know hit ain't gwine ter do ter git de ole nigger atter um.

"Hit seem like ter me dat one time I year a mighty funny tale 'bout one er deze yer niggers w'at wrop der ha'r wid a string, but I speck it mos' too late fer ter start in fer ter tell a tale — kaze present'y you 'll be a-settin' up dar in dat cheer dar fas' 'sleep, en I 'm a-gittin' too ole en stiff fer ter be totin' you roun' yer like you wuz a sack er bran."

"Oh, I 'm not sleepy, Uncle Remus," the little boy exclaimed. "Please tell me the story."

The old man stirred the embers with the end of his cane, and seemed to be in a very solemn mood. Presently he said:

"'T ain't so mighty much of a tale, yit it 'll do fer ter go ter bed on. One time dey wuz a nigger man w'at tuck 'n married a nigger 'oman, en dish yer nigger 'oman kep' 'er h'ar wrop up wid a string

night en day. Dey married, en dey went home ter housekeepin'. Dey got um some pots, en dey got um some kittles, en dey got um some pans, en dey got um some dishes, en dey start in, dey did, des like folks does w'en dey gwine ter stay at home.

"Dey rocked on, dey did," said Uncle Remus, scratching his head with some earnestness, "en it seem like dey wuz havin' a mighty good time; but one day w'en dish yer nigger man wuz gone ter town atter some vittles, the nigger 'oman she 'gun ter git fretted. Co'se, honey, you dunner how de wimmen folks goes on, but I boun' you 'll know 'fo' you gits ez ole en ez crippled up in de j'ints ez w'at I is. Well, dish yer nigger 'oman, she 'gun ter fret en ter worry, en bimeby she got right down mad."

"But what did she get mad about, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked.

"Well, sir," said the old man condescendingly, "I 'll up en tell you. She wuz des like yuther wimmen folks, en she got fretted kase de days wuz long en de wedder hot. She got mad en she stayed mad. Eve'y time she walked 'cross de flo' de dishes ud rattle in de cubberd, en de mo' she 'd fix um de wuss dey 'd rattle. Co'se, dis make 'er lots madder dan w'at she wuz at fust, en bimeby she tuck 'n holler out:

"'W'at make you rattle?'

"Dishes dey keep on a-rattlin'.

"'What make you rattle so? I ain't gwine ter have no rattlin' 'roun' yer!'

"Dishes dey keep on a-rattlin' en a-rattlin'. De 'oman she holler out:

"'Who you rattlin' at? I 'm de mistiss er dis house. I ain't gwine ter have none er yo' rattlin' 'roun' yer!'

"Dishes dey rattle en rattle. De oman, she holler out:

"'Stop dat rattlin'. I ain't gwine ter have you sassin' back at me dat way. I 'm de mistiss er dis house!'

"Den she walked up en down, en eve'y time she do dat de dishes dey rattle wuss en wuss. Den she holler out:

"'Stop dat sassin' at me, I tell you! I 'm de mistiss in dis house!'

"Yit de dishes keep on rattlin' en shakin', en bimeby de 'oman run ter de cubberd, she did, en grab de dishes en fling um out in de yard, en no sooner 's she do dis dan dey wuz busted all ter flinders.

"I tell you w'at, mon," said Uncle Remus, after pausing a moment to see how this proceeding had affected the little boy. "I tell you w'at,

mon, wimmen folks is mighty kuse. Dey is dat, des ez sho' ez de worl'. Bimeby de nigger man come home, en w'en he see all de dishes broke up he wuz 'stonish', but he ain't say nuthin'. He des look up at de sun fer ter see w'at time it is, en feel er hisse'f fer ter see ef he well. Den he up 'n holler:

"'Ole 'oman, yer some fish w'at I bring you. I speck you better clean um fer dinner.' De 'oman, she 'low:

"'Lay um down dar.' De man, he tuck en lay um down en draw'd a bucket er water out er de well.

"Den, bimeby, de 'oman, she come out en start ter clean de fish. She pick um up, she did, en start ter scrape de scales off, but she sees der eyes wide open, en she 'low:

"'Shet dem eyes! Don't you be a-lookin' at me!'

"Fish, dey keep on a-lookin'. 'Oman, she holler out:

"'Shet up dem eyes, I tell you! I 'm de mistiss er dish yer house!'

"Fish, dey keep der eyes wide open. 'Oman, she squall out:

"'Shet dem eyes, you impident villyuns! I 'm de mistiss in dish yer house!'

"Fish, dey helt der eyes wide open, en den de 'oman tuck en flung um in de well."

"And then what?" asked the little boy, as Uncle Remus paused.

"Ah, Lord, honey! You too hard fer me now. De 'oman tuck 'n 'stroy de dishes, en den she flung de fishes in de well, en dey des nat'ally ruint de well. I dunner w'at de man say, but ef he wuz like de balance un um, he des sot down en lit his pipe, en tuck a smoke en den lit out fer bed. Dat 's de way men folks does, en ef you don't b'lieve me yo kin ax yo' pa, but fer de Lord's sake don't ax 'im whar Miss Sally kin year you, kaze den she 'll light on me, en mo' 'n dat, she won't save me no mo' col' vittles."

# THE ADVENTURES OF SIMON AND SUSANNA [1]

"I GOT one tale on my min'," said Uncle Remus to the little boy one night. "I got one tale on my min' dat I ain't ne'er tell you; I dunner how come; I speck it des kaze I git mixt up in my idees. Deze is busy times, mon, en de mo' you does de mo' you hatter do, en w'en dat de case, it ain't ter be 'spected dat one ole broke-down nigger kin 'member 'bout eve'ything."

"What is the story, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked.

"Well, honey," said the old man, wiping his spectacles, "hit sorter run dis away: One time dey wuz a man w'at had a mighty likely daughter."

"Was he a white man or a black man?" the little boy asked.

"I 'clar' ter gracious, honey!" exclaimed the old man, "you er pushin' me mos' too close. Fer

[1] It may be of interest to those who approach Folk-Lore stories from the scientific side, to know that this story was told to one of my little boys three years ago by a negro named John Holder. I have since found a variant (or perhaps the original) in Theal's "Kaffir Folk-Lore."

all I kin tell you, de man mout er bin ez w'ite ez de driven snow, er he mout er bin de blackes' Affi'kin er de whole kit en bilin'. I 'm des tellin' you de tale, en you kin take en take de man en w'itewash 'im, er you kin black 'im up des ez you please. Dat 's de way I looks at it.

"Well, one time dey wuz a man, en dish yer man he had a mighty likely daughter. She wuz so purty dat she had mo' beaus dan w'at you got fingers en toes. But de gal daddy, he got his spishuns 'bout all un um, en he won't let um come 'roun' de house. But dey kep' on pesterin' 'im so, dat bimeby he give word out dat de man w'at kin clear up six acres er lan' en roll up de logs, en pile up de bresh in one day, dat man kin marry his daughter.

"In co'se, dis look like it unpossible, en all de beaus drap off 'ceppin' one, en he wuz a great big strappin' chap w'at look like he kin knock a steer down. Dis chap he wuz name Simon, en de gal, she wuz name Susanna. Simon, he love Susanna, en Susanna, she love Simon, en dar it went.

"Well, sir, Simon, he went ter de gal daddy, he did, en he say dat ef anybody kin clear up dat lan', he de one kin do it, least'ways he say he gwine try mighty hard. De ole man, he grin en

rub his han's terge'er, he did, en tole Simon ter start in in de mornin'. Susanna, she makes out she wuz fixin' sumpin in de cubberd, but she tuck 'n kiss 'er han' at Simon, en nod 'er head. Dis all Simon want, en he went out er dar des ez happy ez a jay-bird atter he done robbed a sparrer-nes'.

"Now, den," Uncle Remus continued, settling himself more comfortably in his chair, "dish yer man wuz a witch."

"Why, I thought a witch was a woman," said the little boy.

The old man frowned and looked into the fire.

"Well, sir," he remarked with some emphasis, "ef you er gwine ter tu'n de man inter a 'oman, den dey won't be no tale, kaze dey 's bleege ter be a man right dar whar I put dis un. Hit 's des like I tole you 'bout de color er de man. Black 'im er whitewash 'im des ez you please, en ef you want ter put a frock on 'im ter boot, hit ain't none er my business; but I 'm gwine ter 'low he wuz a man ef it 's de las' ac'."

The little boy remained silent, and Uncle Remus went on:

"Now, den, dish yer man was a witch. He could cunjer folks, mo' 'speshually dem folks w'at ain't got no rabbit foot. He bin at his cunjer-

ments so long, dat Susanna done learn mos' all his tricks. So de nex' mornin' w'en Simon come by de house fer ter borry de ax, Susanna she run en got it fer 'im. She got it, she did, en den she sprinkles some black san' on it, en say, 'Ax, cut; cut, ax.' Den she rub 'er ha'r 'cross it, en give it ter Simon. He tuck de ax, he did, en den Susanna say:

"'Go down by de branch, git sev'n w'ite pebbles, put um in dis little cloth bag, en whenever you want the ax ter cut, shake um up.'

"Simon, he went off in de woods, en started in ter clearin' up de six acres. Well, sir, dem pebbles en dat ax, dey done de work—dey did dat. Simon could 'a' bin done by de time de dinner-horn blowed, but he hung back kaze he ain't want de man fer ter know dat he doin' it by cunjerments.

"W'en he shuck de pebbles de ax 'ud cut, en de trees 'ud fall, en de lim's 'ud drap off, en de logs 'ud roll up terge'er, en de bresh 'ud pile itself up. Hit went on dis away twel by de time it wuz two hours b' sun, de whole six acres wuz done cleaned up.

"'Bout dat time de man come 'roun', he did, fer ter see how de work gittin' on, en, mon! he wuz 'stonish'. He ain't know w'at ter do er say. He ain't want ter give up his daughter, en yit he

SIMON SHAKES THE PEBBLES.

ain't know how ter git out 'n it. He walk 'roun' en 'roun', en study, en study, en study how he gwine rue de bargain. At las' he walk up ter Simon, he did, en he say:

"'Look like you sort er forehanded wid your work.'

"Simon, he 'low: 'Yasser, w'en I starts in on a job I 'm mighty restless twel I gits it done. Some er dis timber is rough en tough, but I bin had wuss jobs dan dis in my time.'

"De man say ter hisse'f: 'W'at kind er folks is dis chap?' Den he say out loud: 'Well, sence you er so spry, dey 's two mo' acres 'cross de branch dar. Ef you 'll clear dem up 'fo' supper you kin come up ter de house en git de gal.'

"Simon sorter scratch his head, kaze he dunner whedder de pebbles gwine ter hol' out, yit he put on a bol' front en he tell de man dat he 'll go 'cross dar en clean up de two acres soon ez he res' a little.

"De man he went off home, en soon 's he git out er sight, Simon went 'cross de branch en shook de pebbles at de two acres er woods, en 't want no time skacely 'fo' de trees wuz all cut down en pile up.

"De man, he went home, he did, en call up Susanna, en say:

"'Daughter, dat man look like he gwine git you, sho'.'

"Susanna, she hang 'er head, en look like she fretted, en den she say she don't keer nuthin' fer Simon, nohow."

"Why, I thought she wanted to marry him," said the little boy.

"Well, honey, w'en you git growed up, en git whiskers on yo' chin, en den atter de whiskers git gray like mine, you 'll fin' out sump'n 'n'er 'bout de wimmin folks. Dey ain't ne'er say 'zackly w'at dey mean, none er um, mo' 'speshually w'en dey er gwine on 'bout gittin' married.

"Now, dar wuz dat gal Susanna what I 'm a-tellin' you 'bout. She mighty nigh 'stracted 'bout Simon, en yit she make 'er daddy b'lieve dat she 'spize 'im. I ain't blamin' Susanna," Uncle Remus went on with a judicial air, "kase she know dat 'er daddy wuz a witch en a mighty mean one in de bargain.

"Well, atter Susanna done make 'er daddy b'lieve dat she ain't keerin' nothin' 't all 'bout Simon, he 'gun ter set his traps en fix his tricks. He up 'n tell Susanna dat atter 'er en Simon git married dey mus' go upsta'rs in de front room, en den he tell 'er dat she mus' make Simon go ter bed fus'. Den de man went upsta'rs en tuck 'n

tuck all de slats out'n de bedstid ceppin one at de head en one at de foot. Atter dat he tuck 'n put some foot-valances 'roun' de bottom er de bed — des like dem w'at you bin see on yo' gran'ma bed. Den he tuck 'n sawed out de floor und' de bed, en dar wuz de trap all ready.

"Well, sir, Simon come up ter de house, en de man make like he mighty glad fer ter see 'im, but Susanna, she look like she mighty shy. No matter 'bout dat; atter supper Simon en Susanna got married. Hit ain't in de tale wedder dey sont fer a preacher er wedder dey wuz a squire browsin' 'roun' in de neighborhoods, but dey had cake wid reezins in it, en some er dish yer silly-bug w'at got mo' foam in it dan dey is dram, en dey had a mighty happy time.

"W'en bedtime come, Simon en Susanna went upsta'rs, en w'en dey got in de room, Susanna kotch 'im by de han', en helt up her finger. Den she whisper en tell 'im dat ef dey don't run away fum dar dey bofe gwine ter be kilt. Simon ax 'er how come, en she say dat 'er daddy want ter kill 'im kase he sech a nice man. Dis make Simon grin; yit he wuz sorter restless 'bout gittin' 'way fum dar. But Susanna, she say wait. She say:

"'Pick up yo' hat en button up yo' coat. Now,

den, take dat stick er wood dar en hol' it 'bove yo' head.'

"W'iles he stan'in' dar, Susanna got a hen egg out 'n a basket, den she got a meal-bag, en a skillet. She 'low:

"'Now, den, drap de wood on de bed.'

"Simon done des like she say, en time de wood struck de bed de tick en de mattruss went a-tumblin' thoo de floor. Den Susanna tuck Simon by de han' en dey run out de back way ez hard ez dey kin go.

"De man, he wuz down dar waitin' fer de bed ter drap. He had a big long knife in he han', en time de bed drapped, he lit on it, he did, en stobbed it scan'lous. He des natchully ripped de tick up, en w'en he look, bless gracious, dey ain't no Simon dar. I lay dat man wuz mad den. He snorted 'roun' dar twel blue smoke come out'n his nose, en his eye look red like varmint eye in de dark. Den he run upsta'rs en dey ain't no Simon dar, en nudder wuz dey any Susanna.

"Gentermens! den he git madder. He rush out, he did, en look 'roun', en 'way off yander he see Simon en Susanna des a-runnin', en a-holdin' one nudder's han'."

"Why, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "I thought you said it was night?"

"Dat w'at I said, honey, en I 'll stan' by it.

Yit, how many times dis blessed night is I got ter tell you dat de man wuz a witch? En bein' a witch, co'se he kin see in de dark.

"Well, dish yer witch-man, he look off en he see Simon en Susanna runnin' ez hard ez dey kin. He put out atter um, he did, wid his knife in his han', an' he kep' on a gainin' on um. Bimeby, he got so close dat Susanna say ter Simon:

" 'Fling down yo' coat.'

"Time de coat tech de groun', a big thick woods sprung up whar it fell. But de man, he cut his way thoo it wid de knife, en kep' on a-pursuin' atter um.

"Bimeby, he got so close dat Susanna drap de egg on de groun', en time it fell a big fog riz up fum de groun', en a little mo' en de man would a got los'. But atter so long a time fog got blowed away by de win', en de man kep' on a-pursuin' atter um.

"Bimeby, he got so close dat Susanna drap de meal-sack, en a great big pon' er water kivered de groun' whar it fell. De man wuz in sech a big hurry dat he tried ter drink it dry, but he ain't kin do dis, so he sot on de bank en blow'd on de water wid he hot breff, en atter so long a time de water made hits disappearance, en den he kep' on atter um.

"Simon en Susanna wuz des a-runnin', but run

ez dey would, de man kep' a-gainin' on um, en he got so close dat Susanna drapped de skillet. Den a big bank er darkness fell down, en de man ain't know which away ter go. But atter so long a time de darkness lif' up, en de man kep' on a-pursuin' atter um. Mon, he made up fer los' time, en he got so close dat Susanna say ter Simon:

"'Drap a pebble.'

"Time Simon do dis a high hill riz up, but de man clum it en kep' on atter um. Den Susanna say ter Simon:

"'Drap nudder pebble.'

"Time Simon drap de pebble, a high mountain growed up, but de man crawled up it en kep' on atter um. Den Susanna say:

"'Drap de bigges' pebble.'

"No sooner is he drap it dan a big rock wall riz up, en hit wuz so high dat de witch-man can't git over. He run up en down, but he can't find no end, en den, atter so long a time, he turn 'roun' en go home.

"On de yuther side er dis high wall, Susanna tuck Simon by de han', en say:

"'Now we kin res'.'

"En I reckon," said the old man slyly, "dat we all better res'."

## BROTHER RABBIT AND THE GINGERCAKES.

"NOW, I des tell you w'at, honey," said Uncle Remus to the little boy, "if you wan' ter year dish yer tale right straight thro', widout any balkin' er stallin', you 'll des hatter quit makin' any fuss. Kaze w'en der 's any fuss gwine on hit mos' allers inginner'lly gits me mixt up, en w'en I gits mixt up I ain't wuth nuthin' 't all skacely fer tellin' a tale, en ef you don't b'lieve me, you may des ax some er my blood kin. Now, den, you des set right whar you is en stop you behavishness. Kaze de fus' time you wink loud, you got ter git right up on de bed-pos' dar en ride straddle.

"So, den! Well, one time Brer Mink en Brer Coon en Brer Polecat all live terge'er in de same settlement. Let 'lone dat, dey live in de same house, en de house w'at dey live in wuz made in de resemble uv a great big holler log. In dem days, Brer Polecat wuz de king er de creeturs

w'at run 'bout atter dark, en you better make up yo' min' dat he made um stan' 'roun' might'ly."

"Why, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "I thought Brother Rabbit —"

"Well, de goodness en de gracious! ain't I ax you fer ter please ma'am don't make no fuss? Kaze I know mighty well Brer Rabbit use ter be de slickes' en de suples', but dey 'bleege ter be a change, kase 't ain't in natur' fer de 't'er creeturs not ter kotch on ter his ins en his outs, en I speck dat de time w'en dey fin' 'im out is de time w'en ole Brer Polecat got ter be de king er de creeturs—dat 's what I speck.

"But no matter 'bout dat—by hook er by crook, Brer Polecat come ter be de king er de creeturs, en w'en he come ter be dat dey 'd all er um go a long ways out er de way fer ter take off der hats en bow der howdies, dey would, en some un um would tag atter 'im, en laugh eve'y time Brer Polecat laughed, en grin eve'y time he grinned.

"W'iles dish yer wuz gwine on Brer Rabbit wuz in de crowd, en he wuz des ez big a man ez any er um, en I dunner ef he want de bigges'. Well, Brer Rabbit he move en secondary[1] dat bein' ez how Brer Polecat wuz sech a nice king

[1] Moved and seconded.

dey oughter pass a law dat eve'y time de yuther creeturs meet um in de road dey mus' shet der eyes en hol' der nose. Some er um say dey don't min' holdin' der nose, but dey don't like dish yer way er shettin' der eyes, kaze dey mout run up agin a tree, er stick a brier in der foot; but Brer Rabbit, he up en 'low, he did, dat 't wuz des 'bout ez little ez dey kin do ter shet der eye en hol' der nose w'en dey git war sech a nice king is, en so dey all hatter come 'roun'.

"De nex' day atter all dis happen, Brer Rabbit he come by de house whar ole King Polecat live 'long wid Brer Coon en Brer Mink. Brer Coon he wuz a great han' fer ter bake gingercake. Fur en wide de folks knowd 'bout Brer Coon gingercakes, en dey could n't be no campmeetin' 'roun' in dem diggin's, but w'at he wuz hangin' on de aidges sellin' his gingercakes en his 'simmon beer; en it seem like eve'y time Brer Rabbit see Brer Coon dat he whirl right in en git hongry fer gingercakes.

"So de nex' day after dey done fix it all up 'bout ole King Polecat, Brer Rabbit he come sailin' by Brer Coon's house, en he ax 'im ef he got any gingercakes fer ter sell. Brer Coon 'low, he did, dat he got um des ez fine ez fine kin be, en Brer Rabbit say he b'lieve he 'll buy some,

en wid dat he run his han' in his pocket, he did, en pull out de change en bought 'im a great big stack er gingercakes.

"Den he tuck 'n ax Brer Coon ef he won't keep his eye on de gingercakes wiles he go git some gyarlic fer to eat wid um. Brer Coon 'low he 'll take keer un um de bes' w'at he kin. Brer Rabbit rush off, en des 'bout dat time ole King Polecat come in sight. In de accordance er de rules, soon ez Brer Coon see ole King Polecat he mus' shet he eye en hol' he nose; and w'iles Brer Coon doin' dis, ole King Polecat walk up, he did, en grab de gingercakes en make off wid um. Co'se, w'en Brer Rabbit come lippitin' back, he hunt fer he gingercakes, but he can't fine um nowhar. Den he holler out:

"'My goodness, Brer Coon! Whar my gingercakes?'

"All Brer Coon kin say is dat he ain't see nobody take de gingercakes. Brer Rabbit 'low, he did, dat dis a mighty quare way fer ter do a man w'at done bought de gingercakes en pay fer um. Yit he say he 'bleege ter have some, en so he tuck 'n pitch in en buy 'ner stack un um. Den he 'low:

"'Now, den, I done got de gyarlic fer ter go wid um, en I 'll des 'bout squat right down yer en watch deze yer gingercakes my own se'f.'

"So he squat down en fix hisse'f, en des 'bout de time w'en he wuz ready fer ter 'stroy de gingercakes, yer come old King Polecat. Brer Rabbit, he got up, he did, en made a bow, en den he helt he nose en make like he wuz a-shettin' he eyes. Ole King Polecat, he come 'long, he did, en start fer ter pick up de gingercakes, but Brer Rabbit holler out:

"'Drap dem gingercakes!'

"Ole King Polecat jump back en look like his feelin's bin hurted, en he squall out:

"'My goodness! How come yo' eye open? How come you break up de rules dat away?'

"Brer Rabbit pick up de gingercakes, en 'low:

"'I kin hol' my nose ez good ez de nex' man, but I can't shet my eyes ter save my life, kaze dey er so mighty big!'

"Dis make ole King Polecat mad enough fer ter eat all de gingercakes w'at Brer Coon got in de chist, but he can't help hisse'f, kaze he know dat ef Brer Rabbit tu'n agin 'im, he won't be much uv a king in dat ar country. Atter dat it got so dat Brer Rabbit kin put down his gingercakes anywheres he want ter; en folks 'low dat he wuz mighty nigh ez big a man ez ole King Polecat."

## BROTHER RABBIT'S COURTSHIP.

ONE night, as the little boy went tripping down the path to Uncle Remus's cabin, he thought he heard voices on the inside. With a gesture of vexation he paused at the door and listened. If the old man had company, the youngster knew, by experience, that he would get no story that night. He could hear Uncle Remus talking as if carrying on an animated conversation. Presently he crept up to the door, which was ajar, and peeped in. There was nobody in sight but the old darkey, and the little boy went in. Uncle Remus made a great pretense of being astonished.

"Were you just talking to yourself, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy.

"Yasser," said the old man with a serious air, "dat des w'at I wuz a-doin'. I done clean fergit myse'f. I year tell dat dem w'at take en talk 'long wid deyse'f dat dey owe de Ole Boy a day's work. Ef dat de state er de case den he done

got my name down on de books, en hit 's all on account er deze yer uppity-biggity niggers w'at come 'long yer little w'ile ago en ax me ter go 'way off yan ter de Spivey place whar Nancy's Jim gwine ter git married.

"I wuz settin' yer runnin' on in my min'," Uncle Remus continued, "'bout de time w'en Brer Rabbit went a-courtin'. I boun' you dey ain't bin no sech courtin' sence dat day, en dey ain't gwine ter be no mo' sech."

Here Uncle Remus paused and leaned back in his chair, gazing thoughtfully at the rafters. He paused so long that the little boy finally asked him if he could n't tell about Brother Rabbit's wonderful courtship.

"Well, honey," said the old man, "you haf ter gi' me time fer to shet my eye-balls en sorter feel 'roun' 'mongst my reckermembunce atter de wharfo'es en de whatsisnames. Kaze I'm like a broke-down plow-mule: I 'll go 'long ef you lemme take my time, but ef you push me, I 'll stop right in de middle er de row."

"I can wait until bedtime," the little boy remarked, "and then I 'll have to go."

"Dat 's so," Uncle Remus assented cheerfully, "en bein' ez dat 's de case, we haf ter be sorter keerful. Lemme go 'roun' de stumps en over de

roots, en git in meller groun', en den we kin des back right 'long.

"Now den! You done year talk er Miss Meadows en de gals, en 'bout how Brer Rabbit bin gwine dar so much. Well, hit done happen so dat Brer Rabbit wuz tuck wid a-likin' er one er de gals. Dis make 'im sorter glad at de off-start, but bimeby he 'gun ter git droopy. He laid 'roun' en sot 'bout, he did, en look like he studyin' 'bout sump'n 'n'er way off yander.

"Hit went on dis away twel bimeby Miss Meadows, she up en ax Brer Rabbit w'at de name er sense is de matter 'long wid 'im, en Brer Rabbit, he feel so bad dat he up en 'spon', he did, dat he dead in love wid one er de gals. Den Miss Meadows, she ax 'im w'at de reason he ain't tell de gal dat he want ter be 'er b'ide-g'oom. Brer Rabbit say he 'shame'. Miss Meadows, she toss 'er head, she did, en 'low:

"'Ya-a-a-s! You look like you 'shame', now don't you? You mout er bin 'shame' 'fo' hens had der toofies pulled out, but you ain't bin 'shame' sence. I done see you cut up too many capers; I know dey ain't no gal on de top side er de yeth w'at kin faze you,' sez Miss Meadows, sez she.

"Den Brer Rabbit 'low dat he skeerd de gal

won't have 'im, but Miss Meadows 'fuse ter hol' any mo' confab wid 'im; she des broke out singin' en washin' de dishes, en w'at wid de chune en de clatter er de dishes Brer Rabbit can't year his own years. Bimeby, he tuck 'n sneak out, he did, en went en sot in de shade by de spring.

"He ain't set dar long 'fo' yer come de gal w'at he bin studyin' 'bout. She had a pail in 'er han' en she wuz comin' atter water. She come 'long down de paff swingin' de pail in her han' en singin'."

"What did she sing, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked, becoming more and more interested.

The old darkey looked slyly at the youngster, and chuckled softly to himself. Presently he said:

"Hit wuz sorter like dis, ef I ain't make no mistakes in de chune:

"'*Oh, says de woodpecker, peckin' on de tree,*
*Once I courted Miss Kitty Killdee,*
*But she proved fickle en fum me fled,*
*En sence dat time my head bin red.*'

"Brer Rabbit bin feelin' mighty droopy en low-spereted all de mornin', but time he year de gal singin', he hist up his years en look sassy, en

w'en she stop singin' he broke out en 'gun ter sing hisse'f. He sung dish yer kinder chune:

*"'Katy, Katy! won't you marry?*
*Katy, Katy! choose me den!*
*Mammy say ef you will marry*
*She will kill de turkey hen;*
*Den we 'll have a new convention,*
*Den we 'll know de rights er men.'"*

"Why, I 've heard grandma sing that song," exclaimed the little boy.

"Tooby sho' you is — tooby sho' you is, honey," said Uncle Remus, assuming an argumentative air that was irresistibly comic. "Ef Brer Rabbit kin sing dat chune, w'at gwine hender w'ite folks fum singin' it? Bless yo' soul, w'ite folks smart, mon, en I lay der ain't no chune w'at Brer Rabbit kin sing dat dey can't reel off.

"Well, suh, de gal year Brer Rabbit singin', en she sorter toss 'er head en giggle. Brer Rabbit he look at 'er sideways en sorter grin. Den Brer Rabbit 'low:

"'Mornin', ma'm; how you come on dis fine mornin'?'

"De gal say: 'I 'm des toler'ble; how you do yo'se'f?'

"Brer Rabbit 'low, he did: 'I thank you, ma'm, I 'm right po'ly. I ain't bin feelin' ter say reely peart in mighty nigh a mont'.'

"De gal laugh en say: 'Dat w'at I year tell. I speck you in love, Brer Rabbit. You ought ter go off some'rs en git you a wife.'

"Dis make Brer Rabbit feel sorter 'shame', en he hung his head en make marks in de san' wid his foots. Bimeby he say: 'How come, ma'm, dat you don't git married?'

"De gal laugh wuss 'n wuss, en atter she kin ketch 'er breff she 'low: 'Lordy, Brer Rabbit! I got too much sense — *myse'f* — fer ter be gittin' married widout no sign er no dream.'

"Den Brer Rabbit say: 'W'at kinder sign does you want, ma'm?'

"De gal 'low: 'Des any kinder sign; don't make no diffunce w'at. I done try all de spells, en I ain't see no sign yit.'

"Brer Rabbit say: 'W'at kinder spells is you done tried, ma'm?'

"De gal 'low: 'Dey ain't no tellin', Brer Rabbit, dat dey ain't. I done try all dat I year talk 'bout. I tuck 'n fling a ball er yarn outen de window at midnight, en dey ain't nobody come en wind it. I tuck a lookin'-glass en look down in de well en I ain't see nothin' 't all. I tuck a hard-

b'iled egg en scoop de yaller out, en fill it up wid salt en eat it widout drinkin' any water. Den I went ter bed, but I ain't dream 'bout a blessed soul. I went out 'twix' sunset and dark en fling hempseed over my lef' shoulder, but I ain't see no beau yit.'

"Brer Rabbit, he 'low, he did: 'Ef you 'd a-tole me w'en you wuz a-gwine, ma'am, I lay you 'd 'a' seed a beau.'

"De gal, she giggle, en say: 'Oh, hush, Brer Rabbit! Ef you don't g' way fum yer I gwine hit you! You too funny fer anything. W'at beau you speck I 'd 'a' seed?'

"Brer Rabbit, he up en 'low, he did: 'You 'd 'a' seed me, ma'am, dat 's who you 'd a seed.'

"De gal, she look at Brer Rabbit des like 'er feelin's is bin hurted, en say: 'Ain't you 'shame' er yo'se'f ter be talkin' dat away en makin' fun? I 'm a-gwine away fum dis spring, kaze 't ain't no place fer me.' Wid dat de gal fotch 'er frock a flirt, en went up de paff like de patter-roller wuz atter her.

"She went so quick en so fas' dat she lef' 'er pail, en Brer Rabbit, he tuck 'n fill it full er water, en kyar it on up ter de house whar Miss Meadows en de gals live at. Atter so long a time, he came on back ter de spring, en he sot dar, he did, en study en study. He pull his mustaches en

scratch his head, en bimeby, atter he bin settin' dar a mighty long time, he jump up en crack his heels terge'er, en den he laugh fit ter kill hisse'f.

"He 'low: 'You want a sign, does you? Well, I 'm a gwine ter gi' you one, ma'm, en ef dat don't do you, I'll gi' you mo' dan one.'

"De gal done gone, but Brer Rabbit, he hang 'roun' dar, he did, en lay his plans. He laid um so good dat wen dark come he had um all fixt. De fus' thing w'at he done, he went down ter de canebrake en dar he cut 'im a long reed like dem w'at you see me bring Mars John fer fishin'-pole."

"How did he cut it?" the little boy asked.

"He gnyaw it, honey; he des natchully gnyaw it. Den w'en he do dat, he tuck 'n make a hole in it fum eend to eend, right thoo de j'ints. W'en dark come, Brer Rabbit tuck his cane en made his way ter de house whar Miss Meadows en de gals stay at. He crope up, he did, en lissen, en he year um talkin' en laughin' on de inside. Seem like dey wuz done eatin' supper en settin' 'roun' de fire-place.

"Bimeby de gal say: 'W'at you reckon? I seed Brer Rabbit down at de spring.'

"T'er gal say: 'W'at he doin' down dar?'

"De gal say: 'I speck he wuz gwine a-gallantin'; he mos' sholy did look mighty slick.'

"T'er gal say: 'I 'm mighty glad ter year dat, kase de las' time I seed 'im hit look like his britches wuz needin' patchin'.'

"Dis kinder talk make Brer Rabbit look kinder sollumcolly. But de gal, she up en 'low: 'Well, he ain't look dat away ter-day, bless you! He look like he des come outen a ban'box.'

"Miss Meadows, she hove a sigh, she did, en say: 'Fine er no fine, I wish 'im er some yuther man er 'oman would come en wash up dese yer dishes, kaze my back is dat stiff twel I can't skacely stan' up straight.'

"Den dey all giggle, but de gal say: 'You all sha'n't talk 'bout Brer Rabbit behin' his back. He done say he gwine ter be my beau.'

"Miss Meadows, she 'low: 'Well, you better take 'im en make sump'n er somebody outer 'im.'

"De gal laugh en say: 'Oh, no! I done tole 'im dat 'fo' I git married, I got ter have some sign, so I 'll know p'intedly w'en de time done come.'

"W'en Brer Rabbit yer dis, he got in a big hurry. He tuck one eend er de reed en stuck it in de crack er de chimbley, en den he run ter de yuther eend, w'ich it wuz layin' out in de weeds en bushes. W'en he git dar, he held it up ter his head en lissen, en he kin year um des ez plain ez ef dey wuz right at 'im.

"Miss Meadows ax de gal w'at kinder sign she want, en de gal she say she don't keer w'at kinder one 't is, des so hit's a sign. 'Bout dat time Brer Rabbit put his mouf ter de reed, en talk like he got a bad col'. He sing out, he did:

"'*Some likes cake, en some likes pie,*
*Some loves ter laugh, en some loves ter cry,*
*But de gal dat stays single will die, will die!*'

"Miss Meadows 'low: 'Who dat out dar?' Den dey got a light en hunted all 'roun' de place en und' de house, but dey ain't see nuthin' ner nobody. Dey went back en sot down, dey did, but 't want long 'fo' Brer Rabbit sing out:

"'*De drouth ain't wet en de rain ain't dry,*
*Whar you sow yo' wheat you can't cut rye,*
*But de gal dat stays single will die, will die.*'

"Miss Meadows, en de gals wuz dat 'stonished dat dey ain't know w'at ter do, en bimeby Brer Rabbit, he sing out ag'in:

"'*I wants de gal dat's atter a sign,*
*I wants de gal en she mus' be mine —*
*She 'll see 'er beau down by de big pine.*'

"En sho' nuff," Uncle Remus continued, "de nex' mornin' w'en de gal went down by de big pine, dar sot Brer Rabbit dez ez natchul ez life. De gal, she make out, she did, dat she des come down dar atter a chaw er rozzum. Dey jawered 'roun' a right smart, en 'spute 'long wid one 'n'er. But Brer Rabbit, he got de gal."

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