

easy english readers

Uncle Tom's Cabin

By Harriet Beecher Stowe



Special Schools Edition
2026

Easy English words by David McKay
Pictures by Kevin McKay

ISBN: 9966-755-101

About the Book and its Writer

Harriet Beecher Stowe lived in America in the 1800's. Her father was a preacher. She was angry about people in the South of that country owning slaves. Many slave owners were cruel to their slaves. She wanted to do something to help the slaves, and writing was her best weapon.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is a very interesting story, but it is one long argument against owning slaves too. Thousands of people living in the North of America were moved by the book and they pushed the government to do something to stop slavery.

In the end, people from the North went to war with people from the South over this. It is believed that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the strongest reason for the war starting. At the end of the war, the leader of America at that time, Abraham Lincoln, said that all slaves would be free.

And that was the end of people owning slaves in America.

Uncle Tom's Cabin in 'Easy English'

'Easy English' books by David and Kevin McKay use words from the 900-word list in the *Easy English Word Book for Adults and Children*. This book has a picture for each word in the list, to help people understand them.

Some words in this book that are not in the Easy English word list are in another list at the back of this book. Many words have pictures beside them to help you understand them better.

This book uses 1050 different words. Each 'Easy English' book has a number on the cover to say how many words you must know to read that book.

Look for the name "McKay" on Easy English books to know if they are true 'Easy English' books. These books are all easy for people who are learning English as a second language.

Page Listings

1. The Owner.....	5
2. The Mother.....	14
3. The Father.....	17
4. A Night in Uncle Tom's Cabin.....	23
5. How it Feels to be Sold.....	32
6. News of Eliza Leaving.....	40
7. The Mother's Fight.....	48
8. Three Equally Bad Men.....	61
9. Help from a Senator.....	73
10. Haley Takes Tom.....	82
11. When a Slave is not a Slave.....	91
12. Other Mothers.....	101
13. The "Friends".....	114
14. Evangeline.....	120
15. Tom's New Master.....	127
16. Tom's New Mistress.....	134
17. A Free Man's Fight.....	146
18. Tom Quietly Preaches.....	156
19. Topsy.....	166
20. Back in Kentucky.....	173
21. Eva's Sickness.....	178
22. Bad News Coming.....	183
23. The Little Preacher.....	188
24. Death.....	193
25. Those Left Behind.....	202
26. Together in Heaven.....	207
27. Those not Protected.....	216
28. The Slave House.....	221
29. Simon Legree.....	227
30. Dark Places.....	232
31. Cassy.....	239
32. Cassy's Story.....	246
33. Things from the Past.....	252
34. Emmeline and Cassy.....	257
35. Love Wins Out.....	262
36. The Plan.....	270
37. A Faith to Die For.....	278
38. The Young Master.....	283
39. Endings.....	288
List of New Words.....	294

1. The Owner

Late in the afternoon on a cold day in February, two good men were sitting alone in a beautiful house in Kentucky. No servants were in the room, and the good men were talking very seriously about something, with their chairs pulled close together.

We have said two good men, but when you looked closely one of them did not, in truth, come under that name. He was a short, thick man with a rough face. He walked with the proud air that marks a low man trying to elbow his way up in the world. His clothes were too beautiful. His big rough hands were covered with rings. And he had a watch on a heavy gold chain that he often pulled out of his pocket and looked at as he was talking. He was clearly wanting the other man to see the watch and think that he must be very important. His language did not follow the rules of good language, and it was full of words that we could not print in this book.

The man with him, Mr. Shelby, was much closer to looking like what most people think of as a good man. The furniture and the general look of the house showed that he lived a comfortable, if not a rich life.

"That's the way I want to do it, Haley" said Mr. Shelby.

"I can't do business on that. I can't," said Haley, holding up a glass of wine between his eye and the light.

"Tom is easily worth that sum," said Mr. Shelby. He's a very special man. Hard-working, honest, and smart. He runs my whole farm like a clock."

"You mean he's honest as niggers go," said the slave buyer, helping himself to another glass of wine.

"No, I mean he really is a godly man. Says he came to God at a meeting in '59, and I believe he really did. He's been honest with all that I have from that time to now – my money, my house, my horses – and I leave him free to come and go as he chooses without any problems.

"Some people wouldn't believe a nigger could know God,"

said Haley, "but I do. I had one in the last group I sold in New Orleans. Was good as a church meeting just to hear him pray. He was quiet and kind too. Brought a good sum. I was able to buy him cheap from a man who was forced to sell out, and I made \$600 on him. Religion, if it's the real thing, can put the price of a nigger up a lot."

"If ever a man had the real thing, Tom's religion is real," answered Mr. Shelby. "Last year I sent him to Cincinnati alone to sell some things for me and to return with \$500. I said, 'Tom, I believe in you because I think you are a Christian. I know you will be honest.' And he returned without ever so much as thinking to run for Canada with the money. I'll be sad to lose him, I must say. But he should be enough to cover all that I owe you, Haley. If you were honest, you would agree to that."

"I am as honest as a man in business can be. You know how it is – just enough to make a promise by," he said, laughing. "And I do what I can to help a friend. But what you are asking is a little too much."

He breathed out slowly and sadly and poured himself some more wine.

No one said a word for a short time. Then Shelby said, "Okay, Haley, what do you want?"

"Do you have another worker you could throw in with Tom?"

"Not one that I can do without. It's only because I have no other way out of this that I am even thinking about selling Tom now. I don't like selling any of my workers."

The door opened and a small four or five year old boy walked in. His skin was very light, and he had beautiful long hair hanging in his eyes. He was both shy and confident at the same time, showing by his face and actions that he liked his owner.

"Hello, Harry," said Mr. Shelby, whistling and throwing some grapes toward him. "These are for you."

The child ran to get the grapes as Shelby laughed.

"Come here, Harry," said the owner, and the child came. Mr. Shelby rubbed his head and squeezed his cheeks.

"Now, Harry, show this man how you can dance and sing."

The boy started one of those wild strange songs that Blacks like to sing, in a strong, clear voice. At the same time he moved his hands, feet, and whole body in perfect time to the music.

"Very good!" said Haley, throwing him part of an orange."

"Now, Harry, walk like old Uncle Joe does when his legs and feet are hurting," said the owner.

The child's arms and legs quickly changed to those of an old man, with his back hanging forward and Mr. Haley's stick in his hand. He moved slowly around the room with a sad face, and spitting from right to left, looking very much like an old man.

Both of the men laughed loudly.

"Very good! Very good! What a child!" said Haley. "Tell you what," he said quickly, putting his hand on Mr. Shelby's shoulder, "Throw in that boy and I'll forget what you owe me. That's about as good a price as you will get from anyone."

About this time, the door opened again and a part black woman who was close to 25 years old, came in.

It was easy to see that she was the boy's mother. They had the same eyes, hair, and face. She dropped her head when she saw Haley studying her with deep interest. Her neat dress showed her beautiful shape. He could only see her hands and feet, but Haley had learned, from many years in his business, to quickly measure up the best points in a female slave by studying such things. He could see that she would bring a good price."

"Yes, Eliza?" said her owner as she looked up at him with a question on her face.

"I was looking for Harry, please, master." The boy ran to her, showing her the grapes and orange pieces he had just received.

"Take him away, then," said Shelby. And she quickly left the room with young Harry on her arm.

"By God," said the slave buyer, "that is some woman! You could get a good price for her in New Orleans any day. People have paid more than a thousand for girls who are no more beautiful than her."

"I don't want a good price for her," said Shelby dryly.

Putting his hand on Shelby's shoulder, Haley said, "Come, now. Name a price. How much will you take?"

"Mr. Haley, she is not for sale," said Shelby. "My wife would not agree if you were to give me her weight in gold."

"Yes, yes! Women always say such things, because they have no mind for business. Just show them how many watches, feathers, and dresses the gold will buy and they soon change their thinking."

"I do not want to talk about it, Haley. I said no, and I mean no," said Shelby strongly.

"But you will throw in the boy," asked the slave buyer. "You must agree that I have come down a lot for him."

"What can you want with a child?" asked Shelby.

"I have some friends who are in a branch of the business where they buy beautiful boys, teach them to work for the very rich, and get a good price when they're finished. It tops off a beautiful house to have a good looking boy open the door and do other little jobs for you. Your little Harry has so much feeling for music, and he is so smart that he will be just right."

"I don't feel good about selling him," said Shelby after thinking for a minute. "The truth is that I try to be kind to my slaves, and I hate to take the boy from his mother."

"Oh, I understand perfectly. I know it can be difficult getting on with women at times when they start crying and shouting. I always hate that. But I've learned ways around it. What if you send the mother off for a day or two? Then the job will be finished before she returns. Your wife can buy her a new dress or some other little thing to make up for it."

"I don't think so."

"I know how you feel, but you need to remember that black people aren't like white people. If you handle them right, they get over things."

"Now, they say," Haley went on, talking with a confident and

secret air, "that this business destroys the feelings; but I don't find it that way myself. Truth is, I never could do things the way some people do it. I see some pull a child from its mother's arms and put it up to sell with her crying like crazy all the time. Very bad way to do things. Hurts the business. Can destroy the mother's worth. I knew a good-looking mother who went on real bad when they pulled her baby away from her. They had to lock her up, and she went crazy. Died in a week. What a waste! Do the right thing in the first place and it'll be better all around. That's what I always say." The slave buyer leaned back in his chair with his arms crossed over his chest, looking like he believed he was the best friend a slave could ever have.

As Mr. Shelby cut the skin off an orange, Haley returned to his proud talk.

"It's not good for a person to say good things about himself, I know, but I just say this because it's true. The sellers say I bring in better slaves than any other buyer. I lose as few as any man in the business. And I owe it all to my being kind. Kindness is the bottom line in my business.

Shelby did not know what to say, so he said, "Is that so?"

"Yes, I've been laughed at by the others for this. But by sticking to my beliefs, I've made more money than them all," and the slave buyer laughed at this point.

Shelby could not help but laugh, for he had never heard arguments like Haley's before. Shelby's laughing encouraged Haley to go on.

"I worked with a man in the past who was as good a person as you can get. But he was the very devil with niggers. He would hit the women cruelly if they cried. 'Why friend,' says I, 'there's no wrong in a woman crying. If they can't blow off in one way, they will in another. 'Sides,' says I, 'it destroys their worth. They get sick and down in the mouth, and some times they get ugly if your hitting marks them or makes them crippled."

"You think that you are kinder than your friend?" asked Shelby.

"Why yes I do. I get the mothers out of the way when selling their young ones, and in time they get over it. It's not as if they was white people, that's brought up to think they can keep their children and wives and all that. If their owners teach them right they won't go believing such promises."

"Then I did not teach my slaves right," said Shelby.

"Could be. You Kentucky people are too soft on your niggers. You mean well, but it isn't kind in the end. You see, niggers are going to be pushed and pulled from one owner to another all through life, and if you don't prepare them for this, it's no kindness at all. Like I say, I'm kinder than many, but I know when a man is being too soft on his niggers too, and that's where I stop."

"As long as you feel right in your own heart," said Shelby with a little lift of his shoulders and some angry feelings that he did not show.

After a time without talking, when they were each breaking open nuts and eating them, Haley said, "So what do you say?"

"I'll talk it over with my wife," said Shelby. "But for now, if you want us to do business quietly as you say, you best not let people know around here what your business is. If my workers find out I'm thinking of selling one of them, it will not be a quiet business for any of us."

"Oh, yes, I agree in every way! I'll say nothing. But I must say that I do not have a lot of time. I need an answer soon," he said as he was standing to put his coat on.

"Come again tonight between six and seven and you'll have my answer," said Shelby, and the buyer left the room.

"I would be happier to kick the man down the steps," said Shelby to himself as the door closed behind Haley. "But he has me over a barrel. I never would have believed that I could be so low as to sell a man like Tom down south to one of those low-down slave buyers. And as far as I can see I must sell Eliza's child too. That's the price I pay for borrowing money in the first place. Now he has control over me, and he plans to use it."

Slaves in Kentucky had the best life of any slaves in America at that time. If you had visited there, seeing the love the owners had for the slaves, and the faith the slaves had in their owners, it would have been easy to think that the whole business was for the good of everyone. But behind it all is the teaching that a slave is not a living, thinking, feeling person... that the slave is a thing... a thing that you can buy and sell. The kindest owner can fall into hard times or die, and when this happens, their things must be sold. For a few dollars, a slave's life can change from one protected by a kind owner, to one of pain and sadness under a cruel owner.

Mr. Shelby was much the same as other owners in Kentucky. He was kind and friendly, and helped with anything that his slaves needed to make their lives comfortable. But he had put his money into some business plans that did not work. When this happened, he borrowed more money to fix the first problem. And this is the story behind the meeting with Haley. Haley was the man that he owed the money to.

In coming and going, Eliza had been able to hear enough to know Haley wanted to buy one of Shelby's slaves. She did not have enough time to listen clearly, because Mrs. Shelby called to her; but it sounded like Haley was interested in her boy. She hugged Harry close to her before running to help Mrs. Shelby.

"Eliza, girl, what is wrong with you today?" asked Mrs. Shelby when Eliza had pushed over a bottle of water, run into the table, and was now giving her mistress a robe and not the dress she had asked for from the wardrobe.

Eliza jumped. "Oh, Mrs." she said, lifting her eyes, then starting to cry.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Shelby.

"Oh, Mrs!. Mrs!" said Eliza. "A slave buyer from the South was talking with master."

"You poor child, what if he did? It's nothing to cry about."

"I think Master wants to sell my Harry," she said, and the poor girl dropped into a chair and cried loudly.

"No, no, you foolish girl. You know your master never does business with slave buyers from the South. And he would never sell any of his servants if they were being good. What makes you think anyone would want your Harry? Come, stop your crying and fix my hair. Put it up in that nice way you learned the other day. And don't go listening at the door in future.

"If he does, Mrs., you won't agree to it will you?"

"You know I would never do that, child! Why do you talk like this? I love your child like I love my own children. You really worry too much about Harry. A man can't put his nose in the door but you think he's coming to buy Harry."

Eliza was very much encouraged by her mistress' confidence. In a short time she was back at work, laughing at her own fears.

Mrs. Shelby was a woman who was both very smart and very good. Her faith in God showed itself in her actions from day to day. Mr. Shelby did not have a strong interest in religion himself, but he did all that he could to help with anything that Mrs. Shelby believed he should do for the good of their servants. On the whole, he believed that Mrs. Shelby was good enough for the both of them, and that he would be able to get into heaven by saying that he was married to her.

The hardest part of his business with Haley was knowing that he would have to face his wife and argue the reasons for his actions. He knew that she would not give in easily.

Mrs. Shelby, for her part, knew nothing of her husband's business problems when she was talking to Eliza, so she was being very honest in her promises to Eliza. She did not believe a word of what Eliza was thinking, and so she prepared for a trip to see a friend that afternoon without a worry in her head for Eliza.

QUESTIONS ON PART 1

1. What were the names of the two men who were sitting in the house and talking? (page 5)
2. Who were the two men talking about? (page 5)
3. Shelby said that Tom did something that showed Shelby Tom's religion was real? What was it? (page 6)
4. What was the name of the young boy who danced for Shelby and Haley? (page 7)
5. What was the name of the young boy's mother? (page 7)
6. Did Shelby agree to sell the boy's mother to Haley? (page 8)
7. What did Shelby need to talk over with his wife? (page 10)
8. What had forced Shelby to think about selling his slaves? (page 11)
9. What did Eliza talk to Mrs. Shelby about? (page 12)
10. Did Mrs. Shelby believe what Eliza said about Mr. Shelby planning to sell her son? (page 12)

2. The Mother

Eliza had been in the Shelby family from the time she was a young girl. And Mrs. Shelby liked her more than all the other servants.

Women like Eliza, who are part black and part white, often have the best qualities of both parents, and Eliza was like this. She was beautiful and quiet, friendly and strong. She was married to a slave on the farm next to the Shelbys – a slave named George Harris.

George's master had put him to work at a company that made bags. He worked so well and learned so quickly that he was soon leading the other workers. In time, he made a machine for cleaning the material used in making bags, and the company owner was very happy about it, because with this machine he could make his bags faster than any other bag company.

The owner, and all the workers in the company liked George. But, because in the eyes of the law he was not a man, all of his good qualities came to nothing if his owner did not agree to it.

When people started talking to George's owner about how smart he was, he went to the company to see for himself what his slave was doing. He was received with enthusiasm by the owner of the company, who said George was very smart and a very good worker. The company owner asked George to show his master around the machines that were used to make the bags. George, who was feeling good about all the kind words said about him, talked with so much confidence, and was standing up so straight that his owner was feeling less important than George. What business was it for a slave to be making machines and holding his head up high around white people? This must be stopped. If George were on the farm doing dirty work, he would not be so proud! So, George's owner surprised the company owner and all the other workers by saying that he was taking him back to the farm that same day.

"But, Mr. Harris," asked the owner, "Why do this now?"

"Because the man is mine, and what I do with my slaves is my own business!" he answered.

George did not say a word. He knew his future was in the hands of his owner, and anything that he could say would not make a difference. He crossed his arms in front of his chest, and squeezed his lips together. But in his heart an angry fire was burning. His breathing was short, and his eyes were like red hot coals. He was close to showing his anger, but the company owner touched his arm and whispered, "Hold your tongue and go with him, George. We will do what we can to help."

George's owner could not hear the whisper, but he saw it, and he understood the meaning behind it. He promised himself that he would break George's confidence.

George returned to the farm and was put on the worst jobs. He did not put words to his anger, but his eyes and face showed that he was a man with a man's feelings, and he would never agree to thinking of himself as a thing.

It was when he was working in the bag company that George had married Eliza. He had been free to come and go at that time, and Mrs. Shelby had encouraged him to see Eliza. It was in her house that they were married. Mrs. Shelby helped with things like white gloves and the cake and wine.

For a year or two Eliza was often able to see her husband. They had two babies that died, and Eliza was a long time getting over the deaths. After little Harry was born, she slowly returned to wanting to live. Harry was her life. But then came the end of George's job at the bag company.

The company owner, true to his word, visited Mr. Harris a week or two after George left, thinking that his owner would be easier to reason with after having time to cool down. He agreed to pay the owner well if he would agree to George working with him again.

"You're wasting your time," said George's master. "I know my own business."

"I'm not trying to tell you how to do your business, Mr. Harris," said the company owner. "I was just thinking that you could make very good money by sending your man to work for us at the price I have named."

"I know what you're up to," said Harris. "I saw you whispering to him the day he left you. But you won't trick me. The man is mine and I will do with him as I choose. Now that's the end of it!"

And so George's life at the company ended as easily as that.

QUESTIONS ON PART 2

1. What was Eliza's husband's name? (page 14)
2. Did Eliza live with her husband? (page 14)
3. What did the company make where George worked? (page 14)
4. What quality in George made his owner feel less important than George? (page 14)
5. Was the company owner cruel to George? (page 15)
6. How many babies did Eliza have before having Harry? (page 15)

3. The Father

Eliza was standing with young Harry on the verandah, looking after Mrs. Shelby as she left for her afternoon visit. A hand on her shoulder made her turn around. She smiled to see the face of her husband, George.

“George! What a surprise! And Mrs. Shelby is away for the afternoon! We can spend some time together in my room.”

She pulled him in the direction of her little room opening onto the verandah.

“Look at Harry. How he grows!” The child looked up through his long hair, holding close to his mother’s dress.

“It would be better if he’d never been born!” said George angrily. “It would be better if I’d never been born myself!”

Eliza was surprised and afraid. She sat in a chair and asked, “How can you say such a cruel thing?” She was starting to cry.

“There now, Eliza,” said George, sitting down close to her. “I didn’t want to make you feel poorly. If it wasn’t for knowing me, you could be a happy woman today.”

“George, how can you say such a thing? We’ve been happy. What can happen to change that?”

“Yes, we have been happy,” said George, lifting the child onto his knee. He looked into the boy’s eyes and pushed his hands through the long hair.

“He’s just like you, Eliza. You’re the most beautiful woman I ever saw. The best I ever want to see too. But still it would’ve been better if we’d never come to know each other.”

“No, George!”

“Eliza, my life is nothing but pain and sadness. I’ll only pull you down with me. I can’t become anything. It’s most difficult even to see you these days. I see no reason for living. I would be better off dead.”

“George, my love, what a bad thing to say. I know how hard it is for you, but please wait. Things could change.”

"Wait?" he asked. "Haven't I been waiting? I said nothing when he came, for no good reason, to take me away from my job at the bag company. He pulled me from a place where everyone was kind to me. He made more than enough money from me there, and they all said I worked well."

"I know he's cruel," said Eliza, "but he is your master, you know."

"My master? Who made him my master? I'm a man as much as he is. I'm a better man than he is. I know more about business than he does. I am a better leader than he is. I can read better than he can. I can write better. And I've learned it all myself with no thanks to him. And now he wants to make a work horse out of me. He says he'll bring me down and humble me, and he puts me to the hardest and dirtiest work – work that a horse could do."

"Oh, George! George! I never heard you talk so. I'm afraid you'll do something foolish. I understand how you feel, but do think of the effects of your actions. Think of me... and of Harry."

"I am thinking of you. But it's growing worse and worse, Eliza. My mind and body cannot hold out any longer. I tried to be quiet and do my work and have time to read and learn out of work hours. But the more he sees I can do, the more he puts on me. I don't say anything, but he says he can see the devil in me and he plans to bring it out. I'm afraid one of these days it will come out in a way that is dangerous for both of us."

"What can we do?" said Eliza sadly.

"Yesterday I was putting stones in a wagon for him. His son, young Master Tom was hitting his whip so close to the horses that the animals were afraid. I asked him to stop as nice as I could, but he wasn't listening. I asked him again, and he turned on me and started hitting me with the whip. I hit his hand and that's when he cried out and kicked me and ran to his father, saying I was fighting him. Master was very angry and came saying he was going to teach me who was my master."

He tied me to a tree and cut little branches for young Master Tom to whip me with for as long as he liked. And he did." George's face turned dark, and the look on his face made his young wife shake. "Who made this man my master? That's what I want to know!" he said.

"It's the Christian thing to obey your master and mistress," said Eliza sadly.

"For you I can see it," he said. "Your master and mistress have been like parents for you, teaching you, feeding you, and loving you from the time you were a child. But all I get is kicks and hits. The best days are when he forgets I'm there. What do I owe him? For what he pays to feed me he has received from me a hundred times over. I won't take it any longer. No, I won't!" he said, squeezing his hand into a tight, angry fist.

Eliza gave a little shake and said nothing. She could not remember seeing her husband in this spirit before. Her thinking about what was right and what was wrong changed easily when she saw him feeling like this.

"You remember poor little Carlo that you gave me," added George. "He has been the one good thing I have when I am not with you. He follows me around all day and sleeps with me at night. When he looked at me with those sad little eyes I had the feeling that he could understand my feelings. The other day I was giving him some throw outs from the kitchen and Master came by. He said I was taking his money to feed Carlo and he couldn't pay to have every nigger keeping a dog. So he said I should tie a stone to Carlo's neck and throw him in the lake.

"Oh, George, you didn't do that, did you?"

"No, I didn't. But he did. Master and young Tom hit him with stones as he was going under. Poor thing. He looked at me so sad, like he couldn't understand why I wasn't trying to help him. And when they finished, they gave me a whipping for not doing the killing myself. The whipping was no problem, but Master is going to see that it takes more than a whip to break my spirit. My day is coming."

"George, what are you going to do? Don't do anything bad now. Have faith in God and do what is right. You must wait for him to help you."

"I'm not a Christian like you, Eliza. My heart's full of hate. I can't believe God will help. Why isn't he doing something now?"

"Oh, George, we must have faith. Mistress says that when everything is going wrong, we must believe that God is doing his best."

"It's easy for her to say, sitting on her soft chairs and riding in her wagons. But if she was where I am her teaching would come out different. I'd like to be good; but my heart burns and I'm too hard to change. Eliza, if you was in my place, you would be the same. And you don't know all that has been happening."

"What more could be happening?"

"Master has started saying that it was foolish for him to have agreed for me to marry off the place. Says he hates Mr. Shelby and all his family, because they hold their heads up above him. Says I've been getting my ways from you, and I can't come here in future. Says I should take a wife from his place. At first it was just talk. But yesterday he said I must take Mina for a wife and if I didn't, he would sell me down the river."

"How can he do that? You're married to me, by a preacher, same as a white man." said Eliza.

"Eliza, you know a slave can't really marry. There's no rule to cover it. If he chooses to separate us, I can't do a thing about it. Now you see why I said it would be better for me if I had never been born? It would be better if this poor child had never been born too. What is happening to me could happen to him when he becomes a man."

"But we have a kind master!" said Eliza.

"True. But what if he dies? Harry could be sold, and you would have no say at all about who buys him. You're happy now because he's smart and strong and beautiful. But those are the very same things that'll make people want to take him away from you."

This was not the best time for Eliza to hear such words. The face of the slave buyer who had visited Mr. Shelby that same day came before her eyes, and her breathing stopped. She looked out from the verandah to where the boy was now riding Mr. Shelby's walking stick like it was a horse. She wanted to talk with her husband about her fears, but this was not a good time for it.

"He has more than enough to carry now, poor man!" she was thinking. "No, I won't tell him. After all, it can't be true, because Mrs. never lies to me."

"Eliza, my girl, my mind is made up," said the husband sadly. "I came to see you one last time before going."

"Going? Going where?"

"To Canada," said he, standing up straight. "And as soon as I can, I will buy you. Your master is kind enough that I think he will agree if I can get enough money."

"But what if they catch you before you get there?"

"They won't take me, Eliza. I'll die first. I'll be free or I'll be dead. But they won't take me."

"You can't kill yourself, George. That's very wrong!"

"I won't have to kill myself. They'll do it for me. They won't be able to take me and they'll have to kill me."

"George, I can see that you have to go. But don't lift a hand against yourself or against anyone. You're very angry, I know... too angry. But pray God to help you."

"I'll tell you my plan, Eliza. Master sent me with a letter to Mr. Symmes, who lives a mile down the road. I think he knew I would stop and tell you about his plans on the way. He'll be happy that he has made "the Shelby people" as he calls you all, angry with what he's planning for me. I'll return and give him the feeling that I'm going to work in with his plan. I have some things worked out, and I know of some people who will help me. In about a week I'll be off. Pray for me, Eliza. God will listen to your prayers more than he will listen to me."

"You pray too, George, and go in faith. Then you won't be doing anything bad."

"It's time for me to leave," said George, holding Eliza's hands and looking into her eyes without moving. There was a time without words, then much crying and hugging, and with that, the husband and wife were separated.

QUESTIONS ON PART 3

1. George was angry because (a) He and Eliza had an argument. (b) His owner was cruel to him. (c) He wanted to go to Canada. (pages 17 and 18)
2. What did the owner's son use to hit George? (pages 18 and 19)
3. What reason did Eliza give for George to obey his master? (page 19)
4. Why did George's owner kill Carlo the dog? (page 19)
5. George's owner said he would sell him if he did not do something. What did George's owner say he must do? (page 20)
6. Where did George say that he was going? (page 21)
7. When did George plan to leave his owner? (page 21)

4. A Night in Uncle Tom's Cabin

Uncle Tom's cabin is a small building joining on the side of his Master's house. In front of it is a small piece of ground where berries and vegetables grow in the summer. The long horizontal tree branches making up the front of the cabin are so covered with vines and flowers each summer that it is not easy to see the branches. It is Aunt Chloe's job to look after all of the plants, and she does it with loving pride.

Inside the cabin the family has just finished a big meal. Aunt Chloe cooked it, but she leaves the job of cleaning the table and dishes to the less important people in the family. She is back at the fire now, making something special for her "old man" to finish off his meal. Her round black smiling face gives off light as it would if it had been painted with egg whites. A scarf of red and white squares is tied around her hair. Her big fat body has a spirit of happiness in its every movement. But the truth is that some of the happiness comes from knowing she is the best cook on the farm or on any farm in that part of the country.

Cooking is her life. Not a chicken or duck on the farm feels safe when she is around. She thinks so much about making a meal from them that they have good reason to fear for their lives. And her corn cakes are far above those made by any other cook. She shakes her fat sides laughing when telling about some other cook who has tried to equal her.

Aunt Chloe likes nothing more than to have visitors to show off her cooking for. And that is what she is doing now. But first, we will look around the cabin.

In one corner is a bed, covered with a soft white cloth. Beside the bed is a rug. This whole corner is so special that children all know they must never go into it.

In the other corner at that end of the cabin is another bed. This one is humbler, but much more used. On the wall over the fireplace are sayings from the Bible and a picture of George Washington.

On a rough bench in the third corner two boys with fat black cheeks are trying to teach a baby to walk. As happens with most babies, it stands for only a few seconds before falling. But each time this happens, the boys shout happily, thinking that the baby is doing something very special.

A table with legs of different lengths is in front of the fire. It is covered with a neat cloth. Uncle Tom, who is Mr. Shelby's best worker and Aunt Chloe's "old man", is sitting at the table. He is a very big and very strong man who is both friendly and serious, kind and smart, humble and confident.

At this time he is slowly writing letters with a piece of chalk, on a flat, thin piece of stone. Master George, the thirteen year old son of Mr. Shelby is his teacher, and he is taking his job very seriously.

"Not that way, Uncle Tom. Not that way," he says as Tom brings up the bottom of his g the wrong side out. "That makes it a q, you see."

"Does it now?" says Uncle Tom, showing much interest in his young teacher's fast line of q's and g's on the stone to make the point clear.

Taking the chalk in his big heavy fingers, Tom slowly returns to his own writing.

"You see how easy it is for white people to do things," says Aunt Chloe, who stops cooking long enough to look at Master George with pride. "The way he can write now! And read too! And then to come out here at night and show us what he's learning. It's all so interesting!"

"But, Aunt Chloe, all this studying is making me hungry," says George. "Isn't that cake finished by now?"

"Almost, Master George," says Aunt Chloe, lifting the cover on the pan and looking in. "It's browning beautiful. Mrs. asked Sally to make a cake the other day, just to learn her, she said. 'Oh, go away, Mrs.,' says I. 'It hurts me to see good food going to waste that way!' Her cake was all up on one side with no more shape than my shoe. Go away!"

With this last word against Sally's cooking, Aunt Chloe whips the cover off one of the pans and shows a beautiful, neat cake that any cook in the land would be proud of. Because all eyes are now on her and her cake, Aunt Chloe moves quickly into action.

"Here you, Mose and Pete! Get out the way, you niggers! Get away, Polly, honey. I'll give my baby something by and by. Now, Master George, you just take them books off the table and sit down with my old man and I'll have the first pan of cakes on your dishes in less than no time."

"They wanted me to come inside for sweets" says George, "but I knew your cooking'd be better, Aunt Chloe."

"So you did... so you did, honey," says Aunt Chloe, putting three or four smoking flat cakes on his dish. "You knowed your old Aunty would keep the best for you. I love you for that. Go away!" And with that, Aunty gives George a push with her finger before returning to her work at the fire.

"Tom Lincoln," says George, talking with his mouth full, "said that their Jenny is a better cook than you."

"Them Lincolns aren't much count, no way!" says Aunt Chloe. "I mean, put them beside our people. They's good enough in a boring way; but as to getting up anything to equal the Shelby's, they don't even start to have a hold on it. Go away! Don't tell me nothing of them Lincolns!" And Aunt Chloe throws her head back like she is one who knows a lot about the world.

"But I heard you say Jenny's a good cook," says George.

"So I did," says Aunt Chloe. "I agree. Good easy cooking Jenny will do. Makes a good bread. Cooks vegetables well enough. Her corn cakes aren't perfect, but they are good. But when you comes to the higher cooking, what can she do? I went over there when Miss Mary was going to be married and Jenny she showed me the pies. Jenny and I is good friends, you know. So I never said nothing. But go on, Master George! Why, I wouldn't sleep for a week if I made a table of pies like them. Why, they wasn't nothing at all."

"Do you think Jenny believed they were nice pies?" asks George.

"Did she ever! There she was, showing them off as proud as can be. You see, that's her problem. She don't know. See, the family isn't nothing. You can't ask her to know what they never learned her. Oh, Master George, you don't know half of how good it is to be born in your family with your bringing up!" Here Aunt Chloe breathes deeply and turns her eyes up into her head with emotion.

"I know I get the best pies and cakes," says George. "Ask Tom Lincoln if I don't tell him every time I see him."

Aunt Chloe leans back in her chair and laughs until tears come down her fat black cheeks. Between laughs she points at Master Tom and hugs him and says how smart he is and how his smartness is almost enough to kill her, until George is really starting to think that he is a dangerously smart boy.

"And so you telled Tom that you get the best pies and cakes, did you? Holding my cooking over him. Isn't that something! Master George, you're enough to make an angry old bear laugh!"

"Yes," says George. "I says to him, 'Tom, you should see some of Aunt Chloe's pies. They're the best,' says I."

"It would be good if he could," says Aunt Chloe, who is, on the whole, kinder than she is proud. "You should ask him here to a meal some time, Master George," she adds. "Remember not to feel above no one because of what you was born with. What we's born with is from God, and we should always remember that," says Aunt Chloe seriously.

"I mean to ask Tom here next week," says George. "And you do your best, Aunt Chloe. We'll make him eat so he won't be over it for a month."

"Yes, yes. That I'll do," says Aunt Chloe laughing.

In a short time Master George comes to that place where a boy cannot eat another thing, and he see the hungry eyes sitting on the bench.

"Here you, Mose, Pete," he says, breaking off pieces and throwing it to them. "You want some too, don't you? Aunt Chloe, it's time to make them some cakes."

George and Tom move to a comfortable place in the corner by the fireplace, and Aunt Chloe cooks up enough flat cakes for the boys before taking her baby in her arms and feeding it and herself. Mose and Pete are happiest eating their cakes on the floor under the table, where they can play with each other and pull the baby's toes.

"Go on, will you?" says their mother, giving them a kick under the table when their movements become too rough. "You should act right when white people comes to visit."

In time the boys finish their cakes and run outside.

"Did you ever see such children?" asks Aunt Chloe as she pours water onto a cloth. With the cloth she rubs honey off the baby's face and hands. When the baby is perfectly clean, Aunt Chloe puts her down on Tom's knee and starts taking dishes off the table.

"Isn't she beautiful?" says Tom as he holds the baby out from himself to take a full-length look. Then, getting up, he puts her on his wide shoulders and starts dancing around the cabin as Master George tries to touch her with his hands. Mose and Pete return to join the fun, until Aunt Chloe says their noise is "taking her head off". Because noise is always taking Aunt Chloe's head off, no one takes her seriously, and the noise goes on until everyone is too tired to dance any longer.

"Are you finished now?" asks Aunt Chloe, who has been pulling two rough boxes out for the boys to sleep in. "Mose and Pete, you get in there, for we is going to have a meeting."

"Can't we stay up for the meeting? We likes meetings. Please!"

"Aunt Chloe, can they stay up?" asks Master George.

"Okay. The meeting could do them some good," says Aunt Chloe, who is secretly happy that the children want to stay up for the meeting.

At this point, they all start moving things around to get ready. "What can we use for chairs?" asks Aunt Chloe. When you think that they have been having meetings each week for a very long time, it is clear that they will find something to use.

"Uncle Peter was singing so hard that he knocked the back legs loose on the oldest chair last week," says Mose. "But it'll stand up if you push it up hard against the wall."

"Don't put Uncle Peter in it then," says Pete. When he sings, he jumps the chair. Last week he jumped near half way across the room."

"No, put him in it!" says Mose. "Then when he starts singing, down he'll go!" And the boys start laughing.

"Come now, you shouldn't talk like that," says Aunt Chloe. But, because Master George is laughing with the boys and saying it's a top plan, Aunt Chloe has little effect.

"Old man," says Aunt Chloe, "We'll need them barrels."

Two empty barrels are put on their sides, with stones to stop them from moving, and long pieces of timber put across them for people to sit on. Big buckets turned on end join with a few real chairs to finish off the meeting furniture.

"Master George is such a beautiful reader, I know he'll want to stay to read for us," says Aunt Chloe. "It would be so much more interesting with him reading."

George, who is always happy to do what makes him look important, quickly agrees to stay.

In a short time, people from fifteen years old to people so old they were near death, fill the room. Some are slaves from other farms near the Shelbys', and they each have little pieces of news about happenings on their farms.

When the talk dies down, the singing starts. Some of the songs are the same ones that white people sing in their churches each Sunday. But others are wilder, with more emotion, like many of the songs of the black people. Some laugh. Some cry. Some shout out words of agreement as the singing goes on. The words in song after song talk about heaven in one way or another.

Between songs one or the other of them gives a little Bible talk or tells of something spiritual that happened to them in the past week. One grey-headed old woman stands up and leaning on her walking stick, she says:

"Children, I'm very happy to see you all and hear you all one more time, because I don't know when I'll be going on to see Jesus. But I want you to know I have my hat on, and my bag in my hand, just waiting for that wagon to pull up and take me on to heaven. Some nights I think I can hear the wagon wheels turning. Heaven is very close and very real.

"But I want you to be ready too, children," she says, hitting her stick hard on the floor. "You don't know the half of how good heaven is going to be. But I'm telling you it's too beautiful for words, children. Just too beautiful..." And the old woman sits down with tears running down her face, as the group starts up another song.

Master George reads the last few pages of The Revelation with people shouting things like "Now hear that!" "Just think of it!" "Is that true, now?" and "Thank you, Jesus!"

George, who has learned something of the Bible from his mother and from his church meetings, finds the slaves to be such enthusiastic listeners that he cannot help but add some teachings of his own to the reading. He does this so seriously that the young people look up to him and the old people thank God for him. In the end, they all agree that no preacher they know could do it better than young Master George.

Uncle Tom is something of a preacher himself to all the slaves around there. He is smarter than most and has the ability to tell at a look if a person needs encouraging. His teachings are clear and true, coming from real faith in God and a real love for the people he teaches. But praying is what he is best at. He talks to God as a child, and with such feeling as to make the people around him believe he is saying just what they would want to say themselves. At times the others join in so much that it is difficult to hear Tom's prayers at all above the cries of those around him.

At the same time that the church meeting was happening in Uncle Tom's cabin, a very different meeting was happening in his master's house.

The slave buyer and Mr. Shelby were sitting together at a table covered with papers and pens. Mr. Shelby was counting money. When he finished, he pushed it over for the slave buyer to count.

"Everything is right," said Haley. "Now you put your name on the papers of sale."

Mr. Shelby quickly pulled the papers toward himself and put his name on them like a man who was doing what he did not want to do. Then he pushed them over to Haley's side of the table. Haley then handed a very important piece of paper to Mr. Shelby. This paper Shelby received with enthusiasm.

"That finishes it," said the buyer, standing to his feet.

"Finished," said Shelby sadly. Then, breathing out very slowly he said it again, "Finished."

"You don't look very happy about it," said Haley.

"You remember now," said Mr. Shelby. "You promised you wouldn't sell Tom without knowing what the people were like who were buying him."

"But you just sold him to me without knowing who will end up buying him," said Haley.

"You know I was not free to choose," said Shelby.

"And I could find myself in the same way," said the buyer. "But I will do what I can to get Tom a good owner. As for me being kind to him, you don't need to worry about that. I thank God that there is not one cruel bone in my body."

After having listened to Haley's arguments earlier about how kind he was, Shelby was not encouraged very much by this promise now. But he did not argue with Haley.

Haley left quickly, with a promise to return in the morning to take what was now his.

QUESTIONS ON PART 4

1. What job did Aunt Chloe like best and do best? (page 23)
2. How many children did Tom and Chloe have? (page 24)
3. Who was teaching Tom how to write? (page 24)
4. After talking about how much better his family was than other families, what did Aunt Chloe tell Master George to remember? (page 26)
5. What did Mose and Pete use to sleep in? (page 27)
6. What did the old woman at the meeting tell the children was “too beautiful for words”? (page 29)
7. What did Master George do to help in the meeting? (page 29)
8. What were Haley and Mr. Shelby doing at the same time that the meeting was happening in Uncle Tom’s cabin? (page 30)

5. How it Feels to be Sold

Mr. and Mrs. Shelby were in their room. He was in a big soft chair looking at some letters, and she was in front of her mirror brushing her long hair.

"By the by, Arthur, who was that man you were talking to at the table tonight?"

"His name is Haley," said Shelby, turning in the chair and holding his eyes on a letter in his hand.

"What is his business with us, pray tell?"

"I did some business with him one time in Natchez," said Mr. Shelby.

"And for that he can come and eat at our house without being asked?"

"No I asked him. I had more business to do with him," said Shelby.

"Is he a slave buyer?" asked Mrs. Shelby, who was starting to see that her husband was not comfortable talking about Haley.

"What put that into your head?" asked Shelby, looking up.

"Eliza came to me crying and carrying on today. Said you were talking with a slave buyer and she heard him say he wanted to buy her boy."

"Did she?" said Mr. Shelby, returning to his paper. For a minute or two he looked to be studying it. But he did not know that it was wrong side up.

"Sooner or later I must tell her," he was thinking. "This is as good a time as any."

"I said to Eliza that she was foolish to think such a thing," said Mrs. Shelby as she went on brushing her hair. "I said that you would never do business with such people, and that you would never sell any of our people."

"It's true, Emily," said her husband, "that this has always been my belief. But the truth is that my business is in such a bad way right now that I cannot go on without selling some of my workers."

"To that man? Arthur, you can't be serious!"

"Sad to say, I am serious. I have agreed to sell Tom."

"What? Our Tom? He's been your best, most honest worker from a boy. And you promised that he would be free one day too. We have both talked about it a hundred times. If you can sell Tom, how can I believe that you would not sell little Harry too," said Mrs. Shelby in a voice between anger and sadness.

"If you must know, yes, I did sell little Harry too. I agreed to sell them both. Am I a devil for doing what hundreds of other good people do every day?"

"But if you really had to sell, why those two of all the others on our place?"

"Because they will bring the highest sum. The buyer was very interested in Eliza. Said he would give me a good price for her."

"That animal!" said Mrs. Shelby angrily.

"But I would not listen to it. Knowing how you feel about Eliza, I would not agree to it. So don't think so poorly of me."

"Forgive me. Yes, thank you for that. But I was surprised. I wasn't ready for this. I must say something for these poor people, Arthur. Even if Tom is black, he has a heart of gold. I do believe that if he were put to it, he would give his life for you."

"Yes, I think he would. But what is the good of such talk now. I can't change things."

"We can do without some things. I'll help. We can cut corners and sell a few things if we need to. Arthur, I've tried to be Christian in my actions toward these people... loving them, teaching them all these years. How can I hold my head up if I turn around and sell Tom for a few dollars now?"

Mrs. Shelby went on. "It goes against all that I have been teaching them. I've tried to teach about real love between parents and their children, and between husbands and wives.

I have been talking with Eliza about her boy, telling her that as a Christian mother she must protect him, pray for him, and bring him up in a Christian way. Now what can I say, if you take him away and sell him body and spirit to a man with no Christian faith, just because you need the money? I've been telling her that one person is worth more than all the money in the world. How can she believe me when she sees us selling her child... a sale that could destroy his body and his spirit?"

"I didn't want to hurt you, Emily. In truth, I didn't," said Mr. Shelby. "And I agree with much of what you say – just not as strongly as you. But there is no other way out. The truth is that if we don't sell these two, we will be forced to give them all to Haley, and the farm too.

"In the past I borrowed money, promising to give up the farm if we didn't pay the money back on time. Haley had the papers for that promise. If I did not do something this week, he was going to take it all. I pulled together all the money that I could find. But the price of Tom and the boy was needed to make up the difference between what I had and what we needed. Haley liked the child and agreed to a good price. He agreed to do it this way and no other way. I had to do it. You feel bad because these two are sold. But you would feel much worse if they were all sold.

Mrs. Shelby turned toward the mirror and put her face in her hands.

"I knew it! God never planned for people to own slaves! It destroys the slaves and it destroys the owners too. How foolish of me to think that I could make it good through a little teaching. Even when I was a little girl I knew it was wrong. I knew even more that it was wrong when I became a Christian. But I tried to tell myself that with kindness and love and teaching I could make my slaves better off than people who are free. How foolish of me!"

"Really, Emily! You are starting to sound like an abolitionist."

"Abolitionist! If they knew what I know about owning slaves, they would have even more to say against it. We don't need them to tell us it's wrong."

"There are many important Christians who would not agree with you," said Mr. Shelby. "You remember the talk at church the other Sunday?"

"I don't want to hear that man again. It could be that preachers can't change things any more than we can. But it's no reason to encourage it. I think you too were angry about what he was saying."

"I agree. At times preachers go too far," said Shelby. "We men of the world often do things that we don't feel good about; but we don't like our women or our preachers leading the way in such things. But can't you see that I did the best I could with the problem that Haley put before me?"

"Yes, I can see that," said Mrs. Shelby. Then, fingering her gold watch, she said, "Wouldn't this watch do something? It was very expensive. I would give up anything I have to free one or both of them."

"The truth is, it's too late," said Mr. Shelby. "It is is finished. My name is on the papers and the papers are in Haley's hands. If you knew him as I do, you would be thanking God that he did not take more from us."

"Is he that hard?"

"I wouldn't say that he's cruel, but he's a rough man. His life is making money, and he will stop at nothing to do it. If the price was right, he would sell his own mother. But he would feel no hate for her."

"And this is the devil who owns Tom, and poor Eliza's child?"

"My love, it's difficult for both of us, I know. He plans to take Tom and Harry tomorrow. I'll go off on my horse before Haley arrives. I can't look Tom in the eye now, I know. And I think you should take Eliza away for the day. It'll be finished before we both return."

"No, no!" said Mrs. Shelby. "I will not be a part of this cruel business. I will go to Tom and talk to him. He must know that I feel for him in his sadness. As for Eliza, God forgive us. I don't know what I can say to her."

A third person had been secretly listening to all that was said between Mr. and Mrs. Shelby that night.

Beside their room was another, with a door between the two. Eliza had not been able to stop worrying about what she heard earlier that day, so she had returned secretly to the room and put her ear up against the door. She heard every word of what was said about Tom and Harry.

When the voices stopped, Eliza returned quietly to her room. She had been a soft, shy person before this night. But all that was over now. Sleeping deeply on the bed in her little room was her boy... her life. His mouth was half open in a smile that covered his whole face.

"Poor boy! They have sold you," said Eliza. "But they won't take you!"

There were no tears in her eyes. They would come later. But for now she must put her mind on other things. On a piece of paper she left a letter:

Mrs., please do not think bad of me. I thank you for all that you did for me. But I heard what you and Master were saying tonight. I must do what I can to protect my boy. Please do not hate me for this. I pray that God will be kind to you for all your kind help to me in the past."

After putting the letter in a place where Mrs. Shelby would find it, Eliza put a change of clothes for Harry, some food and money, and a toy or two in a scarf, then tied it around her stomach. Eliza put on her hat and a warm cloth around her shoulders before waking Harry.

"Where we going?" he asked as she put his coat and hat on him. She looked at him so deeply and so seriously that he quickly understood that something was wrong.

"Be very quiet, Harry," she said. "We must not talk out loud or they'll hear us. A very bad man is coming to take you away from me. But we won't have that, now, will we? So mother is going to put on her little boy's coat and hat and we will run off together, where that ugly man can't catch us."

Taking him in her arms, she whispered for him to be quiet, opened the door, and moved quietly onto the verandah.

It was a very cold night, and the mother put the cloth on her own shoulder around the boy too. He hugged her tightly without saying a word.

It was after midnight, but because of the late meeting, Tom and Chloe were not asleep when Eliza knocked on the window of their cabin.

"Good God, what's that at this hour?" said Aunt Chloe, sitting up in bed and pulling back the curtain. "Oh! It's Lizey! Put on your clothes, old man, quickly! I'll open the door."

Tom quickly lighted a candle and they opened the door.

"God love you, Lizey! Are you sick?" he asked as she pushed through the door.

"No. I'm running away. Master has sold my son!"

"Sold him?" they both said together in surprise.

"Yes, sold him!" said Eliza strongly. "I heard Master tell Mrs. that he sold Harry and you too, Tom, both to a slave buyer. And the buyer's coming to take you away tomorrow."

Tom had been standing with his hands in the air in surprise. Slowly his hands dropped and he sat down heavily in his old chair. His head went down onto his knees.

"God help us!" said Aunt Chloe. "It can't be true. What did he do, that Master would sell him?"

"It's not for doing anything. Master don't want to sell. And Mrs. – She's always good. She tried to stop it, but he said he owed this man money and if he didn't pay him off with you and Harry it would end with him selling the place and all the people on it. Master said he was sad to do it, but he was forced to choose between selling two and selling all."

"You should've heard Mrs. talk. If she isn't a Christian, there never was one. I'm very bad to leave her so, but I can't help it. She said herself one person is worth more than all the world. And this boy is one person. It must be right what I'm doing; but if it's not, God forgive me, because I can't help it!"

"Old man," said Aunt Chloe, "It looks like you will have to go with her. You can't wait to be carried down river to where they kill niggers with hard work and not enough food. I'll put some things together for you."

Tom slowly lifted his head and looked sadly and quietly around. "No. No, I can't go. Eliza can go. I wouldn't say no to that. But you heard what she said. If it's me or all the niggers on the place, then I'll go. I can take it as well as any of them." His chest was shaking with his sad, deep breathing now. "Master always believed I was honest, and I always was. I can't destroy that now. Don't be angry with Master, Chloe. I know he'll look out for you and the poor..."

Here Tom turned to the rough boxes where the two boys were sleeping and he started to cry. He leaned over the back of the chair and covered his face with his big hands. His loud, deep crying was shaking the chair as tears dropped to the floor. The same tears that you would cry if your baby was killed. For he is as much a person as you are. All the expensive clothes in the world do not change the sadness that a parent feels on losing a child. And skin colour makes no difference too.

"I saw my husband today," said Eliza. "They've pushed him to the point where he's planning to run away too. Do try if you can, to get word to him. Tell him how I went and why. Tell him I'm going to try to find Canada. Give my love to him and tell him if I never see him again..." She turned her back to them for a second, and then added in a deeper voice, "Tell him to be as good as he can and try to meet me in heaven."

After a few last words and tears, Eliza hugged her child to her and moved quietly away from the house.

QUESTIONS ON PART 5

1. What were Mr. and Mrs. Shelby talking about in their room? (pages 32 and 33)
2. Mr. Shelby said that if he did not sell two of his slaves, he would be forced to do something. What would he be forced to do? (page 34)
3. What did Mrs. Shelby have that she wanted to sell to pay for Tom and Harry? (page 35)
4. Who had been secretly listening to Mr. and Mrs. Shelby when they were talking in their room? (page 36)
5. What did Eliza leave for Mrs. Shelby? (page 36)
6. Where did Eliza go before leaving the Shelby farm? (page 37)
7. What two reasons did Tom give for not going with Eliza? (page 38)
8. Where did Eliza say she was going to try to go? (page 38)

6. News of Eliza Leaving

Because of the late night, Mr. and Mrs. Shelby were late getting up the next morning.

"Where could Eliza be?" said Mrs. Shelby after giving her bell a few pulls without any effect.

Mr. Shelby was standing in front of the mirror when the door opened. A black boy came in with hot water to use in washing up.

"Andy, said his mistress, "go to Eliza's door and tell her to come. Poor thing!" she said to herself. Andy returned with his eyes wide in surprise.

"Mrs! Lizey's drawers is all open and her things all over the place. I think she's clean run off!"

The truth hit Mr. Shelby and his wife at the same time. "She heard!" he shouted. "And she's off!"

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Shelby. "Good for her!"

"Wife, that's crazy talk! Do you understand what this will mean for our good name? Haley knew I didn't want to sell the child. Now he'll think I helped plan this. People will never believe our word if this gets out." And Mr. Shelby ran out of the room.

There was a lot of running and shouting and opening and closing of doors for the next few minutes. Only one person said nothing, and she was the one who could have answered the most questions. That person was the head cook, Aunt Chloe. The face that was always happy in the past now had a heavy cloud over it as she worked on making breakfast for the family.

Soon 10 or 12 children were sitting like a line of crows on the verandah, waiting for the slave buyer, so they could be first to tell him the bad news.

"He'll be real angry, I know," said Andy.

"Won't he use some bad words!" said little Jake.

When Haley arrived and heard the news, the children were right about him using bad words. He said so many that they were laughing as they ran to hide under the verandahr.

"If I catch you little devils!" Haley said as he walked loudly up onto the verandah.

"But you won't catch us!" whispered Andy with a quiet laugh to his friends under the verandah.

"I say now, Shelby, this is no way to do business!" shouted Haley as he walked into the house without knocking. "They say that girl has run off with her young one." To this he added a few more bad words.

"Mr. Haley!" said Shelby. "You are talking in front of my wife!"

"Forgive me, Madam," said Haley, leaning over toward her. "But we still have a problem. Is it true what the children are saying about her running off?"

"First," said Mr. Shelby, "if you want to talk to me, you should do it in the right way."

Andy was out from under the verandah and standing at the open door by now. "Andy, take Mr. Haley's hat and riding whip. Please sit down, Mr. Haley. Yes, I am sad to say that the young woman must have learned something of this business and left in the night with her child."

"I didn't think you'd do a thing like this to me," said Haley.

"What are you trying to say?" said Mr. Shelby as he turned sharply on Haley. "If anyone questions my word, I have but one answer for him."

The buyer backed down at this, and in a softer voice he said, "It's not easy for me, you know. I believed that the child would be here when I came for him."

"Mr. Haley," said Mr. Shelby, "If I did not agree that you have good reason to be angry, I would have kicked you out of my house for coming in without knocking. But I will not have you saying I was a part of Eliza running away. I plan to help you with horses and servants to find her. But if you want my help," and here he dropped his own voice from one of anger to one that was more friendly, "then the best thing for you to do is to cool down and have some breakfast with us. When we are finished, we will see what we can do."

Mrs. Shelby said she had other business to do and would not be eating with Mr. Haley, and she left the room.

"I must not be good enough for your woman," said Haley, trying to be friendly.

"Kindly leave my wife out of it," said Mr. Shelby dryly.

"Forgive me, I was being foolish," said Haley, forcing a laugh.

"Some foolishness is worse than others," answered Shelby.

"Now that he doesn't owe me anything, he thinks he can talk to me any way he likes," said Haley to himself. "He wasn't like this yesterday!"

One by one the servants were learning about Tom and Harry being sold.

Black Sam, who was called that because his skin was blacker than any other slave on the place, was thinking about what Tom's leaving would mean for him. His line of thinking was as good as that of any government leader.

"It's a bad wind that doesn't bring good to someone," he said to himself, pulling his pants up a little higher on his fat stomach. "Tom's down, that's true. But that leaves room for some other nigger to be up. And why not this nigger?"

"Hello! Sam! Master wants you to get Bill and Jerry," said Andy, cutting short Sam's thinking.

"Why's that? What's happening, child?"

"Don't you know? Lizey's cut stick and left with her young one."

"You tell some old woman about it!" said Sam. "I knowed it long before you. This nigger isn't so green, now!"

"Master wants you and me to saddle up Bill and Jerry and go with Master Haley to look for her."

"You see?" said Sam. "At a time like this, it's Sam that they turn to. He's the nigger. See if I don't catch Lizey too. Master will see what Sam can do!"

"But Sam," said Andy, "Mrs. don't want her catched, and she'll be on your head if you do."

"How you know that?" said Sam, opening his eyes wide.

"Heard her say so myself this morning when I telled her Lizey was off. She just sit up and say, 'God be thanked!' Master was real angry with her, but I know she'll turn him around. It's always best to stand on Mrs.' side of the fence."

Black Sam scratched his grey head. If it was not full of smartness, it was full of another quality that government leaders of all colours are full of. That quality is called "knowing what side of the bread the butter is on". He pulled his pants up again, an action he often did when thinking deeply.

"But from my understanding of Mrs. she'd travel the whole world to find her Lizey," he said.

"Can't you see through a ladder, you black nigger?" said Andy. "Mrs. don't want this here Master Haley to get Lizey's boy. That's the thinking behind it!"

"Right you are!" said Sam.

"And I'll tell you more than that," said Andy. "If you don't start getting them horses soon, you'll pay for it with Master."

On hearing this, Sam ran off to get the horses. In a short time he was racing down toward the front of the house with both horses. He jumped off the one he was on before it had even stopped. Haley's horse was tied there and it pulled away in fear from the other horses.

"Very interesting!" said Sam. "A jumper, are you? I'll fix that!"

There was a big tree hanging over the place, and small, sharp, triangle-shaped nuts were on the ground under it. With one of these in his hand, Sam walked up to the horse and talked to it softly. He rubbed its side as he talked, to stop it from worrying. Then, his hand moved under the saddle, where he put the sharp little nut. Any weight on the saddle would give the horse more than enough to jump about.

"There," said Sam, "all fixed!"

At this time Mrs. Shelby called to Sam from the window at the top of the house. "I sent Andy to tell you to come quickly, Sam. Why have you been so long?"

"It wasn't easy, Mrs." said Sam. "The horses run off to the south and God knows where all before I catched them."

"Sam, how often must I tell you not to say 'God knows' and 'God help me' and such things? It's very bad to use his name without truly meaning it."

"God help me! I was not thinking, Mrs. I won't do it no more."

"But Sam, you just did it again."

"Did I? Oh, God... I mean, I didn't go for to say it."

"You must think about what you're saying, Sam."

"If I just slow down, I'll get it, Mrs. I'll think about it."

"For now, Sam, you are to go with Mr. Haley, to show him the road and to help him. Don't work the horses too hard. You know Jerry had a sore leg last week. Don't ride them too fast."

Mrs. Shelby said the last words with a low voice and with a strong look at Sam to see if he understood.

"I know just what you mean!" said Sam, turning his eyes up into his head. "God knows... Wait! I didn't say that!" he said, as he put his hand over his mouth to take away what he had said. His mistress could not stop herself from laughing. "Yes, Mrs., I'll look out for the horses!"

"Now, Andy," said Sam, returning to his young helper. "I shouldn't be surprised if that horse tries to throw when Haley comes to be a getting up on her. You know, Andy, horses will do that at times." Sam secretly pushed his elbow in Andy's side.

"Top job!" said Andy, who understood perfectly.

"You see," said Sam, "Mrs. wants to give Lizey time. That's clear to the most stupid person. Just make a little time for her. Leave our horses loose, just walking around, and we'll see if they don't run off down to the trees."

Andy smiled.

"You see," said Sam, "You see, Andy, if it should happen that Master Haley's horse gets a little worried and starts cutting up, you and I will just have to turn loose of ours to help him. We'll help him, we will!" And Sam and Andy leaned their heads back and had themselves a good laugh.

Then Haley walked out on the verandah. He was in a better spirit now after having some good coffee. "Boys," said Haley, "look alive now. We must lose no time." Sam quickly put a palm leaf hat on and raced to meet Haley.

Slaves can make a palm leaf hat by bending it in a special way. But Sam's hat needed a lot more bending, because long, thin leaves were projecting out from it in all directions.

"We won't lose a second, Master," said Sam, leading Haley to his horse as Andy cut the other two horses loose.

The second Haley sat on the saddle, his horse jumped up off the ground in a movement that sent his owner flying high up into the air before he landed on the soft grass. Sam jumped for the horse's rope but a leaf projecting from his hat hit the horse in its eye, making it push Sam to the ground before turning and running away. Bill and Jerry raced after it, as Sam had planned. Sam and Andy ran after all three horses, shouting. Dogs started making noise, and all the children joined in, shouting with much enthusiasm.

Haley's horse, a white one, would wait until someone was close enough to almost touch it and then run off deeper into the trees. Sam added to the game by shouting "Catch him! Catch him!" each time someone would get up close to one or the other of the horses, and he would run straight at the animal, making it run away even faster.

Haley ran and shouted, and used all the bad words he could think of. Mr. Shelby, from the verandah, tried to bring some meaning to the exercise, as Mrs. Shelby laughed in the window above him.

It was almost the middle of the day before Sam came riding back on Jerry with Haley's horse by his side. Both horses were breathing heavily and wet all over from all their exercise.

"He's catched!" shouted Sam. "If it hadn't been for me, they never would've catched him. But I catched him!"

"You?" shouted Haley. "If it hadn't been for you, this never would have happened."

"God help me!" said Sam in a voice showing the deepest hurt. "And after me racing all morning to catch him for you too. I'm as wet as the horses from all the running."

"We're near three hours behind with all this foolishness," said Haley. "I've had enough of it. It's time we left."

"Go now?" said Sam? "Master, you'll kill us and the horses both if we go now. We're all most ready to drop. Your horse needs a rubbing down, and Jerry's leg is hurting him. Mrs. won't agree to us pushing Jerry so hard. You have yourself a meal first and we'll leave first thing after it. God help you, Master, we can catch Lizey easy. She never was no good at running."

Mrs. Shelby, who was on the verandah now, liked what she was hearing. She knew it was time to play her part now. She came forward and said how bad she was feeling about the accident with the horses, and how she wanted to give Haley a good meal before he started on his trip. She said the cook would have the meal ready very quickly.

Knowing that the horses were too tired to push on, Haley agreed to stay for another meal, and Sam left with the horses to give them a rub down.

"Did you see him Andy? Did you see him?" Sam asked when they were safe behind the building. "God, if it wasn't good as a meeting to see him a dancing and kicking and shouting at us. Did you hear him? 'Shout away!' I says to myself. I can see him now!" And Sam and Andy leaned up against the building and laughed and laughed and laughed.

"You should've seed how angry he looked when I come back with the horse. God, he would've killed me if he could. And there I was standing all humble like."

"I seed you," said Andy. "Aren't you something, Sam!"

"Yes, that I am," said Sam. "Did you see Mrs. up at the window? I seed her laughing."

"Did you? I was racing so, I didn't see nothing," said Andy.

"You see," said Sam as they rubbed down the horses, "over the years I've worked on something they call observation. It's very important, Andy, and something you should work on now when you're young. You see, it's observation that makes all the difference in niggers. Didn't I see what way the wind was blowing this morning? Didn't I see what Mrs. was wanting without her having to tell me? That's observation, Andy. It's what they call an ability. Abilities is different in different people, but working on them makes all the difference."

"And if I hadn't helped your observation this morning, you wouldn't have come out looking so smart," said Andy.

"Andy, my boy," said Sam, "you's a promising child, no way around it. I can learn a thing or two from you. Even the smartest of us needs help at times. So, we'll go up to the house together now, and I believe Mrs. will give us both a specially good meal today."

QUESTIONS ON PART 6

1. What was the first thing that Mrs. Shelby said when she learned that Eliza had run off? (page 40)
2. What did Mr. Shelby say he was going to do to help Haley find Eliza? (page 41)
3. What was the difference between what Mr. Shelby wanted Sam to do, and what Mrs. Shelby secretly wanted him to do? (pages 42 and 43)
4. What name was Sam always using without really meaning what he was saying? (page 44)
5. What was the secret meaning behind Mrs. Shelby telling Sam not to work the horses too hard? (page 44)
6. What did Andy do when Haley's horse jumped? (pages 44 and 45)
7. What did Mrs. Shelby do as her part in slowing Haley down? (page 46)

7. The Mother's Fight

One cannot think of a sadder person or one more alone in the world than Eliza was when she left Uncle Tom's cabin.

Her husband's problems and her child's danger mixed with her feelings about leaving the only place she had ever lived in, and a friend who had loved and protected her all her life. She was leaving the people, the buildings, the animals, even the trees that she had played under as a child, and that she had walked through with her husband in happier days. How could she go from a place like that?

But her love for all of this was not as strong as her love for her child. Her boy was old enough to walk by her side, but she could not think of putting him out of her arms now. She hugged him to her breast as she ran quickly forward.

Ice on the ground made noise at each step. Each sound sent the blood racing through her heart and made her move more quickly. She herself was surprised at her strength. Carrying her boy was like carrying a feather. And the more afraid she became, the stronger she would feel. Through it all, she prayed to her Friend above, "God, help me! God, help me!"

At first the child was wide awake with fear. But as his mother stopped him from making a sound, it was not long before he had dropped off to sleep with his tired head on her shoulder.

The touch of his warm arms and his soft breathing on her neck added fire and spirit to her movements. Strength poured into her with every movement of the sleeping child.

She moved quickly through the trees around the farm, then walked by one place after another that she knew. By the time the sky was turning red for morning, she was on the open road, miles away from any place that she knew well.

Eliza had been with her mistress a few times to a town by the Ohio River. She knew the road to that town, so the first part of her plan was to get to there and then find a way across the river to Ohio. After that, she had no plan.

When horses and wagons started to move on the road in the morning, it became clear to Eliza that she would need to slow down her movements. Running as she had been would make people ask what she was running from. So she put the boy on the ground, smoothed out her dress, and moved only as quickly as she believed was safe.

In the middle of the morning she stopped by the side of the road to feed her boy with some food from her scarf. The boy asked why she wasn't eating. He put his arms around her neck and tried to push some of his cake into her mouth.

"No, no, Harry my love! Mother can't eat until you are safe. We must go on until we come to the river." When he finished the cake, they returned to their walking.

Two points were on Eliza's side: The first was that, if she should meet anyone she knew, they would never believe she was running away. Everyone in those parts knew how kind the Shelby's were to their servants. And the second point on her side was Eliza's very light skin colour and the light skin colour of her boy. It made it difficult for people to think of her as a slave.

Knowing this, Eliza stopped in the middle of the day at a farm house to rest and to buy some food for her child. The good woman of the house was happy to have a visitor and quickly believed Eliza's story that she "was going on a little piece to spend a week with her friends," something that Eliza prayed in her heart would be true.

An hour before the sun went down, she arrived at the town by the river, tired and sore, but still strong in her heart. She looked at the river, thinking that it was like the river between one world and the next.

The coldest time of the year was coming to an end and the river was filled with big pieces of ice. Owing to the shape of the beach on the Kentucky side, where the land projected far out into the water, pieces of ice from up river were backed up with one piece on another, making almost a road to the other side.

The pieces were moving slowly all the time, breaking here and there. A boat trying to cross the river below the ice would find it difficult crossing without a piece breaking away and hitting it. The water moved most freely in a space of ten feet just at the side of the river.

Eliza stopped at a pub beside the river to ask a few questions. The woman who owned the pub stopped her cooking for a minute to answer Eliza's questions.

"Is there a boat that takes people to the town across the river?" she asked.

"No way!" said the woman. "Not until after the ice has melted. It's too dangerous."

Eliza's sad worried look made the woman ask on. "Is it important? Is anyone sick?"

"I learned last night that my child over there is dangerously sick. I walked a long distance today thinking I could get a boat across to see her."

The woman, who was a mother herself, wanted to help Eliza. "Solomon!" she shouted out the window toward a small back building. A man with very dirty hands soon arrived at the door.

"Sol," said the woman, "is that man going to carry them barrels over tonight?"

"He said he'd try, if there's any way he can get through."

The woman turned to Eliza. "There's a man going to try crossing tonight. He'll be here later, so you best sit down and wait. What a sweet little boy," she said, giving Harry a piece of cake.

But the child was too tired and only cried.

"He isn't used to walking and I pushed him on so today," said Eliza.

"You can put him in this room," said the woman, opening the door to a room with a comfortable bed. Eliza put Harry on the bed, holding his hand until he was fast asleep. She herself could not rest. Haley could not be far behind now, and she looked out on the angry water moving through openings between the pieces of ice in the river.

Here we will leave Eliza for the present to follow the actions of those coming after her.

Mrs. Shelby had promised that a meal would be on the table in a short time; but it takes more than one to keep a promise like that. Haley heard Mrs. Shelby send word for the meal to be made quickly, and he saw five or six children run off to tell Aunt Chloe. But Aunt Chloe only made sounds that no one could understand, moved her head to one side, and then returned to work more slowly than before.

For some reason, the other servants came to think that it would not make Mrs. angry at all if the meal was late. It is difficult to believe how many accidents happened that day to slow things down. One worker knocked over the gravy, and Aunt Chloe had to make a new lot. This was a long time in coming because Aunt Chloe said she "wasn't going to put gravy that wasn't cooked on the table to help no one's catchings." Another worker had an accident with the water and had to go to the well for more. And there was a third accident making the butter that slowed things down even more.

"Don't see no reason to give him special." said Aunt Chloe. "He'll get worse than this one day. His master will be sending for him, and then see how he goes!"

"He'll go to hell! No two ways about it!" said little Jake.

"It's what he needs!" said Aunt Chloe angrily. "He has destroyed many many hearts, I tell you all! It's like what Master George reads in The Revelation, about people crying out to God for God to hit back at them that've been hurting them. By and by God will hear them, too. So he will!"

The food was almost all on the table now, so the children were free to listen to Aunt Chloe with open mouths.

"People like him will burn for ever, won't they?" said Andy.

"I like to see that," said little Jake.

"Children!" said a voice that made them all jump. It was Uncle Tom. He had been listening to their talk at the door.

"Children," he said, "I'm afraid you don't know what you're saying. For ever is a very long time. It's too much to think on. You shouldn't want any man or woman to go through that."

"We wouldn't for anyone but the slave buyers," said Andy. "You can't help but want it for them, they's so cruel and bad."

"Don't God himself feel angry about them?" asked Aunt Chloe. "Don't they pull a baby right off its mother's breast and sell it, and her children as is crying and holding on by her clothes... don't they pull them off and sells them? Don't they pull wife and husband apart?" And at this Aunt Chloe started to cry. "It's taking the life out of people, and all the time does they feel even a little sad? No, they drink and smoke and take it all easy. If the devil don't get them, what's he good for?" Aunt Chloe covered her face and started crying strongly.

"Pray for them that tries to hurt you, the good book says," Tom said.

"Pray for them?" said Aunt Chloe. "God, it's too much! I can't pray for them."

"It's the way we're made," said Tom, "but God's Spirit is stronger than ours. What we should do is think about how sick a man's spirit is that'll do them there things. You should thank God that you aren't like him, Chloe. I would be happier to be sold ten thousand times over than to have all that there man has to answer for."

"Me too," said Jake. "Think of what we would catch if we was like him, Andy!"

"I'm happy Master didn't go off this morning like he was thinking to do," said Tom. "That hurt more than the selling, it did. I can understand how he feels, but it would've come very hard on me after knowing him from when he was a baby. But I had time to see Master today, and I feel I'm ready for anything that happens now. Master did what he had to do, but I'm afraid things will go down on the farm after I leave. Master can't know where all the problems are, like I do, keeping up all the

loose ends. The boys all mean well, but they can be lazy at times. I feel bad about that."

At this point Mr. Shelby called for Tom in the sitting room.

"Tom," said his master kindly, "I want you to know that I have agreed with Mr. Haley that I will give him \$1000 if you are not here when he comes for you. He's going today to look after his other business, and you can have the day to yourself. Go where you like, boy."

"Thank you, Master," said Tom.

"Mind you don't come it over your master with any of your nigger tricks," said the slave buyer. "I'll take every cent out of him if you aren't there. If he'd listened to me, he wouldn't believe in any of you."

"Master," said Tom, standing up very straight, "I was just eight years old when your mother put you into my arms, and you wasn't a year old. 'There,' says she, 'Tom, that's to be your young master. You look after him,' says she. Now I ask you, Master, did I ever break word to you, specially from the time I became a Christian?"

Tears were filling Mr. Shelby's eyes. "You've been a good boy," said he. "God knows you've always said the truth. If I was able to help it, all the world wouldn't buy you."

"True as I am a Christian woman," said Mrs. Shelby, "We will buy you back, Tom, as soon as we can get together enough money." She turned to Haley, "Take down who you sell him to and send word to me, do you understand?"

"God yes," said the slave buyer. "I could be bringing him back here next year, not much worse for his time away, and selling him back to you."

"I'll do business with you then and give you a good price," said Mrs. Shelby.

"Very good," said the buyer. "It's all equal with me. I'd as soon sell them up as sell them down if the price is right. All I want is a living, you know, Madam. That's all any of us wants."

Mr. and Mrs. Shelby hated being friends with the man, but they both could see how important it was for them to hide their feelings. The more Mrs. Shelby saw of the man's hard heart, the more important it was for her to stop him from catching Eliza. So she did all that she could to keep him talking as time slowly moved on.

At two in the afternoon Sam and Andy came to the front of the house with the horses, ready to head out. Sam was still thinking of new ways to slow things down.

"Does your master keep dogs?" asked Haley as he was about to get on his horse.

"Yes, we have many dogs," said Sam. "There's Bruno who sleeps in the house, and about every nigger of us keeps a dog of one size or another."

"Oh no!" said Haley. And he said some other things too, about the dogs.

"I don't see no reason to use such words about dogs," said Sam.

"I was meaning dogs that know how to look for niggers," said Haley.

Sam knew perfectly what he was meaning, but he acted like he was stupid.

"Our dogs are all sharp smellers," he said. "I think they're what you want. They never had a go at catching niggers before, but they can learn most anything if you just get them started. Here, Bruno," he called to the big fat dog on the verandah.

"You go hang!" said Haley. "It's time to get on your horse and ride." Sam stepped up onto his horse, giving Andy a secret push as he did, and this started Andy laughing. This made Haley angry, and he cut at Andy with his riding whip as they were riding away.

"I'm surprised at you, Andy," said Sam with a perfectly straight face. "This is serious business, Andy. Playing games is no way to help Master."

"We'll take the straight road to the river," said Haley when they had left the farm road. They always head for Ohio. It's the way of them all."

"Very smart of you," said Sam. "Master Haley hit the nail on the head. Of the two roads to the river, what one does Master plan to take?"

Andy looked up surprised at hearing of a second road, but quickly covered his surprise and agreed with what Sam had said.

"I think Lizey would head for the dirt road, being as there's less people on it," said Sam.

Haley was a smart old bird, but talk of a second road interested him.

"I don't know if I can believe a thing you say," he said. But it was clear that he was thinking about it.

Andy had to drop behind a little because he was finding it hard to hide a laugh that was trying to get out of him. But Sam stayed as serious as can be.

"Master can do what he thinks is best," said Sam. "As I think on it, the straight road does sound like the best."

"It's true that she'd want to be away from other people," said Haley, thinking out loud.

"It's hard to say," said Sam. "Girls is strange. They never do what you think they will. If you think they's going to go on one road, they'll go on the other. Now I was thinking that she would take the dirt road, so that's a true sign that she'll take the straight one. Yes, that's where you'll find her."

Haley wasn't listening to Sam's teaching about the female mind. He was leaning more and more to the dirt road. He asked Sam when they should come to it.

"It's not far from here," said Sam, smiling at Andy with the side of his face that was away from Haley. He added seriously, "I've been thinking about this, and I'm clear now that that way is the wrong one, Master Haley. I never been over it no way. Not many uses it and we could lose our way."

"No, I think the dirt road is the right one," said Haley. "We will go that way."

"Now I think of it, I heard them say that road was fenced up now. Isn't that true, Andy?"

Andy didn't know. He only "heard tell" about the road, but he had never been over it himself. In short, he couldn't say.

Haley, who often had to choose between big lies and little ones, believed the dirt road was the best one to use.. He believed it was an accident that Sam had said there were two roads to start with, and all that followed was Sam trying to steer him away from Eliza.

So when Sam pointed to the road, Haley raced quickly down it, followed by Sam and Andy.

Now, the road, in truth, was an old one that had at one time been a road to the river. But it was not used after the new, shorter road was put in. It was open for an hour's ride or more, and after that it was now cut across by farms and fences. Sam knew this perfectly well. It had been closed for so long that Andy really had not heard about it. So Andy went on, not knowing what was up. He said a few things about it being rough and bad for Jerry's foot, that was all.

"I'm telling you," said Haley, "You won't turn me off this road. So close your mouth!"

"Have it your way if you must, Master," said Sam sadly, at the same time smiling at Andy.

After riding for about an hour like this, the whole group came to a steep drop in the road, leading down to a farm building that was square in the middle of the road. Not a person was around, but it was clear from the building and the fences around it that this was the end of the road.

"Wasn't that what I was telling Master?" said Sam with an air of one who was hurt when trying to help. "How does strange people think they know more about a country than the people who was born and lived in it?"

"You devil!" said Haley. "You knew all about this."

"Didn't I tell you I knowed, and you wouldn't believe me? I telled Master it was all fenced up and I didn't think we could get through. Andy heard me."

There was no space for Haley to argue. He was forced to put his anger in his pocket as well as he was able. All three turned their horses around to return to the straight road.

The effect of all Sam's "accidents" was that Haley, Sam, and Andy arrived at the pub by the river about an hour after Eliza had put her child to sleep. Sam was the first to see Eliza standing by the window of the side room as they were riding up the road. Haley and Andy were two steps behind him. Eliza was not looking in their direction, so Sam fixed the problem by knocking his hat off and shouting loudly as he turned to get it. This was enough to turn Eliza's eyes toward him as well as the eyes of Haley and Andy. Eliza pulled back from the window and the three riders moved by the window and around to the front door without Haley seeing her.

Eliza's room opened by a side door to the river. Lifting Harry from the bed, she ran out the door and down the steps to the river. But the slave buyer saw her as he was getting down from his horse. Calling to Sam and Andy for help he was after her like a dog after a deer. In a few seconds Eliza was at the water with Haley closing in behind her. With a strength that only God can give, and with one big shout, she jumped over the wild white water between the land and the first big piece of ice in the river. It was a jump that only a crazy person or someone running for their life would try to make. So Haley, Sam, and Andy all stopped at the border of the water.

The big piece of ice that Eliza landed on started to move with her weight. But she did not stop. With more wild cries and more strength from God, she jumped to another piece and still another. Falling, jumping, running, she moved across the river. One shoe came off and blood was coming from her foot by the time she saw the Ohio side, but she could feel no pain.

It was all like a dream, moving ever so slowly until before she knew it a man was helping her up the Ohio side of the river.

"I couldn't believe it when I looked down and saw you running across that ice," said the man. "You are one brave girl!"

The voice and the face were not new to Eliza. It was the man whose farm George was to visit the day before.

"Oh, Mr. Symmes, please help me. Please hide me," said Eliza.

"Who is this?" said the man. "Why, if it isn't Shelby's girl!"

"It's my boy!" said Eliza. "He sold my boy. There is his new master," she said, pointing to the Kentucky side of the river. "Mr. Symmes, you have a little boy. Think of how you would feel!"

"So I have," he said as he roughly, but kindly pulled her up the steep side of the river. "And you are one very brave girl. I like that in a person."

When they were at the top, he stopped for a minute.

"I would be happy to do something for you," he said, "but I have no place where I can take you here. The best I can do is to tell you to go... there." He pointed to a big white house in the town. "I've heard they're kind people. I don't think any danger would stop them from helping someone who was in need."

"God love you for helping me!" said Eliza as her heart filled with thanks for getting this far.

"It's nothing," said Mr. Symmes. "It's nothing at all."

"You won't tell anyone, will you?" she asked.

"What do you take me for, girl? There's no way I would tell anyone," said the man. "You were prepared to lose your life for your son by crossing that river. So who am I to stop you now?"

The woman hugged her child to her breast and walked quickly toward the white house, as the man looked after her.

He was thinking to himself: "It could be that Shelby would not think it right of me, but what can I do? If it was one of my girls with the same problem, he could do the same to me and I'd understand. I can't go against anyone who's fighting for her life with dogs after her. And I don't see it as my job to be catching for other people."

This was the thinking of a man who had not learned to follow the laws of the land or the teachings of the church, and in so doing he was acting in a more Christian way than those who believed they had more understanding than him on such things.

Haley had watched it all until Eliza walked to where he could not see her. Then he turned to look at Sam and Andy.

"I never would have believed it," said Sam.

"The girl has seven devils in her, I believe," said Haley. "Did you see her jumping? She was like a wild cat!"

Sam scratched his head and said, "You'll have to forgive us for not going after her. I'm not strong enough for that road, no way!" And he gave a rough little laugh.

"Nothing to laugh about!" said the slave buyer angrily.

"God love you, Master, I couldn't help it now," said Sam, giving way to the happiness he had been hiding for so long. "She looked so funny running and a jumping with the ice breaking around her. Plunk! Kerchunk! Kersplash! My God, how did she do it?" And Sam and Andy laughed until the tears were pouring down their black cheeks.

"I'll make you laugh out the other side of your mouths," said the slave buyer, hitting at them with his riding whip.

They both moved quickly out of the way and ran shouting up the side of the river. They were on their horses before he was at the top.

"Good night, Master," said Sam very seriously. "I very much think that Mrs. will be worrying about Jerry. You won't be needing us no longer. And I know Mrs. won't hear of us riding the horses over the way Lizey went tonight." With a friendly hit at Andy, Sam was off and Andy was close behind him.

Haley was left to hear their shouts and laughing slowly die out in the distance.

QUESTIONS ON PART 7

1. There were two things that would stop people from thinking that Eliza was a slave who had run away from her owner. What were they? (page 49)
2. Why were boats not crossing the river at the place where Eliza stopped? (page 50)
3. There were accidents with three things that made the meal late. What were the three things? (page 51)
4. What saying from the Bible did Tom give to show that the slaves should not want to see Haley hurt? (page 52)
5. What did Mr. Shelby agree to do if Tom was to run away before Haley returned from looking for Eliza? (page 53)
6. What road did Haley first think Eliza would have used? (page 55)
7. When Sam said that the dirt road was fenced up, what did Haley think Sam was doing? (page 56)
8. What did Eliza do when she saw that Haley, Sam, and Andy were coming after her? (page 57)
9. What was the name of the man who helped Eliza up the far side of the river? (page 58)

8. Three Equally Bad Men

The sun was just going down when Eliza ran across the ice. The ice, the water, and now the dark were between her and her new owner. So Haley returned to the little pub to think more about what he could do. He sat in a side room drinking and thinking.

"Why did I buy the little animal in the first place?" he said to himself. "I've made more problems for myself than he was worth." And at this point Haley said some very bad words about how stupid he had been. We have very good reason to believe the words were true, but in the interest of good taste, we will not print them here.

Haley was surprised by the loud deep voice of a man getting off a horse at the door. He moved out of his side room to see who it was.

"By God, if this isn't the closest thing to a miracle that has ever happened to me," he said. "I do believe it's Tom Loker."

Loker was a tall wide man, dressed in a coat of buffalo skin, with the hair side out. The coat went well with the whole wild look of the man. Every part of him had a look of danger about it. With him was a man who was perfectly opposite in his looks. Tom Loker's friend was short and thin, with the face of a rat and the movements of a cat. His long thin nose projected from his face like it wanted to be into everything, and his thin black hair looked like it was pasted to his head.

The big man walked over to the counter. He poured himself a big glass of whiskey, drinking it down in one go.

"Who would think that this could happen to me?" said Haley as he walked over to the men and put his hand out. "Loker, how are you?"

"What the devil! What brings you here, Haley?"

The little man, whose name was Marks, pushed his head forward to see Haley.

"I say, Tom, this is the best thing that could happen to me,"

said Haley. "I'm in the middle of a problem and you're just the person to help me out."

"I was afraid of that," said his friend. "The only time you're happy to see a man is if you can make something of him. What's the problem now?"

"Who's your friend?" asked Haley, who wanted to know more about Marks before telling his story.

"Name is Marks. Marks, this is the man I was telling you about, that I worked with in Natchez."

"Pleased to meet you," said Marks, putting out a long thin hand much like the claws of a crow. "Your name's Haley, is that right?"

"That's right," said Haley. "And now, seeing that we are all here together, I'll buy some drinks. Here, boy!" he said to the black servant who worked there, "Bring us hot water, and sugar, and cigars, and your best drinks. We're going to have a good time."

Candles were lighted and the smoking fire pushed back into life in the fireplace, as the three sat down together around a table in the side room.

Haley went through his sad story without Loker showing much interest. But Marks, between trying to mix a drink from the things on the table, would push his sharp nose almost into Haley's face to hear all that he was saying. Marks was shaking from a quiet little laugh at the end of the story.

"Looks like she had the last laugh on you," he said. "Hee, hee, hee!"

"Children are a big problem in the business," said Haley sadly.

"If we could find women who didn't like their children, it would be the best thing we could do for the business," said Marks, laughing at his own words.

"I don't understand them," said Haley. "Children are a lot of work. You'd think they'd be happy for us to take them off their hands; but they aren't. And the worse the child is, the closer they hold to them, as a general rule."

"I agree," said Marks. "I had a girl when I was in the business – she had a young one that was always sick. Crippled back or something. I give it away to a friend because it was good for nothing. I never believed the girl would carry on about it. But God help me, you should see how she went on. I think she wanted it more because it was sickly, and because it gave her so much work. I know she wasn't making believe too, because she acted like every friend had left her when I give that child away. God, I can't never understand women!"

"The same with me," said Haley. "Last summer down on Red River, a girl was sold to me with a good looking child. His eyes looked as good as yours, but he couldn't see a thing. I could see the best thing was to sell him quickly, before anyone learned about his eyes.

"Man said he would give me a barrel of whiskey for him; but when I come to get the child from the girl, she started fighting like a wild cat. We were on a river boat and she didn't have her chains on, so she jumped, young one and all, into the river. Went down and they never come up."

"You make your own problems!" said Tom Loker, who had been listening to the stories with a feeling that the other two were stupid. "I don't have any such foolishness from my girls, I can tell you!"

"How do you get around it?" asked Marks quickly.

"Get around it? If I buy a girl with a child, I just walks up and puts my fist to her face and says, 'Look here now, if you give me one word out of your head, I'll destroy your face and the child's too. I won't hear one word.' Then I put them straight about who owns who. I says to them, 'This here young one's mine and not yours. You have no business with it. I'll sell it to the first buyer who gives me a good price, and don't you cut up when I do or I'll make you hate the day you was born.' They sees it's no game when I gets hold of them. If one of them does say anything, why – " and Loker hit his fist on the table so hard that there was no question about his meaning.

"Tom knows how to make a nigger understand," said Marks, hitting Haley in the side and starting another of his little laughs. "If you aren't the devil, Tom, you must be his brother. Hee, hee, hee!"

Tom understood that Marks was saying that he liked such qualities, and so Tom was very pleased with himself.

Haley, on the other hand, had been drinking too much and had started to think of himself a little more highly than he should have.

"Tom, you shouldn't be like that," he said. "I used to tell you so down in Natchez. You can make just as much in this world by handling them well; and if worse comes to worst, you could do better in the next world too because of it."

"Don't make me sick with your talk," said Tom. "My stomach is turning a little as it is."

But Haley went on: "I always ran my business to make money first of all, as much as any man. But business isn't everything, and money isn't everything. We all have a spirit that lives on after this life. I don't worry about who hears me say it. I believe in religion. And one of these days, when I'm comfortable enough, I plan to work on my spirit and on things to do with my spirit. So it's no good being any more bad now than I really need to be. That's how I see it."

"You work on your own spirit and leave mine alone then," said Tom. "But I think it would take a strong light to find a spirit in you, all the same." "There's no reason to be angry with me," said Haley. "I'm only saying this for your own good."

"Stop your mouth," said Tom roughly. "I can take most things you say. But when you turn preacher on me, that just kills me. After all, what's the difference between you and me? You don't have one little piece more feeling for them than I do. All that makes you hold back is so's you can get away from the devil and protect your own skin when you die. I can see through it easy enough. Getting religion for you means working for the devil all your life and then shooting through when it comes time to pay."

"Come, come," said Marks. "This isn't good for business. We all have different ways of looking at things. Mr. Haley is a very nice man, I believe, and he has rules that he lives by. And Tom, you have your ways, and very good ones they are, too. But fighting won't answer a thing. We have business to do. Now, Mr. Haley, what do you want? Do you want us to catch this girl for you?"

"The girl's not my problem. She's Shelby's. It's the boy that I want. It was foolish of me to buy the monkey in the first place!"

"Sounds like most of your business," said Tom roughly.

"Come now, Loker, enough of that," said Marks, rubbing his tongue over his lips. "You see, Haley is putting us in the way of a good job. You listen and see what we come up with. Doing business like this is my strong point; so tell us something about this girl, Haley." "She's almost white and she's beautiful. Worth well over a thousand easy."

"White and beautiful?" said Marks, his sharp eyes alive with plans. "Look here, Loker. If we do the catching, the boy can go to Mr. Haley, and we can take the girl to Orleans and see what we can get there. What do you think of that?"

Tom, whose big heavy mouth had been open up to this point, closed it tightly, like a big dog closing on a piece of meat. He was going over it all very slowly in his head.

"You see," said Marks to Haley, "We know judges at many points on the river, who will help us. Tom takes the slave in, and then I come by later all dressed up, saying it's one of mine. Tom's the best there is when it comes to fighting, but he's no good at lying. But if there's a man in the country who can carry a lie through better than me, why, I'd like to see him! I believe in my heart that I could pull it off even if the judges were more honest."

Tom Loker, who was finished with his thinking, hit his fist on the table again. "We'll do it!" he said.

"Good for you Tom," said Marks, "but there's no need to break all the glasses! Keep your fist for when we need it."

"You'll give me some of the money from the girl, won't you," said Haley.

"Isn't it enough that we catch the boy for you?" asked Loker. "What more do you want?"

"But if I give you the job, it must be worth something," said Haley. "Say ten dollars in every hundred?"

"Now!" said Loker, hitting the table again. "What're you trying to put over me, Dan Haley? You think Marks and I went into the nigger catching business to help people like you and to get nothing for ourselves? Not by a long chalk! We'll have the girl, and if you don't like it, we'll have the boy too. What's to stop us? You and Shelby couldn't find us if you tried."

"Okay, we'll leave it at that," said Haley. "You catch the boy for me and you can have the girl. I know you'll do what's right."

"Yes, you know that," said Tom. "I don't play at having religion like you, but I do tell the truth. I won't lie to the devil himself. What I says, I'll do."

"Just so, just so. I said so myself, Tom," said Haley. "And if you promise to have the boy for me in a week at any point you name, that's all I want."

"But it's not all I want," said Tom. "I want fifty dollars flat down, or I don't start."

"But you'll get over a thousand dollars on this job. Why take more from me?" asked Haley.

"And what if we go looking for your young one and don't find him. Girls are always the devil to catch because so many more people will help them. What then? No! You give us fifty now, and if the job pays, we'll give it back. What do you think of that, Marks?"

"Very good! Very good!" said Marks. "It's only for the time being. Tom will have the boy for you, and you'll have the money back."

"If I find the young one, I'll bring him on to Cincinnati for you, and leave him at old Mrs. Belcher's, on the landing," said Loker.

Marks pulled some paper out of his pocket. "Now it's time to ask a few questions. Mr. Haley, do you know that the girl landed safely on the other side?"

"I could see her easy as I see you now."

"And a man helped her?"

"That's right."

"She'd be hiding in some house over there by now. What do you think, Tom?"

"We must cross the river tonight or it could be too late," said Tom.

"It's very dangerous," said Marks. "The ice is running. And there's no boat."

"I heard the woman say there's one coming by tonight. Dangerous or not, we must go with it," said Tom.

"Do you have good dogs?" asked Haley.

"The best," said Marks. "But they're no good without something that has her smell on it."

"Her hat was still on the bed when she left," said Haley.

"Good," said Loker. "Get it for us."

"The dogs could mark the girl if they come on her too far in front of you," said Haley.

"That's true," said Marks. "They had a nigger in pieces down in Mobile one time before we could pull them off."

"When you're selling a girl for her looks, you can't have dogs marking her," said Haley.

"And if she's getting help from people in Ohio, the dogs won't be much good," said Marks. "Dogs are no help in these here parts where niggers can get carried in a wagon. They only work in places where niggers has to do their own running and don't get no help."

Loker had left to talk to the owner. He returned a short time later to say, "The man with the boat's here. Do you have the fifty, Haley?"

Haley handed over the money and the three separated.

*As this was happening at the pub, Sam and Andy were making their way back to the Shelbys'. It was between ten and eleven when Mrs. Shelby heard the horses walking on the stones below her window. She ran to the window.

"Is that you, Sam? Where are they?"

"Master Haley's resting at the pub. He's very tired, Mrs."

"And Eliza, Sam?"

"Oh, she's clean across the river, living with God!"

"Sam, what do you mean by that?" asked Mrs. Shelby as her heart filled with fear at what that could mean.

"It's like this, Mrs.: God helps his own. Lizey went clean over the Ohio River. It was as big a miracle as if God carried her over in a wagon of fire and two horses." Sam liked to use word pictures like this from the Bible when talking to his mistress.

"Come up here, Sam," said Mr. Shelby, who was at the window beside Mrs. Shelby now. "Come on inside and tell your mistress what she wants to know."

"Hear that, Andy? Master's a calling for me," said Sam. "Now you take these here horses." And Sam was soon standing at the front door with his palm-leaf hat in his hand.

"Now, Sam, tell us all that you know," said Mr. Shelby when they were in the living room. "Where is Eliza now?"

"I saw her with my own eyes a crossing the river on the loose ice. It was something to see. It was no less than a miracle. And I saw a man help her up the Ohio side. And then it was too dark to see where she went.

"This does sound like a real miracle," said Mr. Shelby. "Crossing the Ohio on loose ice. I never heard of it before."

"Couldn't no one do it without help from God," said Sam. "Master Haley, and me and Andy, we come up to the pub by the river. I was a riding at the front, being as I wanted most to catch Lizey for you, Master Shelby. And there at the window was Lizey. About the same time my hat blowed off and I shouted out loud enough for the dead to hear. Lizey heard me and she jumped back out of the window. But a minute later she run out

the side door with little Harry in her arms, and Master Haley he seed her and shouted out, and him and me and Andy we went after her. Down she come to the river where the water was running ten feet wide before the first piece of ice. All them pieces was rubbing and moving against each other. And then Lizey gives a big shout like I never heard and next thing I knowed, she was over to the first piece of ice. She went a shouting and a jumping like a deer, right over to the other side."

Mrs. Shelby was perfectly quiet as she listened to Sam's story.

"God be thanked. She isn't dead!" she said. "But where can she be now?"

"God'll help her," said Sam, turning his eyes up toward heaven. "What happened is a sign. It's like you teached us, Mrs. God uses people and other things as his instruments. Didn't he use me this morning to send off the horses and keep them runing until near meal time? And didn't he use me to take Master Haley five miles out the way this afternoon. I was just his instrument!"

"You want to think very seriously about being such an instrument again," said Mr. Shelby as seriously as he was able. "I do not agree with such actions."

Sam could see that Mr. Shelby was not really angry, but he played the game with him, hanging his head and looking as sad as he could.

"Master's right," he said. "It was ugly of me to do that. I know Master and Mrs. wouldn't encourage no such works. But a poor nigger like me gives in and does ugly things at times that he shouldn't do."

"I can see, Sam, that you understand how wrong you were to slow Mr. Haley down in his business," said Mrs. Shelby. "You go now and tell Aunt Chloe to give you some of the meat that was left from our meal today. You and Andy must be hungry."

"Mrs. is far too good to us," said Sam before leaving.

Sam was always looking for a way to make himself look good.

He believed that he had just showed Mr. and Mrs. Shelby how very Christian he was. So he now moved out to Aunt Chloe's kitchen to do much the same there.

"I'll show these here niggers," he said to himself. "God, won't they think I'm something!"

In the past, there had been hard feelings between Sam and Aunt Chloe. Sam knew she would obey Mrs. Shelby in giving him and Andy some meat. But he was thinking that she would give much more generously if the feelings between them were better. So he talkd to Aunt Chloe about how much he and Andy had been through in trying to help another slave.

It worked perfectly. Aunt Chloe was so easy to win over that in a short time Sam was sitting in front of a big pan filled with all that had been left over from the meals of the past three days. Sam, as king of all that was in front of him, kindly gave small pieces of the food to Andy from time to time.

The kitchen was soon filled with all the slaves on the farm and most of their children. They had come to hear of all that had happened to poor Eliza and Harry. It was Sam's best hour. Sam added to the story anything that he believed it needed to make it more interesting. As he talked, from time to time his listeners laughed out loud. But Sam's face stayed straight, apart from turning his eyes up into his head when they laughed, to show that he believed they were not taking his story seriously enough.

"You see, my friends," said Sam, putting down a chicken leg he had been chewing on. "You see what I was up against in fighting for each and every one of you? Anyone who tries to take one of our people is as good as trying to take them all. And any buyer who comes smelling around after our people will have to answer to me. So, brothers, if you have any problems, you should bring them to me."

"But Sam," said Andy, " you said to me this morning that you was going to catch Lizey fast as anything. From where I'm sitting, your talk don't hold together."

"Boys like you shouldn't be a talking about things like this," said Sam. "You means well, but you're not smart enough to understand the deep truths of a thing like this."

Andy dropped his head, humbled by Sam's high talk.

"You see, Andy, what I said this morning come from wanting to help," said Sam. "I was thinking Master wanted her. When I heard Mrs. was sitting the other way on it, that was when I wanted even more to help, but to do it her way. You see, both ways I was helping. It's all about being honest," said Sam loudly, hitting a chicken wing down on the table. "What good is it to be honest at all if you can't stick with it even when it's difficult. Here, Andy, you can have this wing. It still has some meat on it."

The others were waiting with open mouths to hear what Sam was trying to say.

"This business of being honest," said Sam with the air of one who understands what lesser people could never understand, "this business of being honest isn't easy for some people to see. If a man stands up for a thing one day and does the opposite the next, some people will say (and I can understand why) that he's not honest. But look closer! I'll use an easy little picture here to help you poor people understand. Say I wants to get to the top of the roof and I puts my ladder up on one side the house but find it's too short. I can move the ladder to the other side and still get to the same place. It's the same with being honest. Some times you have to come at it from a different direction."

"And you has more directions than most," said Aunt Chloe, who was growing tired of all the laughing when serious problems were going on.

"You're so right," said Sam, standing up for one last word. "Brothers and sisters sitting together here tonight, I'm proud to say that I am honest in all directions. If I believe a thing is right, they can burn me alive and it won't stop me. I'd walk right up to the fire and say, 'Here I am, come to die for what's right, for my country, and for my people'."

"For now," said Aunt Chloe, "you best walk up to your cabin and get to bed. Now every one of you children who don't want a hit on the head, you be getting back to your cabins right smartly."

"Niggers, all of you," said Sam, holding his hat out over them, "you go to bed with my love protecting you. And you all be good."

With this weak closing, the people left.

QUESTIONS ON PART 8

1. Who did Haley meet at the pub by the river after Sam and Andy returned to the Shelby farm? (page 61)
2. What were Marks and Haley not able to understand about mothers? (pages 62 and 63)
3. Haley wanted to think that he was a good person; but between his business and his religion, what did he do "first of all"? (page 64)
4. What was Loker to receive if he helped Haley find young Harry? (pages 65 and 66)
5. What did Sam and Mr. Shelby think was a miracle? (page 68)
6. Do you think Sam was honest, humble, and strong about doing the right thing, like Tom was? (pages 70 and 71)

9. Help from a Senator

A fire was burning in the fireplace as Senator Bird pulled his shoes off. Mrs. Bird was putting the last few things on the table as her children ran and played around her.

"You don't know what a surprise it is to see you here tonight," said she when he was resting in his chair.

"I must be back in the morning," said Mr. Bird. "But what I want now is a cup of your good hot tea and some time with my children. It's hard work being a Senator."

"And what have you been doing there?" asked his wife. It was not often that Mrs. Bird showed interest in the business of government, so the question surprised the good Senator.

"Not much that is important," he answered.

"Is it true that they're making a rule against people giving food or drink to slaves who come here for help? I heard talk of such a law, but I can't believe a Christian government would agree to it."

"Why, Mary, you sound like a senator yourself tonight."

"You know I don't have any interest in most of your business. But this is one rule that's too cruel for a Christian to stand by and not say something. We must stop it."

"I'm afraid, my Love, that it's too late. The rule is now in force. You see, these abolitionists have been making problems for us. We in Ohio can choose not to have slaves ourselves, but the kind and Christian thing is not to make problems for our brothers in Kentucky. Their business is not our business."

"And does the new rule say that we cannot give a bed to one of these poor people for even one night? that we cannot give them a thing to eat or a few old clothes before sending them on their way?"

"They're breaking the rules of Kentucky by running away, my Love. If we gave to them, we would be helping them to break the law."

Mrs. Bird was a very shy person, little more than four feet tall,

with the softest, quietest voice in the world. Her husband and children were her whole world, and she was not one to argue with any of them. Only one thing could make her angry and that was any sign of someone being cruel. Her boys still remember the day she saw them throwing stones at a baby cat.

"If ever I was afraid it was that day," Master Bill would say. "Mother came at me with such a look on her face that I was thinking she was crazy. I was whipped and put to bed without eating. And when she was finished, I could still hear her crying in the next room. I'll tell you, we never stoned another cat after that."

Mrs. Bird was starting to feel the same anger on this night. She walked up to her husband and said, "John, you look at me and tell me if you think that law is right and Christian!"

"Will you shoot me if I say yes?" her husband asked.

"Are you saying that you agreed to that law?"

"I'm afraid I did," he said.

"How could you do such a thing? To poor people without a place to sleep! It's a very very bad rule and I plan to break it the first time I see one of them in need. What has the world come to if a woman can't help a person who is in need just because they are slaves?"

"Listen to me, Mary. Your feelings are good feelings, and I love you for them. But we can't have our feelings taking away our ability to make good rules. There are the feelings of the slave owners in Kentucky, and the good of the whole country to think about."

"John, I don't know much about government business, but I can read my Bible. And it says that I must feed the hungry and give clothes to those who have no clothes, and a bed to those who have no place to sleep. And no law is going to stop me from following that Bible."

"But at times when doing that could be bad for others..."

"Obeying God could never be bad for others. It's always best all around to do what he tells us to do."

"Listen to me, Mary, and I'll show you..."

"You can talk all night, but you won't change my mind. I put it to you, John – would you turn away a poor, cold, hungry slave from your door just because his cruel owner wanted you to? Would you, now?"

The truth is that the senator himself had a kind heart, and turning away anyone who was in danger did not come easy for him. His wife knew it; so she was using that to win her argument.

"Would you turn a woman out in the snow for being black? Or would you throw her in prison?"

"It wouldn't be easy, but it's what we must do," Mr. Bird started.

"What we must do? What we must do is to obey God, John! If people in Kentucky want to keep their slaves, they should be kind to them. Slaves don't run away if they're happy. For when they run, their very lives are in danger. Think of what they must be running from to choose the dangers of life on the run. Rules or no rules, I promise that I'll never turn a slave away from my door, so help me God!"

"Mary! Mary! You don't know what you're saying. Listen to reason..."

"I hate reasons, John, when they're used to come around what is clearly true. You don't believe what you're saying yourself when it comes to really doing it."

At this point, old Cudjoe, their black worker put his head in at the door to ask Mrs. Bird to come into the kitchen.

Mr. Bird was happy for the rest. He was just starting to read the newspaper when his wife shouted for him to come and join her in the kitchen.

When he walked in he was surprised to find a young woman with ice-covered clothes lying across two chairs. She was without one shoe and that foot was covered with blood. He could not tell if she was alive or dead. On looking more closely, he could see that she was part black.

His wife and their black cook, Dinah, were trying to bring the woman around. And old Cudjoe was pulling cold wet shoes and socks off a small boy and rubbing his cold feet.

"I think it was the heat that made her faint," said Dinah. She was walking and talking when she come to the door asking if she could come in and warm herself for a time. I was asking where she was from when she dropped into my arms."

"Poor woman!" said Mrs. Bird lovingly as Eliza slowly opened her big dark eyes and looked up at her.

"My boy! Where is my boy?" she asked.

Harry jumped off Cudjoe's knee and ran to her side.

"Oh, he's here, he's here!" she said. "Thank you, God!"

She turned to Mrs. Bird, "Please, Madam, please protect us! They want to take my boy!"

"You're safe here," said Mrs. Bird. "Don't be afraid."

In a short time Mrs. Bird was able to make the woman see that she was safe. A bed was there for her on a couch by the kitchen fire. The woman and her child were soon sleeping deeply.

Mr. and Mrs. Bird returned to the sitting room, where, strange as it sounds, not a word was said about what they had been talking about before Eliza and Harry arrived at the house. For a time Mr. Bird went through the movements of reading the newspaper, and Mrs. Bird knitted. Both were thinking.

"Who can she be?" said Mr. Bird after some time.

"When she has rested, she'll tell us," said Mrs. Bird.

A short time later, Mr. Bird said as he looked into his newspaper, "I say, Mary!"

"Yes?"

"Do you think she could wear one of your dresses if you take down the border a little? She's taller than you."

A smile moved across Mrs. Bird's face. "We'll see."

Another wait, and then, "I say, Mary?"

"Yes?"

"That old coat of yours that you put over me when I fall asleep in my chair. We don't need it as much as she does. You can give that to her."

Soon Mr. and Mrs. Bird were called to the woman's side. She was awake and quiet. Her sad eyes looked into the fire.

"You need not be afraid of anything. We are your friends," said Mrs. Bird. "Where are you from and what do you want?"

Only one month earlier, Mr. and Mrs. Bird had buried one of their children who died of a sickness. So as they listened to Eliza's story, about burying two babies before Harry was born; about Harry being sold; about her husband's master taking her husband from her; and about running for her life with the child across the freezing river, their feelings were deeply touched. The Senator was too much of a man to cry, but he turned his back and looked out the window before blowing his nose on a cloth from his pocket.

"Where do you plan to go now?" he asked.

"To Canada, if only I knew where that was. Is it far off?"

"Yes, it's very far off," said Mrs. Bird sadly. "Give us time to think what we can do. Here, Dinah, make up a bed for her in your room. In the morning we can do something. For now, poor woman, you pray to God. He'll protect you."

Mrs. Bird and her husband returned to the sitting room. She sat by the fire. Mr. Bird walked up and down talking to himself. "What do I do now? I must do something. Dirty business, this." At length he said to his wife, "She'll have to leave tonight. That slave buyer will have the dogs on us in the morning. We could hide the woman, but it's too much to ask the child not to make a noise. It'll go bad for me too if they find her here. No, we must move her tonight."

"Tonight? But where could she go?"

"I know just the place," he said, putting his shoes on. "It's ugly business, but I see no other way."

Mrs. Bird knew this wasn't the time to push her husband. She waited quietly, and he finished dressing before telling her more about his plan.

"A man from Kentucky, Van Tromp, came here to Ohio a few years back with his slaves. He made them all free. He has a place seven miles back in the trees, where no one goes. She would be safe there, but it's a very rough road on a night like this.

I would have to go with Cudjoe to show the way. If we wait until midnight, we can take her there and then carry on to Columbus, where I can get a coach at four in the morning and be at my desk in time for work. People will think I left early from here only to meet that coach."

"You have a good heart, John," said his wife, putting her little white hand on his. "I love you because I know you better than you know yourself," she said with tears in her eyes.

Mr. Bird started to walk out to see about the horses when he stopped at the door and turned.

"Mary, I don't know how you'd feel about it, but there's that drawer full of little Henry's things." So saying, he turned quickly and left, closing the door after him.

His wife opened the door to their dead son's room and went to a drawer with a candle in her hand. She slowly opened the drawer. There were coats and shirts and socks, and even some shoes. There was a horse, a ball, and other toys. With tears in her eyes she started putting one thing after another into a suitcase. She could not find it in her heart to give the toys or clothes to any of the happy children that she knew. But in Eliza she could see a mother with the same sadness that she had been through over losing a child. Harry was still alive and able to find happiness from such humble things as she was putting into the suitcase.

She opened a wardrobe and taking a few dresses, she sat down with a needle and thread to take down the border of them and make them long enough for Eliza. She worked quickly and was just finishing them when the old clock in the corner said that it was midnight. At the same time she heard the sound of wheels at the door.

"It's time to wake her," said the Senator coming in the door with his coat in his hand.

Mrs. Bird put the last few things into the suitcase and her husband put it in the coach. A short time later Eliza walked out wearing a coat, hat, and blanket that she had just received from

her new friends. From inside the coach she put out her hand to thank Mrs. Bird. She tried to talk, but could not. She covered her eyes and her tears said more than any words of thanks ever could. The door was closed and the horses moved off with Cudjoe driving them.

What a strange turn for the good Senator who had argued for a rule against people in Ohio helping slaves from Kentucky. He had been honestly thinking that it was right not to be too hard on people in Kentucky; but in trying to help the slave owners, he was being cruel to the slaves, and it was only when he came face to face with the cruel effect of the rule that he could see how wrong it was.

The trip to Van Tromp's was a very wet and very rough one, as Senator Bird and Cudjoe worked together two or three times to pull the coach and horses from the mud.

It was very late when the coach arrived at the door of a big farm house. After much knocking, the owner came and opened the door. He was a very big man in a long red night shirt. His brown hair was pointing in all directions and his eyes were still half filled with sleep. He looked stupidly at the Senator, trying to understand what was happening, as the Senator slowly went through Eliza's story.

Honest John Van Tromp had been a rich land owner in Kentucky. He had the look of a bear about him on the outside, but inside he was as soft as a baby cat. His kind heart was equal to his big body, and it could not stand to see what owning slaves was doing to Whites as well as to Blacks in Kentucky. When he could take no more, he used all the money he had to buy a very big piece of land in Ohio where his slaves could start a new life as free people. He made them all free, then moved his family to a small farm far back in the trees, where he could live his life with a clean heart before God.

"Are you a man who would protect a poor woman and her child from slave catchers?" asked the Senator, coming to the point of his visit.

"That I am," said Honest John.

"Then I was right in coming here," said the Senator.

"If anyone comes looking, I'll be waiting for them," said the good man, standing tall. "And I have seven sons, each as big as me. They'll be ready for them too. They can come at any hour, and we'll be ready for them," he said, breaking out into a big deep laugh.

Eliza was very tired after two nights with very little sleep. She pulled herself up the steps with her sleeping child in her arms. The rough man put a candle near her face to see her better. He opened a door to a small room off the big kitchen and made a movement with his hand for her to go in. He lighted another candle and put it on the table in that room.

"You have nothing to be afraid of here, girl. I'm ready for anything that comes," he said, pointing to three guns over the fireplace. "You sleep as quiet as if you were in your own mother's arms," he said as he closed the door.

"She's very beautiful," Honest John said to the Senator when the door was closed. "It's the beautiful ones that have the most reason to run. But this business about them selling the child makes me want to use words that I shouldn't. You know, it was many years before I would join a church, because the preachers in our parts all said the Bible was for such things. I couldn't be up to them with their Bible talk, so I turned against them and the Bible too. I never joined a church until I come across a preacher who could talk their language saying that the Bible said just the opposite to what the others were saying. That's when I joined the church," said John, who had been opening a bottle of juice.

He gave a glass to Senator Bird and said, "You best stay here for the night. I'll call my wife and we can make up a bed for you in no time."

"Thank you, my good friend," said the Senator, "but I must move on. I'll be meeting the night coach in Columbus."

"If you must, I'll walk in front for a piece and show you a way to Columbus that's better than the one you came in on."

John put on his clothes and, with a lantern in his hand, he was soon leading the Senator's coach to a road at the back of his farm. Before he left, the Senator put some money into John's hand for Eliza.

QUESTIONS ON PART 9

1. What law was the government in Ohio wanting to bring in, that would make life difficult for slaves who were running away from Kentucky? (page 73)
2. How tall was Senator Bird's wife? (page 74)
3. What did Mr. Bird find lying across two chairs in his kitchen? (page 75)
4. What sad happening in their life helped Mr. and Mrs. Bird to feel sad for Eliza and her child? (page 77)
5. What did John Van Tromp do for all of his slaves after he moved to Ohio from Kentucky? (page 77)
6. When face to face with a slave that was running away, the Senator could see that a rule to help the slave owners was a rule to hurt the _____. (page 79)
7. Why did it take many years for Honest John to join a church? (page 80)

10. Haley Takes Tom

It was grey and wet on that sad February morning. Hearts were sad and heads were down at the Shelby farm. Aunt Chloe was ironing shirts on the table in front of the fire. Every now and then she would lift her hand to her face to rub away the tears that were running down her cheeks.

Tom sat with his Bible open on his knee and his head leaning on his hand. It was early and the children were still asleep. Tom walked over to look at them.

"It's the last time," he said.

Aunt Chloe did not answer. She pushed the iron over and over the rough shirt that had been as smooth as she could make it some minutes earlier. At long last she put her iron down and dropped sadly onto the bench by the table to have the cry that she had been holding back for so long.

"Oh God, how can I take it?" she asked. "It would be different if I knew where you was going. Mrs. says she'll buy you back some day; but God knows no one ever comes up that goes down there. They kills them with the hard work on them farms down South."

"The God we follow here will be with me there," said Tom.

"I know you're right," said Aunt Chloe. "But bad things happen and he doesn't stop them."

"I'm in his hands," said Tom. "He won't make it any worse than I can take. And I can thank him for one thing. I can thank him that it's me that's sold and going down and not you or the children. Here you're safe. What comes will come only on me, and God will help me. I know he will."

It wasn't easy for Tom to say this. The feeling in his throat wanted to cry too. But he knew that he must be brave and strong for the good of Chloe and the children.

"We should be thinking about the good things we've received from God," said Tom, knowing that he needed to do this as much as Chloe.

"Good things?" said Aunt Chloe. "I don't see no good things in it. It's not right. Master should never have put himself in such a place that they could take you. He's made more off you than what he paid for you many times over. He owed it to you to make you free. Even if he can't get out of it now, it don't make it right. No one can force me to say it is. You always put his work before your own in every way. You loved him more than your wife and children and this is how he thanks you! God will be on to them that sell the hearts of those that love them!"

"Chloe, no! If you love me, you won't talk so. It could be our last time together ever. Don't let hate destroy it. I tell you, it hurts me to hear talk against Master. Wasn't he put in my arms as a baby? It's right that I should love him; but I can't ask that he have the same feeling for me. They're used to having good things; it don't come so easy for them to think about what others do for them. You can't ask them to. You just put him beside other masters. Tell me what slave has had a better living than I've had? He would never have sold me if he could get away with it. I know he wouldn't. So you look at it that way."

"I know something isn't right about it," said Aunt Chloe. I can't rightly put my finger on it, but it's clear that something's wrong about it."

"You should be looking up to God. He's above it all. Not one bird falls but what he knows about it."

"I know it should make me feel better, but it don't," said Aunt Chloe. "But what's the good of talking? I'll just wet up the corn cake and get you one good breakfast. God knows when you'll get another one."

And what a breakfast it was! For Mrs. Shelby had said that Chloe need not cook for the family that morning. Poor Aunt Chloe put all that she had into Tom's breakfast. She killed the fattest chicken and opened bottles of things on the shelf over the fireplace that were only for the most important times. And she made her most perfect corn cake ever.

"Look here, Pete," said Mose when they were awake, "Isn't this the best breakfast you ever saw!" at the same time catching at a piece of chicken.

Aunt Chloe hit him on the side of the head. "Look at you, being happy over the last breakfast your poor father's going to have with us."

"Don't be hard on them," said Tom quietly.

"I can't help it," said Aunt Chloe. "I'm so heated up that it makes me act ugly."

The boys were standing quietly, looking first at their father and then at their mother as the baby, holding her mother's dress, started to cry.

"There!" said Aunt Chloe, rubbing her eyes and lifting the baby. "I's finished shouting now. You eat some of this chicken, boys. Your mother's been too hard on you."

The boys needed no more than that. They jumped into the food with enthusiasm, and it was just as well that they did, for if they had not, the food would have been wasted on Tom and Chloe, who were not in the spirit for eating.

"Now," said Aunt Chloe after breakfast, "I must put up your clothes. I can almost promise that he'll take them for himself. I know their ways — low as dirt they are. Your old shirts are here, and these here are your new ones. I put new toes in your socks last night, but I don't know who will ever do it for you again." With this Aunt Chloe put her head on the side of the box and had another little cry.

The boys, who had finished eating by now, started to cry a little and put their hands to their eyes. Tom had the baby on his knee and she was having the time of her life scratching his face and pulling his hair. She was shouting with happiness.

"Shout away, poor baby," said Aunt Chloe. "You'll have to come to it too one day. You'll live to see your husband sold, or to be sold yourself one day. And these boys'll be sold, like as not, when they gets good for something. No use in niggers having nothing!"

"Here comes Mrs.!" shouted one of the boys.

"She can't help; what's she coming for?" said Aunt Chloe.

Mrs. Shelby walked into the room. Aunt Chloe put out a chair for her, but was very rough about how she did it. Mrs. Shelby did not see the chair or the spirit behind the action.

"Tom," she said, "I come to —" and stopping there, she looked around at the family and sat down in the chair, and, covering her face with a cloth, she started to cry.

"Oh, Mrs., don't do that!" said Aunt Chloe, who started to cry too. For a few minutes they all cried together. In doing so, all the anger in Aunt Chloe melted away.

You who try to help the poor, do you know that all your money cannot buy with a cold face what one honest tear can do for these people.

"My good man," said Mrs. Shelby. "I cannot give you anything, because they will take it from you. But I can give you my word before God that I will bring you back as soon as I get enough money. Until then, just ask for God's help."

At this the boys shouted that Master Haley was coming. He kicked open the door. The day before had been a very bad one for him and he was not in a good spirit this morning.

"Come with me, nigger!" he said. "Your servant, Madam," he said, taking off his hat, when he saw Mrs. Shelby.

Aunt Chloe closed the box and tied a rope around it. As she looked at the slave buyer, her tears dried and her eyes turned to coals of fire.

Tom put the heavy box on his shoulder and followed his new master. His wife carried the baby; and the boys, still crying, followed behind.

Mrs. Shelby stopped the buyer to talk to him very seriously for a few minutes, giving the family time to walk to the wagon before him. All the young and old workers on the place were waiting to say goodbye to their old friend. They all looked up to Tom as the head servant and as a Christian teacher, so they were truly sad to see him leave.

"Chloe, you're taking it better than we are," said one of the women when she saw how quiet Aunt Chloe was by the wagon.

"I's finished my tears," she said, looking angrily at the buyer, who was coming up. "I won't cry in front of that old stick of timber, no way!"

"Get in!" said Haley to Tom as he walked through the group of angry servants.

When Tom was in, Haley pulled some very heavy handcuffs from a box and put them around Tom's ankles.

The whole group showed its anger and surprise, and Mrs. Shelby shouted from the verandah, "Mr. Haley, I promise you that there is no need for that!"

"Can't say that I agree, Madam," answered Haley. "After losing one slave from this place, I think it's best to play safe."

"It's just like him to do such a thing," said Aunt Chloe angrily. The two boys were starting to understand what their father was in for and they were crying loudly now.

"It's too bad," said Tom, "that Master George happened to be away."

George had been sent to visit friends on another farm very early in the morning on the day before. He had left without learning what was going to happen to Tom.

"Give my love to Master George," Tom said seriously.

Haley whipped up the horse and Tom pulled away, looking back at the old place until he could see it no more.

At this time Mr. Shelby was away too. After seeing, the day before, how willing Tom was to receive what was happening, and how he was willing to receive it without showing anger in return, Shelby was feeling too bad to face Tom. He left on business very early that morning, planning to return after Tom had left.

Out on the open road, Haley and Tom travelled together for about a mile before coming to a shop where a worker made shoes for horses, and other things from metal. Haley pulled some smaller handcuffs out of the box and carried them into the shop.

"These are a little too small for his hands," said Haley, pointing at Tom.

"That's Shelby's Tom, isn't it. Has he sold him?" asked the worker.

"That he has," said Haley.

"Really? I never would've believed it. But you don't need chains on that man. He's the most honest, best slave I've ever..."

"I've heard it all before," said Haley, "but good slaves are just the ones to run off. The stupid ones are happy to go any place you take them. And the drinkers don't think about what's happening until it's too late. They'll stick by you and even be pleased to be carried around. But these smart ones, they hate it like anything. No way but to chain them. If they have legs, they'll use them."

The worker started looking for the right tools. "I understand the farms down south are no place for a Kentucky nigger to choose to go. They die real fast down there, don't they?"

"Yes, I agree with you on that," said Haley. "It's the weather as much as anything. But it's what keeps me in business finding new ones for them."

"I can't help but think that it's a waste of a good man like Tom to send him to a sugar farm to be used up and killed."

"He could finish up better than that," said Haley. "I promised to see if I could get him a job as a house servant."

"Are his wife and children still at the Shelby's?"

"Yes, but he'll get another wife there. God knows there are women enough any place you go."

Tom was sitting sadly in the wagon as this was happening. Then he heard the sound of a horse behind him. Before he knew what was happening, Master George jumped into the wagon, put his arms around his neck and started crying loudly.

"It's not right!" he said. "I won't listen to any of them. It's a cruel, bad thing to do. If I was a man, I'd stop them. I would!" said George between crying.

"Oh, Master George. It's so good to see you!" said Tom. "I was real sad going off without you. You don't know how happy I am to see you!" Here Tom moved his feet and George saw the chains on his ankles.

"What is this?" he shouted, lifting his hands. "I'll knock his head off for this. I will!"

"No, you won't, Master George. And you must stop shouting. It won't help me at all if you make him angry."

"Then for you I won't," he said. "But it makes me angry to even think of it. You know, they never sent for me. I only heard about it from Tom Lincoln. I tell you, I exploded when I arrived back at the house and you weren't there!"

"That, too, is not the right thing to do, Master George."

"I can't help it! It's wrong, and there's no two ways about it! Look here, Uncle Tom," said he, turning his back to the shop and whispering. "Take my silver dollar!"

"Oh, I couldn't think of doing that," said Tom, who was moved by George's action.

"But you will!" said George. "See, I put a hole in it and I put a string through it, so you can hang it around your neck where they won't see it. Then they won't take it away from you."

George quickly tied the string around Tom's neck. "Now button your coat up tight over it and keep it secret from them. Remember each time you see it that I'll come after you one day and bring you back. I'll argue the life out of father if he doesn't do it."

"Master George, you mustn't talk like that about your own father!"

"Tom, I don't mean nothing bad."

"Now, Master George, you listen to your parents. And always stay close to your mother, you hear?"

"Yes, I will, Uncle Tom," said George seriously.

"And never say anything bad about your parents."

"You aren't angry with me for talking to you like this, are you, Master George?"

"Oh, no, Uncle Tom. You always do give good teaching."

"I'm older, you know," said Tom, softly touching the boy's face with his big rough hands. "You grow up to be a good master like your father and a Christian like your mother."

"I'll be real good, Uncle Tom, I promise," said George. "I'll do the best I can in everything. And don't you be discouraged. I'll get you back here. And when I'm a man, I'll build you a new house, with a sitting room and a big rug covering the whole floor."

Haley came out of the shop carrying the handcuffs.

"Look here now, Mr.," said George to Haley as he was stepping out of the wagon, "I'll tell father and mother if you're cruel to Uncle Tom!"

"Oh, will you now?" said the buyer.

"You should feel very bad for spending your life buying people and chaining them like animals!" said George.

"I'm no worse for buying than you rich people are for selling," said Haley.

"When I'm a man, I'll never sell anyone," said George.

"Goodbye, Uncle Tom. You be strong now!"

"Goodbye, Master George," said Tom looking after him with love in his heart. "God love you!" he said more to himself as George was riding away. Over Tom's heart was a warm place where young George had put his dollar.

"I'll tell you what I tell all my niggers," said Haley to Tom after George had left. "You do the right thing by me and I'll do the right thing by you. I know all the tricks, so there's no point in trying them. If you're quiet and don't try to take off, you'll have a good time with me. If you don't, you'll bring on yourself what comes of it. I keep these handcuffs in the box. I won't use them if I don't need to."

Tom promised that he had no plans to run off. But with chains on his feet, it was a promise that was not needed.

QUESTIONS ON PART 10

1. What did Tom thank God for, about being sold? (page 82)
2. What did Aunt Chloe make for Tom on his last morning with her? (page 83)
3. What does the writer say will help the poor more than giving all of our money to them with a "cold face"? (page 85)
4. Where was Master George on the day that Tom left the farm with Haley? (page 86)
5. What job had Haley promised to try to get for Tom? (page 87)
6. What did Master George give to Tom? (page 88)
7. What did Master George say that he would do for Tom when he himself was a man? (page 89)

11. When a Slave is not a Slave

It was a wet afternoon when a traveller walked into a pub in a small town in Kentucky. The room was filled with people, all hiding from the rain. The traveller was a short, thick man in neat clothes. He was older than most in the room, and carrying a small suitcase and an umbrella. He moved to what he believed would be the warmest corner of the room and looked up at a tall, thin man leaning back in a chair on the side of the fireplace closest to him. The man was chewing tobacco and spitting from time to time.

"Hello, stranger. How are you?" said the tall man, spitting tobacco juice onto the floor near the older man.

"Good, thank you," said the older man as he pulled his foot back away from the tobacco juice.

"Chew?" said the first man, who had pulled a piece of tobacco and a big knife from his pocket.

"No, thank you. It doesn't agree with me," said the little man, pulling away even more.

"To each his own," said the other, cutting off a piece and pushing it into his mouth. Seeing that the older man was not happy about his spitting in that direction, the man by the fire turned his spitting to one of the fire-irons.

"What's that?" said the old man, pointing toward a group who were standing around a sign on the wall."

"Runaway nigger," said one of the men in the room.

Mr. Wilson, for that was the old man's name, pulled out his glasses and put them on his nose before walking over to read the sign:

My part black boy, George, has run away. He is six feet tall, with very light skin. His hair is brown. He is very smart, talks well, can read and write. Has deep marks on his back and shoulders from whippings, and the letter H burned into his right hand. I will give \$400 for him, alive or dead.

The tall tobacco chewer walked over to the sign. Standing in front of it, he let loose with a full mouth of tobacco juice on it. "That's what I think of it," he said to all in the room, and he returned to his place by the fire.

"Why did you do that?" asked the owner of the pub.

"I would do it to the writer as soon as to the writing," said the man coldly. "Any man who owns a smart slave like that and can't find a better way to act toward him has no right to keep him. Papers like this tell the world the worst about Kentucky. That's my mind on it."

"Is that true?" said the owner, showing no real interest.

"I have a few niggers," said the tall man, "and I just tell them, 'Run if you want. I won't come looking.' That's how I keep them. Knowing they're free to run breaks up their wanting to. More than that, I have free papers for them when I die, and they know it. I tell you, there isn't a man in our parts who gets more out of his niggers than I do. My boys have been to Cincinnati with \$500 worth of horses and returned with the money all straight, time and time again. And why not? See, if you act toward them like they're dogs, they'll act like dogs toward you. But act like they're good men, and you'll have the work of good men out of them."

"I think you're right, friend," said Mr. Wilson. "I know for myself that this boy is a good man. He worked for me some six years in my bag company. He's a smart one too. He made a machine for cleaning the cloth. That machine is being used all over today. His master holds the papers on it."

"Holds the papers and makes money of it, too, I promise," said the farmer. "Then turns around and burns a mark on his worker's hand as thanks!"

"These smart boys are the worst ones," said a rough looking man from the other side of the room. "It's why they get themselves cut up and marked so. If they were so good, it wouldn't happen."

"What you mean is that God made them men and you have a devil of a time changing them into animals," said the farmer.

"Smart niggers are no help to their masters," argued the other. "What's the good of them having abilities that you can't make anything from? All they use their smartness for is to get around you. I've had one or two of these smart ones and I just sold them down river. I knew I would lose them sooner or later if I didn't."

"You need to send a letter to God, asking him to make you some people without any brains or spirit at all," said the farmer.

At this, a coach pulled up at the door. A well dressed, rich looking man was sitting in it with his black servant beside him.

People in the room looked at the man with the interest of those who have nothing better to do on a wet day. The man was tall and dark. He looked like he was from Spain. He had dark black hair and an air of confidence that said he must be very rich. He walked in easily and with a shake of his head showed his servant where to put his suitcases. He walked up to the counter and gave his name as Henry Butler. He walked over to the sign to read it out loud.

"Jim," he said to his servant, "did we meet a boy like this up at Bernan's?"

"Yes, Master," said Jim. "Only I don't know about the hand."

"I didn't look at the time," said the stranger, walking up to the owner of the pub. He then asked for a room, saying that he had some writing to do.

The owner was more than happy to have his business, and in a short time black workers of all sizes were stepping on each other's toes in their enthusiasm to prepare Master's room as he sat down in a chair in the middle of the room and started talking to the man next to him.

Mr. Wilson, from the time that the stranger had come into the pub, had been thinking that he knew him, but he could not remember when or where. Every few minutes, when the man moved or smiled, Mr. Wilson would look into his eyes. But the dark eyes were so cool that they showed no interest in Mr. Wilson. Then it came to him how he knew the man and he walked confidently up to him.

"Mr. Wilson, is that you?" said the man, showing surprise, and putting his hand out to shake the hand of the older man. "I didn't know who you were at first. I see that you remember me... Henry Butler."

"Yes, yes, I remember you," said Mr. Wilson like one who was talking in a dream.

Just then a black servant came to say the room was ready.

"Jim, see to the suitcases," said the man. Then, turning to Mr. Wilson, he added, "I should like to talk with you about some business in my room, if you please."

Mr. Wilson followed him, as one who walks in his sleep. They went up to a room with a fire burning in it. When they were inside, the young man locked the door, crossed his arms on his chest, and looked Mr. Wilson full in the face.

"George?" said Mr. Wilson.

"Yes, George!" said the young man.

"I didn't know at first!"

"Black colouring on my hair and some brown colouring on my face makes a big difference, doesn't it?" said the young man with a smile.

"But George, this is a dangerous game that you're playing. I do not want to encourage you in it."

"I can do it without you encouraging me," said George with the same proud smile.

George's father was white, as was his mother's father. He had received his proud spirit from a very rich family, and only a little yellow colour in his skin from the poor side of the family. By making his yellow skin brown and his brown hair black, he had become a new person.

Mr. Wilson was in a corner now. He wanted to help George, but he had a strong belief about obeying the laws of the land.

"George," he said, "I'm not surprised about you running away from Mr. Harris. But I must say that I'm not happy about what you're doing."

"And why aren't you happy about it?" asked George quietly.

"Why... because you're going against the laws of your country."

"My country?" said George with hate in his words. "What country do I have before I'm buried? As it is, I'd be better off dead!"

"No, George! You mustn't talk like that. It goes against the teaching of the Bible. You have a hard master, I know. I won't say he's a good man. But you know how the angel said for Hagar to return to her mistress, and Paul said for Onesimus to return to his master."

"Don't talk about the Bible to me that way, Mr. Wilson," said George with fire in his eyes. "My wife is a Christian, and I want to be one some day. But when you use the Bible against a man like myself, it's enough to make me give it all up. I ask you to leave the Bible out of it and ask God himself if it's wrong. I feel that he would agree with me."

"I can understand your feelings," said the kindly old man, "and I know God can understand them. But it doesn't make them right. See, Paul says, 'Each of you, free or slave, must stay in the place you were when God called you.' We shouldn't fight against the will of God, George."

George's head leaned back and his arms were tightly crossed over his big wide chest. An angry smile was taking shape on his lips.

"Think of it like this, Mr. Wilson," he said. "If Indians should come and take you prisoner, away from your wife and children, and tell you to work all your life planting corn for them. Would you think that trying to leave was fighting against the will of God? No, I think you would tell yourself that the first horse you could put your hands on was a sign from God that you should run away. Wouldn't you?"

Mr. Wilson was not the best person in the world at arguing, but he was smart enough not to argue with a point that had no answer. So he said nothing for a few seconds. All he did was play with his umbrella. Then he changed to a different line of talk.

"You know, George, I've always been your friend. What I say is said out of love. What you are doing is very dangerous. If they catch you, your life will be worse than it was before you ran away."

"I know that, Mr. Wilson," said George. "But..." and he opened his coat to show two guns and a knife, "I'm ready for them. If it comes to that, I'll buy myself six feet of free land with my life – the first and last that I'll ever own in Kentucky."

"George, this is very bad. You can't go breaking the laws of the land."

"Mr. Wilson, it's your land, not mine. A slave has no country. What laws are there for us in this country? We don't make them. No one asks if we agree to them. All the laws do is hold us down to hurt and destroy us. I hear you people talk about how a good government can't force people against their will. You say government only receives strength if the people choose to give it. But think how that sounds to us who have no voice!"

Mr. Wilson was clearly losing the argument. But he believed that it was his job to show George the truth.

"It's not right, George," he said. "I just know it's not right," and he sat down to chew on the handle of his umbrella.

"Look at me," said George, coming up and sitting himself down in front of Mr. Wilson. "Aren't I just as much a man as you are? Look at me. Am I not as much a man as anyone? Now listen to my story. I had a father, a rich Kentucky man who did not think enough of me to keep me from being sold with his dogs and horses when he died. I saw my mother put up for sale with her seven children. They were sold before her eyes, one by one, all to different masters. I was the youngest. She came on her knees before my new master and prayed for him to buy her with me, that she could have one child with her. He kicked her away with his heavy shoe. I saw him do it, and the last I heard was her cries of pain as I was carried off to his place."

"Go on," said Mr. Wilson.

"My master later made an agreement with a friend to buy my oldest sister from him. She was a good Christian, and as beautiful as my poor mother had been. At first I was happy that she was coming to live with us. But that ended when I heard her being whipped and I couldn't do a thing to help her. You know why she was being whipped? She was being whipped because she was a Christian, because she didn't believe in giving her body to any man that wanted it. Your Christian laws give no slave girl the right to be a Christian when it comes to that. Because she would not give her body, my master sold her down the river. I was left without a father, without a mother, without a sister.

"No one ever said a kind word to me as I was growing up... until I came to work at your company. You were kind to me. You encouraged me to do well, to learn to read and write, to make something of myself. And God knows I love you for that.

"Then there was the day that Eliza came into my life. You know how beautiful she is. And she's as good as she is beautiful. When I learned that she loved me, when I married her, I could not believe that life could be so good. But then what happened? My master comes and takes me away from my work and my friends, and forces my face into the dirt. And then he comes between me and my wife and says I must give her up and live with another woman.

"All of this, your laws give him the right to do, without a word on what God thinks of it. Look at it. All that has been bad in my life came from your laws. How can you call these the laws of my country? I don't want your country. All I want is to get away from it as quickly as I can. When I get to Canada, where the laws protect me, that will be my country, and I'll obey its laws. If anyone tries to stop me from going there, I'll fight to be free in the same way that your fathers went to war to be free."

Mr. Wilson was deeply moved by the feeling and truth behind what George had just said.

"To the devil with them!" he exploded. "Oh, I must watch my language! But you go on, George, and God be with you! Don't shoot anyone... or if you must shoot, don't shoot to kill." Then, putting his hand in his pocket, he went on, "It's not right by the rules, but hang the rules! Here, take this money."

"No, I can't," said George. "It could make problems for you if anyone learns that you helped me."

"Foolishness! You take it. You'll need it more than me."

"I'll return it when I'm able," said George, taking the money. "And thank you so much, Mr. Wilson."

"It's a dangerous game that you're playing, George. Who is the black man travelling with you?"

"Jim. He went to Canada early last year. He returned with a plan to help his poor old mother get away."

"Did it work?"

"He's been waiting for the right time. But he agreed to help me as far as Ohio. He knows people there who will help me. When I'm safe, he'll return for his mother."

Mr. Wilson looked at George with pride. "George you've turned out well. You hold your head and talk and move like a different person."

"I am a different person. I am a free man!" said George proudly. "I will never call any man 'Master' again!"

"I am surprised at your confidence," said Mr. Wilson. "To come here to the nearest pub."

"But that's the good of it!" said George. "They will never think to look for me so close. They have been here with their sign and left, thinking that I am running in front of them like a dog. My friend's master isn't from these parts, and people stopped looking for him last year some time. I don't think people will know me from what it says on the sign."

"What about the mark on your hand?"

George pulled off one glove to show the mark.

"This was the last thing Mr. Harris gave me. He said if I was to try and run away, this would make it easier to catch me."

"It makes my blood run cold," said Mr. Wilson.

"And it makes my blood run hot," said George. Then, after a few seconds, he said, "I'll be leaving from here very early in the morning, and by tomorrow night I should be sleeping safe in Ohio. I'll say goodbye now."

George put his hand out with the air of a king. The friendly little man smiled as he was shaking it, and then left.

A second or two after the door closed, George opened it and said, "Mr. Wilson, one more word please?"

The old man returned. When he was safe inside, George said, "Can I ask one more Christian act from you?"

"Yes?"

"It's true that what I am doing is very dangerous. If I die, my wife is the only person on earth who will feel the effect of it. I have a little button that she gave to me. Can you give it to her and tell her I loved her to the last?"

"Oh yes. How could you think I wouldn't?" said Mr. Wilson with a tear in his eye.

"Tell her this," said George. "Tell her if I die, I want her to run away to Canada without me. I know her mistress is kind; but in the end just being a slave will bring her pain. Tell her to bring up our son as a free man so he won't be forced to go through what I've been through. Will you tell her that, Mr. Wilson? Please?"

"Yes, George, I will. But I'll be praying that you won't die. You're a very brave man! Put your faith in God."

"You Christians don't know how difficult it is for people like me to do that," said George. "It's not easy to believe there is a God who loves any of us."

"But there is," said Mr. Harris, crying openly now. "It's not always easy to see him behind the clouds, but in his own time he'll make things right. There is a God, George. Believe it. If he doesn't put things right in this life, he will in the next."

The honest love and faith of the kind old man did more to help George believe than all the arguments in the world.

QUESTIONS ON PART 11

1. A sign in the pub said that George had very light skin. How could people know by looking at George's hands that he was the slave that the sign was talking about? (page 91)
2. In what way did the man who was chewing tobacco think that people should act toward their slaves? (page 92)
3. How did it happen that Mr. Wilson knew the slave who had run away? (page 92)
4. What did the well dressed man who looked like he was from Spain say that his name was? (page 93)
5. What was holding Mr. Wilson back from helping George? (page 94)
6. How many children did George's mother have? (page 96)
7. Why was George's sister whipped? (page 97)
8. What did Mr. Wilson give to George? (page 98)
9. What did George ask Mr. Wilson to give to Eliza? (page 99)

12. Other Mothers

As Tom and Haley were riding in the wagon, both men were thinking. But their thinking was very different.

Haley was thinking about how kind he was. Other buyers chain their slaves hand and foot, but Tom's hands were free. Most of his slaves were not even happy with this, but Haley was surprised at Tom's good spirit.

Tom was thinking about some words from the Bible. "We have no country here. We are looking for one in the future. God is happy to have us following him, and he is making a new country ready to receive us." They say that the writers of the Bible were not very smart and had very little schooling. But their words have touched the hearts of poor people like Tom for many years. They give spiritual strength and they encourage the hearts that would be filled with sadness without them.

Haley had some newspapers and was looking through them for news of slave sales in other Kentucky towns. One of them listed five slaves being sold in a town a short distance away.

"I'm going to look into this one," he said to Tom, because he had no other person to talk to. "You see, I want to take a group of you down South together. It's cheaper for me, and you'll have people to talk with on the way. We'll ride into town and I'll put you in the prison until I finish my business."

Tom listened quietly. He was thinking about how the five slaves would be feeling now, and if any of them had a wife and children like himself. He was hurt by Haley's plan to put him in prison, because he had always been honest and always obeyed the law. Poor as he was, it was about all he had to be proud of. If he had been richer, he would not have been forced to put so much worth on things like being honest and obeying the law!

That night Tom was put in the town prison.

The next morning a group of people came together in front of the court house for the sale. Those being sold were talking quietly to each other. An old woman named Hagar was said to be 60 years old, but she looked much older through hard work and sickness. She wasn't able to see well and her hands and feet were crippled with pain. By her side was her last son, Albert, a good looking boy of 14 years. One by one her other children had been sold down South. His mother's shaking hand was holding him tightly.

"Don't be afraid, Aunt Hagar," said the oldest of the men in the group. "I talked to Master about it. He said he'd try to sell the two of you together."

"They needn't think I'm too old for working," said she, lifting her shaking hands. "I can cook and clean. I'm worth buying. Tell them that there. You tell them," she said sadly.

Haley pushed into the group, walked up to the oldest man, pulled his mouth open, and looked in, feeling his teeth. He said for him to stand up straight, bend his back, and do other exercises to show his muscles. Then he moved to the next man, going through the same exercises with him. He finished with the boy, feeling his arms, looking at his fingers, and telling him to jump.

"He's not going to be sold without me!" said the old woman strongly. "He and I goes in a lot together. I's real strong, Master, and can do a lot of work – a lot of it, Master."

"Farm work?" said Haley. "I don't think so!" With that, he moved away, put his hands in his pocket, a cigar in his mouth, and waited for the sale to start.

"What do you think of them?" asked a man who had been watching Haley.

"I think I'll put in for the younger ones and the boy," said Haley, spitting.

"I hear they want to sell the boy and the old woman together," said the man.

"Won't happen!" said Haley. "She's just skin and bones – not worth feeding."

"What if they added her in cheap?" asked the man.

"Not interested. Not even if she was to give her to me. I'm looking for workers, not sick old women."

At this point, the man leading the sale pushed through the people standing around in the sun. The old woman stopped breathing and pulled her son up close to her.

"Stay close to me, Albert," she said. "Stay close and they'll put us up together."

"Oh, mother, I'm afraid they won't," said the boy.

"They must, child. I can't live no ways if they don't."

The man doing the selling shouted that it was time to start. The four men were sold very quickly, with Haley getting two of them.

"Come now, young one," said the seller, giving the boy a touch with his hammer. "Come up and show us how you can jump."

"Put us two up together. Do, please, Master," said the old woman, holding close to her boy.

"Be off!" said the man roughly, pushing her hands away from himself. "You come last. Now, boy, you jump!" and with that he pushed the boy toward the box that he was to stand on for the sale. The boy turned to look back at his crying mother, but there was no time left for him to touch her now. People were shouting out prices for him and he looked from side to side at those fighting to become his next master. In the end, Haley added him to his winnings for the day. As Haley came to take him, his poor old mother, shaking all over, put out her hands toward Haley.

"Buy me too, Master, please! Do it for Jesus if not for me. Buy me. I'll die if you don't!"

"You'll die if I do. That's the problem," said Haley. "No, I can't!" And he turned away from her.

The man who had been talking to Haley, and who was not without a kind heart, was the only person interested in buying the mother, and she was soon his for almost nothing.

The slaves themselves tried to encourage the poor old mother.
"Couldn't they leave me just one? Master always said I would have one. He did," she was saying over and over.

"Put your faith in God, Aunt Hagar," said the oldest of the men sadly.

"What good will that do?" she said, crying loudly.

"Mother, don't cry!" said the boy. "They say you's been sold to a kind master."

"I don't want him! Oh, Albert, I want you! You's my last baby. Oh, God, how can I take it?"

"Come take her away, can't some of you?" said Haley without any feeling. "It's not good for her to go on that way."

Some old farmers pulled the poor woman away and tried to talk to her as they were leading her to her new master.

"These are for you three," said Haley as he started putting handcuffs on each of their wrists. The handcuffs were each joined to a long chain that joined them to each other as they walked off to the prison to join Tom.

In a few days, Haley and his slaves were on a river boat. It would stop at towns on the way, where Haley or where someone working for Haley had put other slaves to be added to the group as they worked their way on down the river.

The boat itself was as beautiful as any on the river. The flag of a free America was flying above it. Well dressed men and women walked the front of the boat, taking in the beautiful weather. All was happiness up here; but at the back of the boat, with all the boxes and bags, were Haley's newest toys.

"Boys," said Haley as he came up to them, "I want you all to be happy. No sad faces, you understand? You do well by me and I'll do well by you."

They all said "Yes, Master," the only right answer for a Black in this part of America. But the truth is that they did not look happy. Little things like the wives and children they would never see again, were heavy on their minds.

"My wife doesn't even know I's been sold," said one of them to Tom.

"Where does she live?"

"She works in a pub not far from here. If only I could see her one more time..." and the tears started to fall from his eyes. They were the same tears a white man would cry if it had happened to him. Tom tried his best to say something that would help the man, but he could not find the right words.

On the floor above them fathers and mothers were sitting in comfortable chairs as their happy little children danced around them.

"Oh, mother," said a boy who had been looking toward the back of the boat, "there are five slaves down there!"

"Really?" said his mother.

"What did he say?" asked another woman.

"Some slaves are down below," said the mother.

"And they have chains on," added the boy.

"It's very wrong that such a thing should go on in a free country," said another woman.

"There's two sides to every story," said a rich woman who was knitting by the door of her room as her son and daughter played near her. "I've been South and I think they're better off as slaves than if they were free."

"But a good master can't take the place of the families they are pulled away from when they're sold like that," said the woman who was arguing against owning slaves.

"Yes, that's bad," said the rich woman, holding up the jumper she was knitting for her child and looking at it closely. "But I don't think it happens often enough to worry about."

"But it does," said the first woman. "I've lived many years in Kentucky and I know that it happens every day. Madam, you think about it. How would you feel if someone should take your two children there, and sell them?"

"We can't reason from our feelings to the feelings of these people," said the woman, who had returned to her knitting.

"Oh, but they do feel as we feel. Truth is, I think they feel these things more than we do."

"Is that true?" said the rich woman, who was losing interest now. She finished with the same argument that she had started with, "On the whole, I still think they're better off than they would be if they were free."

"It's God's plan," said a serious looking man in black who was sitting in a chair close to the others. "The Bible says that God will punish the children of Canaan. 'The servants of servants they will be,' it says."

"And you think that means that God wants us to own them as slaves?" asked a tall man who joined in the talk.

"How can it mean anything more? And how can we go against the will of God?" answered the preacher.

"Do you hear that?" said the tall man to Haley, who had been standing with his hands in his pockets by the stove, listening closely to the talk. "You're doing the will of God. God wants us all to punish the Blacks, and you are one of his best workers. It must make you feel very good to hear that coming from a man of God like this man!"

"I never did think of it as working for God," said Haley. "I just did it because I needed the money. I plan to stop it one day and fix things up with God."

"But now you don't have to stop," said the tall man. "You see what you can get away with when you have learned how to use the Bible the way this preacher man does? You just say, 'God will punish the children of... what's his name?' and that makes it all right."

This man, who was the same farmer who had been talking to Mr. Harris in the Kentucky pub, returned to smoking his cigar with a funny little smile on his face.

A thin young man with a face that showed deep feeling, now joined in. "The Bible does say, 'Do to others what you would want them to do to you.' I think that is as important as the one about Canaan in choosing how to act toward slaves."

"Yes, it does sound like a clearer piece of Bible to a stupid person like me," said the tall farmer.

The young man was going to say more, but at this point the boat stopped, and all the people ran to see where they were landing.

"Are they both preachers?" asked the tall farmer of a man who was travelling with the two men. He asked it as they were leaving.

"Yes, they are," he answered.

As the boat stopped, a black woman came running wildly toward the boat. She pushed through the people who were leaving, ran to where the slaves were sitting and hugged the slave who had been talking to Tom. He was a 30 year old man named John.

The tall farmer looked at the woman as she and her husband hugged for the last time. He touched Haley's arm. "I say now, there's a difference between one preacher and the next, isn't there? That young one doesn't feel so confident about the Canaan-will-be-punished saying."

Haley's head was hanging down.

"And the worst part of it is that God himself could agree with him – and not with the first preacher – when the day comes that he is to judge you. You think about that."

Haley walked away, thinking about the truth in what the farmer had said.

"If I can make enough in one or two more trips," he was thinking, "I'll stop this business. It's getting too dangerous." He then pulled some paper out of his pocket and started listing how much money he believed he would need before he could leave the slave catching business – an exercise that has helped many others to forget about God and what he thinks of their actions too.

The black woman was pulled away from her husband and the boat left the landing. It moved slowly down the river, stopping from time to time to take on more people.

At one stop, Haley left to do business and returned with a young black woman who was holding a young child in her arms. She was well dressed, and she had been talking happily to Haley as she came on. When the boat pulled away from the land, the woman came and sat close to the slaves, talking happily to her baby. After some time Haley sat beside her, and Tom could see that he was saying something serious to her. A heavy cloud moved over the woman's spirit, and she started talking quickly and loudly.

"It's not true. I don't believe it," she said. "It's a trick!"

"If you will not believe me, then believe this," said Haley, pulling out a piece of paper. "This says that I am your new owner. And here is your master's name on it. I gave good money for you too."

"I don't believe Master would pull a trick like this; it can't be true!" said the woman, whose fear was growing.

"You can ask anyone here who can read. Here!" he said to a man who was standing close to him. "Can you read this for me? This girl won't believe me when I tell her what it is."

"I'll see," said the man, taking the paper. "It says that John Fosdick has sold the girl Lucy and her child. It's all easy enough to read."

The woman was shouting now and more people were coming to see what the problem was.

"Master said I was going to work as a cook. He said it would be at a pub in Louisville – the same pub where my husband works. That's what he said to me himself. I can't believe he would lie to me," said the woman.

Haley showed the papers to the people who were interested. One friendly-looking man said to the girl, "I'm afraid your master has sold you. The papers say the sale has been finished."

"Then there's no good in talking," said the woman, who hugged her baby more tightly, quietly sat down on a box, and turned her back to the people to look out at the river.

"That's a good girl," said Haley. "You'll do well."

On the outside all was quiet on the boat, but the woman's heart was filled with much strong pain as she looked out at the river. One by one her tears dropped onto the face of the baby that she was hugging to her breasts. A little later the baby's movements (for he was a strong boy of ten months) forced her to move too, and so she turned away from the river to play with him.

"That's a good looking boy," said a man who stopped near her. He whistled to the boy and handed him a lolly. The baby quickly put it in his mouth.

The man walked on to the other side of the boat, where Haley was smoking on the top of a big box. The man lighted a cigar himself and said to Haley as he did, "Looks like a good woman you have over there."

"Yes, I think she'll sell well," said Haley, blowing smoke from his mouth.

"Selling her as a farm worker?" asked the man.

"They said she's a good cook, but she has the right fingers for work on a cotton farm. I'll see what happens. Should get a good price both ways."

"They won't want a young one on a cotton farm," said the man.

"Oh the boy? I'll sell him on his own."

"Won't get much for him," said the man, sitting on the box beside Haley.

"Don't know about that," said Haley. "He's smart, straight, fat, and strong."

"True, but there's all the work of bringing him up."

"Not much to that," said Haley. "About as easy as keeping a dog. He'll be walking soon, too."

"I have a cook whose young one died last week. I could put her on to bringing up this one."

They smoked together without talking for a few seconds, then the man went on, "I can't see you getting more than ten dollars for him."

Shaking his head, Haley had a spit before going on.

"You'll never get him for ten dollars," he said.

"Then what will you take?"

"I could bring him up myself. In six months I'd get a hundred for him, and in a year or two he'd bring two hundred from the right buyer. So I won't take less than fifty now."

"You can't be serious!" said the man.

"I am," said Haley.

"I'll give you thirty, but not one cent more."

"Tell you what I'll do," said Haley, spitting again. "I'll drop it to 45, but that's the best I can do."

"Agreed!" said the man after a few seconds of thinking about it.

"Good," said Haley. "Where do you get off?"

"At Louisville," said the man.

"Good. It'll be almost dark when we get there. The boy will be asleep. You can take him quietly without any crying and shouting. I like to do things quietly."

When the boat pulled in at Louisville, the woman put her sleeping baby between two boxes and ran to the side for one last look at the town where her husband lived.

"Now is your time," said Haley, taking the sleeping child in his arms and handing him to the buyer. "Don't start him crying or we'll have the girl to fight with."

The man pushed into the middle of all the people when he was leaving the boat. The girl never saw him or the child as they left.

When the boat pulled away from Louisville, the woman returned to where she had left the child. Haley was waiting for her.

"Lucy," said Haley, "I knew you wouldn't be able to bring up your boy down South, so I sold him to a good family. They'll be able to do a better job of bringing him up than you could."

The wild look of surprise and pain on the face of the woman as she looked around for her baby did not move Haley at

all. His feelings had become hard from so many years in the business. And you too, my friends who are reading this book, could become just as hard if you go on seeing others in pain without acting to help them.

All that Haley could think about was how the woman's actions could make his own life difficult. He did not give his mind one minute to think that he could do anything to stop the pain that was now close to taking the life away from the poor girl. All he could think about was that if she started shouting, it would destroy the happiness that so many others were feeling at the front of the boat, and people would think badly of him because of it.

But she did not shout. There were no tears. The bullet had cut so quickly through her heart that there was no time to cry out.

She sat down. Her eyes were open, but she did not see. All the sounds around her had no meaning.

Haley, who was feeling pleased at how quiet the girl was, believed that he was being very kind when he said, "I know this is not easy to take at first, Lucy. But a smart girl like you will not give in to her feelings. In time you'll understand that it couldn't be helped. You'll see that it was all for the best. The boy will be better off this way."

"Don't, Master! Don't!" said the woman with a voice like one who cannot breathe.

"You're a smart girl, Lucy," he went on. "I'll get you a good place down river. Beautiful girl like you — you'll soon have another husband, you watch and see."

"Please, Master! Don't talk to me now," said the woman in a voice so filled with pain that even Haley started to believe that she was feeling something he could not understand. As he walked off, the woman buried her face in her coat.

Haley watched from a distance and said to himself, "She's taking it hard, but she's being quiet about it, thank God. She'll come right, by and by!"

Tom looked on and could only think that what was happening was very wrong and very cruel. He was not as smart as many Christian preachers who would argue that what the woman was going through was part of a bigger plan that would help the country. Tom could not make the pain go away with teachings like these, so in his heart he cried with her.

He moved over beside her and tried to say something to help her. Honestly, and with tears running down his cheeks, he talked of a heart of love in the skies, of Jesus, and of a family that lives on together in heaven. But she could not hear or feel a thing.

Night came on and one by one people went to their rooms or went to sleep on the chairs on the open floor of the boat. Tom went to sleep on top of a big box, listening to the quiet cries of the mother for her husband and baby. "God, help me! Good God, show me what to do!" she was praying.

At midnight Tom opened his tired eyes. Something had moved by him to the side of the boat. He heard the sound of something dropping into the water. He lifted his head and saw that the place where the woman had been sleeping was empty. He moved around looking for her without finding her. Her sad, broken heart was in the arms of Jesus now.

In the morning, Haley came out to look after his animals.

"Where is that girl?" he said to Tom.

Tom did not think it was smart to say all that he knew, so he said that he did not know where she was.

Haley looked the boat over, from front to back without finding a thing.

"Tell me the truth, Tom," he said when he was finished. "Do you know something about this? You was sleeping right close to her. You must know something."

"All's I know, Master," said Tom, "is that toward morning something moved by me. I was only half awake. Then I heard a noise in the water at the side of the boat. When I looked around, the girl was not here. That's all I know."

The slave buyer was not surprised or sad for the girl. Death was a part of his business. But he was angry. Her dying had forced him to lose a lot of money.

QUESTIONS ON PART 12

1. What was Haley looking for in the newspapers? (page 101)
2. What was Aunt Hagar worried about? (page 102)
3. What did Hagar's son say after she was sold, to try to encourage her? (page 104)
4. What were two women talking about on the floor above the slaves on the river boat? (pages 105 and 106)
5. A tall man was arguing with a preacher on the river boat. Where did we see this man earlier in the story? (page 106)
6. The tall man was a farmer. What job did the other two men do? (page 107)
7. What did Lucy's owner tell her to trick her into going quietly on the boat with Haley? (page 108)
8. What did Haley do with Lucy's baby? (pages 109 and 110)
9. What did Tom hear on the boat at midnight? (page 112)

13. The 'Friends'

We turn now to a big, neat kitchen in a different part of the country. In it sit two big chairs. Eliza is sitting in one, doing some needle work. She is thinner than she was when she was living in Kentucky, and her face looks older and sadder now, from all that she has been through. When she lifts her eyes to look at young Harry, who is playing on the painted kitchen floor, her face shows a deep strength that was not there in her younger, happier days.

By her side sits a woman with a big container in her hand. She is putting dried fruit into it. She is close to 60 years old, but her round, happy face is one that has become more beautiful with time. She wears the white hat and long dark dress of a Christian group that calls itself "Friends". One look into the woman's honest loving eyes would be enough to tell you that her heart was as good and kind as any that has lived in any woman.

The woman, Rachel Halliday, said as she quietly looked over her fruit, "Do you still want to go on to Canada, Eliza?"

"Yes, I do," said Eliza strongly. "It's not safe to stop."

"And what will you do after you arrive, my daughter?"

Using the word 'daughter' was easy for Rachel, as her spirit was that of a mother to all that she knew.

"I will do what I can," said Eliza, her voice shaking.

"You know that you can stay here as long as you want, don't you," said Rachel.

"Yes, that's very kind of you," said Eliza, "but..." and she pointed to Harry, "I can't sleep nights, thinking about that man coming here."

"Poor child!" said Rachel. "But God has helped us. Not one person who has come here to hide has been returned to their owner. I am praying that you will not be the first."

The door opened here and a little short, round woman stepped into the room. She was dressed like Rachel.

"Ruth Stedman!" said Rachel, getting up out of her chair.

"How are you Ruth?" she said, taking both her hands.

"Very well," said Ruth, who was about 25 years old.

"Ruth, this is Eliza Harris, and this is the little boy I was telling you about."

"I am happy to meet you, Eliza — very happy," said Ruth, shaking Eliza's hand like they were old friends. "I have a cake for your boy," she said, holding out a little heart-shaped cake for young Harry.

"Where's your baby, Ruth?" asked Rachel.

"He's coming," said Ruth. "Your Mary saw me as I was coming in and she wanted to show him to the other children." At the same time, the door opened and Mary came in with the baby.

The women were some time talking about the baby and doing little jobs in the kitchen as they talked about their friends and other interests.

Then Rachel's husband, Simeon, came in. He was a tall, straight, strong man.

"How are you, Ruth?" he said, taking Ruth's hand. "And how is your husband?"

"John is well, and so is all the family," said Ruth happily.

"Any news, father?" asked Rachel as she was putting some bread inside the stove.

"Peter is coming tonight with some *friends*," he said, with special meaning in the last word.

"Is that true?" said Rachel, looking over at Eliza.

"Yes," said Simeon, turning to Eliza. "Did you say, child, that your name was Harris?"

Eliza looked worried as she said quietly, "Yes." She was thinking that signs must be out telling people to look out for her.

Simeon walked out on the verandah. "Mother, can you come here?" he said, calling Rachel out.

"What do you want, father?" she asked, as she rubbed flour from her hands onto her dress, and walked out to the verandah.

"This woman's husband is with our people, and he will be here tonight," said Simeon.

"Do you know it to be true?" asked Rachel, her face breaking into a very big smile.

"Peter was down at the other farm yesterday with the wagon, and there were two men and an old woman. One said his name was George Harris. From what he said, I know he is Eliza's husband. He's a very smart man too.

"Should we tell her now?" he asked.

"We'll ask Ruth," said Rachel. "Here, Ruth! Can you come here?"

Ruth put down her knitting to come out on the verandah.

"Ruth, what do you think? Eliza's husband is in the last group of slaves to arrive, and he will be here tonight."

The little, round woman jumped into the air and shouted with happiness as she hit her hands together.

"Shh!" said Rachel softly. "Should we tell Eliza now?"

"Oh yes! This very minute. Just think if it was my husband. How would I feel? Yes, tell her right off!"

"You use yourself to learn how to love others, Ruth," said Simeon. "That's very good."

"Oh yes, isn't it what we are made for? If I didn't love John and the baby, I would not know how to feel for her. Come, now, do tell her – do! You can take her into the bedroom and I'll cook the chicken as you tell her."

They returned to the kitchen and Rachel opened the door of a small bedroom. "Come in here, Eliza. I have news to tell you."

Eliza looked up in fear. Standing to her feet she turned toward her boy.

"No, no," said Ruth, coming over to help. "He can stay with me. It's good news. You have nothing to fear."

Ruth turned to little Harry and hugged him. "You will see your father in a short time, little one. Can you understand that? Your father is coming."

At the same time, behind the door Rachel pulled Eliza close to her and said, "God has been good to you, daughter. Your husband is free!"

Eliza's heart almost stopped from surprise. She sat down, as she was feeling very weak.

"He is with Friends. We will bring him here tonight."

"Tonight?" Eliza said. "Tonight!" The words died as her eyes closed and her body dropped in a faint.

When Eliza opened her eyes again, she was in a bed with a blanket over her and Ruth was lovingly rubbing her hands with a nice smelling oil. She was like someone in a dream. She could hear the happy sounds of the family sitting down to eat a meal in the other room, but through it all she rested as she had not been able to rest from the time that she had left the Shelbys' with her little boy. She rested as one who had just dropped a very heavy weight that she had been carrying for a very long time.

And she dreamed of a beautiful country – a land with green grass and blue water, and a house that was her own. She dreamed of her boy playing – a free and happy child. She heard her husband walking through the house, coming toward her. His arms were around her, and his tears were falling on her face. Then she opened her eyes to see that this much was not a dream. It was dark outside now, and a candle was burning on the table beside her. Her child was sleeping by her side. And her husband was leaning over her and crying tears of happiness.

The next morning was a happy one at the house of the Friends. When George and Eliza came out of their room with little Harry at Eliza's side, all the family were there to welcome them. A big Indiana breakfast was on the table, and George sat down, for the first time in his life, as an equal at a white man's table. He was not comfortable with it at first, but this feeling quickly went away in the kindness and happiness of the Friends.

Here in this loving family, George started to feel faith in a loving God grow in his heart. All the dark lies of the devil melted away before the light of a living faith that was being preached through a thousand little acts of kindness toward him and toward each other.

"Father, what if the police find that we are hiding slaves?" asked a young Simeon.

"I will be punished," said the older Simeon quietly.

"And what if they put you in prison?"

"You and mother can work the farm," said Simeon, smiling.

"Yes, but the law is a bad one," said the boy.

"We should not talk against the leaders of our country, Simeon," said his father seriously. "Our lives should be used to help others; and if the government asks us to pay for what we do with our lives, we must pay."

"I hate those people who buy slaves!" said the boy.

"I am surprised at you!" said Simeon. "We did not teach you this. We should do the same for the owners as we do for the slaves if they come to our door in need."

Young Simeon dropped his head, knowing that his spirit had been wrong. "He is a good boy," said his mother. "He will learn, and one day he will be as loving as his father."

"I do not want you to go to prison because of me," said George, who was starting to worry for Simeon.

"Have no fear, George. We are here to do good. And if we pay nothing for it, we cannot say it is good, can we?"

"But for me," said George. "I cannot ask it of you."

"Ah, but it is not for you," said Simeon. "It is for God, and for people as a whole that we do it. For now you must hide. And tonight at ten Phineas Fletcher will take you on to the next stop. They are looking for you, and we must not waste any time."

"If that is true, why must we wait until tonight?" asked George.

"Because it is safer to travel by night."

QUESTIONS ON PART 13

1. What was the name of the religious group that Rachel Halliday belonged to? (page 114)
2. What did Ruth Stedman give to young Harry? (page 115)
3. When Rachel was talking to her husband, Simeon, what did she call him? (page 115)
4. Simeon told his wife that someone was coming to see Eliza that night. Who was it? (page 116)
5. Fill in the missing word: When Eliza heard that George was coming to see her, she was so happy that she _____. (page 117)
6. What did George do for the first time in his life on the morning after he and Eliza were together again? (page 117)
7. Who said this: “If the government asks us to pay for what we do with our lives, we must pay.” (page 118)
8. What did Simeon say was the safest time for slaves to travel, if they were running away from their masters? (page 118)

14. Evangeline

Back on the river boat, we find Tom in a little space between some big containers of cotton, on the top floor of the ship. Partly because of what Mr. Shelby had said about Tom, and partly because of Tom's own quiet spirit, Haley had dropped his rule about chains for Tom. Tom was free to walk about the boat.

Workers on the boat liked Tom because he used his time to help them with anything that they needed. When there was no work to do, he would find a place between the cotton and study his Bible as he was doing now.

Between readings Tom's heart turned to the Kentucky farm where he had lived most of his life. In his mind he could see the little cabin with vines growing on it. He could see the faces of his friends. And he could see his wife cooking a meal. He heard the happy laughing of his boys at play, and the sounds of the baby on his knee. Then he would return to the sounds of the machines on the boat, telling him all too clearly that he would never return to that part of his life.

If you or I were separated from our family, we would write a letter. But Tom could not write. There could be no break in his pain by a friendly word from time to time.

So it is easy to understand why some tears dropped on the Bible as he was reading it. Tom's reading was very slow, but the book was one that needed to be read slowly. For each word must be measured closely, as a piece of gold. We will follow him as he points to each word and moves his lips as he reads:

"Do – not – be – afraid. My – Father – has – many – big – houses. I – will – go – to – prepare – one – for – you."

Others have been separated from loved ones. Others have had loved ones die. But Tom had promises in this Book that could bring meaning to it all. Smarter people would ask questions before they could believe the promises. But for poor Tom, there was no room for questions. It must be true; for if it was not, how could he live?

Tom's Bible was filled with markings; for when he heard a saying that he liked, he would put a line around it, so that he could turn to it quickly without having to read the parts leading up to it. And every marking breathed something of his past life.

On the boat was a very rich man from New Orleans, named St. Clare. With him was his six-year-old daughter and a woman who was close to him and the girl. The girl was both beautiful and full of action, so that Tom, like others on the boat, had often looked up to see her and had easily remembered her. She was a very happy girl, often singing to herself as she moved in her happy day dreams. But she had a serious side too, that was far above her years. She was always dressed in white, but she was able to move through every part of the boat without becoming dirty.

The man who shovelled coal into the big stove that moved the boat's wheel, would at times look up to see the girl's big blue eyes looking deep into the fire or looking sadly at him, as if she was thinking that he was in danger.

The man steering the boat would stop and smile as she looked through the window of the room where he worked before moving on.

Each day Tom watched the girl with growing interest. Each time he turned to see her looking at him he had the feeling that she was an angel who had stepped out of his Bible.

She often walked sadly around the place where Haley's slaves were sitting in chains. At times she would lift a chain and then breathe out slowly and sadly. A few times she came with lollies, nuts, or fruit and happily gave them to the slaves before quickly leaving again.

Tom had, in the past, cut little faces or made little baskets out of cherry seeds or cut whistles from pieces of timber, and he often used these to make friends with small children. He had some of these in his pockets, and he used them little by little to interest the girl.

For all her interest in people, she was shy, and would easily fly away like a bird. But in time Tom was able to talk to her.

"What is your name?" he asked at last, when he believed it was safe to push such a question.

"Evangeline St. Clare," said the little one. "But they all call me Eva. What's your name?"

"My name's Tom. The children called me Uncle Tom back in Kentucky."

"Then I will call you Uncle Tom. I like you," said Eva. "Where are you going, Uncle Tom?"

"I don't know, Miss Eva."

"Don't know?"

"No. Someone will buy me, but I can't know who it will be, can I?"

"My father can buy you," said Eva quickly. "And if he buys you, you will have a good time. I'll ask him."

"Thank you, my little woman," said Tom.

At this point the boat stopped at a landing to take on coal. Eva, hearing her father's voice, ran off. Tom went to help the workers bring the coal on.

Eva and her father were standing by the side of the boat when it was leaving. The big boat wheel had just started to turn when, by some sharp movement, Eva fell over the side and into the water. Her father was going to jump in after her, but a man pulled him back, pointing out that another man was helping Eva.

Tom had been standing on the floor below her when she fell, and he was after her in a second. Swimming to the side of the boat with her in his arm, he handed her up to the many hands that were projecting out for her.

The next day, as the boat was moving closer to New Orleans, all the people on it were preparing to leave. The workers were cleaning the boat, to make it look its best on coming into New Orleans.

Tom was sitting on the lower floor with his arms crossed,

trying to hear what was being said by a small group on the far side of the boat.

In the group was Evangeline. The young man beside her was her father. He had her looks – the same yellow hair and blue eyes – but not her serious side. He was listening to Haley, half laughing at what Haley was saying. Haley was talking very loudly about the best qualities of the thing he was trying to sell.

“A Bible in black skin, from the way you talk!” said Evangeline’s father when Haley had finished. “But the big question is how much are you asking?”

“The way I see it,” said Haley, “if I was to get \$1300 it would only just cover what I have had to pay for him.”

“You poor man,” said the young man with laughing eyes, “and am I to believe that you are giving me such a price because you think of me as a friend?”

“Your daughter does show a lot of interest in him,” said Haley.

“And you are being so kind because of your love for her. Now tell me, how much lower can you put your price in the name of Christian love?”

“Think of what you would be getting,” said the seller. “Look at those arms and legs. He’s as strong as a horse. Look at his head. The high top always shows a smart nigger, one that can do any kind of work. I’ve marked that. A nigger of his size is worth the price for his body alone, even if he’s stupid. But put in a smart mind and it makes him worth much more. He did all the business on his master’s whole farm. He has a very special mind for business.”

“Bad. Very bad. Knows too much!” said the young man, with the same smile playing on his lips. “Can’t have a smart nigger. They run off, rob horses, and argue with you. I think you should take 200 off for his smartness.”

“I would agree with you if it wasn’t for his religion. I can show papers from his master and others to say he has real faith – the most humble praying person you ever did see. They look on him as a preacher in his parts.”

"I should buy him as a preacher then," added the young man, dryly. "God knows, we don't have much religion around our house."

"You're making fun of me, aren't you?"

"How can you say that? You said he's a preacher. Does he have papers from a Bible school or a church to say that? If you do, then show them to me."

If Haley did not believe that all this talk was going to lead to a sale in the end, he would have walked off. But he started looking through his papers as he waited for St. Clare to finish with his game.

"Father, do buy him!" whispered Eva, who was up on a box now, where she could be close to her father's ear. "You have enough money, I know you do. I want him."

Here the seller handed a paper to St. Clare. Mr. Shelby's name was on it. St. Clare looked at the paper quickly.

"Yes, the paper looks good," he said. "But now I'm thinking that religion could be a bad thing too. Look at the men of religion that are trying to lead this country. They use their religion to help themselves, but not to help others. You can't put your faith in any of them, because they'll rob you as quickly as they'll do anything. No, I don't think religion is selling very well these days. How many hundred dollars have you added on for his religion?"

"I know you're not serious," said Haley, "but there's some truth in what you say. Some religion can be very bad. There's your meeting religion. There's your singing and shouting religion. Them don't count for nothing, in Blacks or in Whites. But there's another, and I see it in niggers as often as any. It's your real soft, quiet, honest religion that the whole world couldn't pull them into doing what they thinks is wrong. And you see in this letter, that Tom's master saw that in him."

"Now," said the young man, pulling out his money, "if you can promise me that this is the religion I'm buying, and if you can promise me that I'll own it when I get to heaven, I'll be happy to pay your price."

"You know I can't do that," said Haley. "You have to have your own religion when it comes to heaven. You can't buy another man's religion."

"That's hard on a man who pays a good price for religion and then finds he can't use what he paid for when he needs it the most, isn't it, now?" said the man, who had counted out the money Haley had asked for. "Here, count your money, old boy!" he added as he handed it to Haley.

"Come, Eva," he said, taking the hand of his daughter and walking across to the other side of the boat.

"Look here," he said to Tom with a smile. "How do you like your new master?"

Tom looked up. It was not easy to feel sad when looking into the happy young eyes of that man, and Tom said, with tears of happiness starting to fill his eyes, "God love you, Master!"

"Yes, I could use his love. And from what I hear he will do it more for you than he would for me, Tom. Can you drive horses?"

"Master Shelby had a lot of horses. I've always worked with them."

"Good. You can drive my coach if you won't drink too much more than one time each week."

Tom looked surprised and hurt when he heard that. "I never drink, Master," he said seriously.

"They all say that, Tom; but we'll see. We'll all be better off if you don't. Don't worry about it," he added, seeing that Tom was still looking hurt. "I believe you'll do a good job."

"That I will, Master," said Tom.

"You'll like working for us," said Eva. "Father laughs at people, but he's good to them all."

"How kind of you to say that," said St. Clare, laughing, as he turned and walked away.

QUESTIONS ON PART 14

1. What rule did Haley drop, partly because of Tom's quiet spirit? (page 120)
2. Why did Tom put a line around the sayings that he liked in his Bible? (page 121)
3. What did Tom often give to small children, to make friends of them? (page 121)
4. What was the name of the little girl on the ship who gave Tom the feeling that she was an angel? (page 122)
5. What dangerous thing happened to Eva when she was travelling on the boat? (page 122)
6. Who jumped into the water to help Eva? (page 122)
7. Haley said that Augustine St. Clare was making fun of him when he was trying to sell Tom. Do you think St. Clare was making fun of Haley? Tell why you think this. (pages 123, 124 and 125)
8. What job did St. Clare say Tom could have if he would not drink too much? (page 125)

15. Tom's New Master

Augustine St. Clare's father was a rich farmer from Louisiana. He was a very serious child with a soft heart. Soon after he finished his studies, he fell in love with a beautiful woman from the North. They agreed to marry, and he came South to prepare for that day. But he was surprised to have his letters returned to him with a short letter from the girl's father, saying that she had agreed to marry another, and by the time the letters arrived she would be married. Augustine was too proud to write back and he tried to drown his sadness by turning to other women. In a short time he was married to a very important woman from New Orleans. She had a beautiful body, dark eyes, and a hundred thousand dollars. People all believed that he was very happy.

Then, a short time after they were married, Augustine received a letter from the woman he loved, saying that she had never received his letters, and her parents had tried to force her to marry another man. She had been sending letters to him, but they had secretly destroyed them all. In the end, she learned what they were doing and now she wanted to leave them to marry Augustine.

Augustine sent a letter back saying, "I received your letter, but it is too late. I believed what I had heard and now I am married. It is over between us and we must try to forget what we had."

Augustine covered his broken heart with foolishness. His wife, Marie, could not see that his heart had been broken. As said before, she had only a beautiful body, dark eyes, and a hundred thousand dollars. These were not the things needed to fix Augustine's broken heart.

Augustine was happy at first that she was not smart enough to see his sadness. But as time went on he learned that she was not able to love anyone but herself. From the day she was born she had always had servants do things for her. She never believed that they had feelings and she did not think about their needs. Because she was so rich, she believed Augustine should give her more than he ever could give her.

He would buy her things and talk to her lovingly, but it was never enough. She would cry, shout, argue, and walk away from him.

Then they had a beautiful daughter, and Augustine had someone he could give his heart to. Marie was angry that Augustine gave time to Evangeline that he could give to her, and she turned to false sicknesses as a way to force him to think of her. She would be in bed three days out of six with every sickness that she could think of. Evangeline herself was not a strong girl, and Augustine tried for a few years to give his time to both Marie and Evangeline. When Marie was sick, the job of leading the servants was up to Augustine, and he was never good at such things. In the end, he went on a trip with Evangeline, to visit an uncle who lived in the North. The uncle's oldest daughter, Ophelia agreed to return with Augustine and help him.

And that was the reason for them being on this boat at this time.

Ophelia was about 45 years old. She was a thin person with sharp eyes that were always looking for what needed fixing, so that she could fix it. Her movements, like her words, were sharp and strong, and she was as perfect as a clock in doing things on time.

She had a very good mind but she only used it on things that she believed were important. What she believed about God was clearly named and marked, never to be questioned or changed. And her thinking about other things was much the same. She had one way of doing anything and there was no room for anyone to argue with her.

Above all she was a slave to the word *should*. If she believed something should be, then there was nothing left to say about it: What should be would be and nothing must stop it. She would walk through fire to do what she should do. But the problem with anyone who has such strong beliefs is that they always fall short of them, and the bad feeling that came with this robbed Ophelia of much happiness.

So how could she ever live with Augustine, who was so opposite to her in every way?

The truth is that she loved him. They had lived together when he was a boy, and it had always been her job to teach him, clean up after him, and fix the holes in his clothes. Augustine had a way of winning the hearts of most people, and it was easy for him to make Ophelia believe that she "should" come to New Orleans, to teach Eva, and to put things straight in the house. It was easy to love Eva, and, bad as he was, Augustine could always make Ophelia laugh.

When the boat landed in New Orleans, Tom went with Augustine, Ophelia, and Evangeline to the beautiful big house where they lived. As the coach they were travelling in pulled up at the house, Eva was so enthusiastic that she was like a bird wanting to break out of its cage.

"Isn't it beautiful! This is where I live. Isn't it beautiful, Miss Ophelia?"

"Yes, it is," said Miss Ophelia. "But it is a little old."

Tom looked around with a quiet happy spirit.

"Tom, my boy, do you like it?" asked Augustine.

"Yes, Master, it does look like the right thing," said Tom.

As they were saying this, men, women, and children came running out to see their master come in. In the middle of them was one young light-skinned slave – Adolph – who was wearing very beautiful clothes and holding a red scarf in his hand. He would shake the scarf in the air to make people listen when he had something to say.

"Back! All of you," he was saying as the scarf moved above his head. "This is no way to welcome Master. He must see to his family first."

Two strong workers came up to carry the bags, but the others all moved away. When Augustine turned around after paying the coach driver, the slaves had all left. Only the beautifully dressed Adolph was there, in white pants, a purple shirt, and a gold chain.

"Adolph," said his master, holding out his hand. "How are you?"

Adolph then went into a long talk to welcome his master back. He had been planning it for two weeks. Augustine listened without showing much interest.

"Good job," he said when Adolph was finished. "You see to the bags now and I'll come to the people in a minute." Having said this, he went with Miss Ophelia to a big sitting room that opened onto the verandah.

As this was happening, Eva had run through the verandah and sitting room to a little room where her mother was lying on a couch.

"Mother!" she said, throwing herself on her neck and hugging her over and over again.

"That's enough, child. You will bring back the pain in my head," said the mother after she had kissed her.

Augustine came in, hugged his wife, and then showed her Ophelia. Marie lifted her big dark eyes to look at Ophelia with some small interest.

A group of servants was now standing at the door. In the middle of them was a heavy brown-skinned woman in her forties, who was almost jumping with enthusiasm.

"Oh, there's Mammy!" said Eva, as she ran across the room. Throwing herself into the woman's arms, she kissed her again and again.

This woman did not talk of a pain in her head. She hugged her, laughed, and cried like a crazy woman.

When Eva was free of the hugs, she ran from servant to servant, shaking hands and kissing in a way that Miss Ophelia later said turned her stomach.

"You people can do something that I could not do," said Miss Ophelia.

"And what is that?" asked Augustine.

"I try to be kind to all people, and I would not want to hurt anyone; but as to kissing..."

"Niggers?" said Augustine. "You're not up to that?"

"No, I am not. How does she do it?"

Augustine laughed and went out to see his people. He moved from one to another shaking hands. "Look out for the babies!" he added as he almost stepped on one. "If I step on one, you sing out and tell me."

There was much laughing and thanking Master as he gave out small coins to them.

"Off with you now, like good boys and girls," he said, and they went out through a door to a big verandah, followed by Eva, who carried a big suitcase that she had been filling with fruit, nuts, lollies, and small toys on the whole of the return trip.

Augustine turned to see Tom waiting, and Adolph leaning against a wall looking at Tom through some special glasses that he was holding in his hand.

"Put that down, you foolish goat!" said his master, hitting the glasses out of Adolph's hand. "Is that the way you act toward visitors? It looks to me, Adolph," he added, putting his finger on the beautiful purple shirt that Adolph was wearing, "It looks to me like that is my shirt."

"But master, there was a mark on it from some wine. A man like you could never wear a shirt with a mark like that on it. I understood that I was to take it. It's only good enough for a poor nigger like me now."

He said this, throwing his head back and pushing his hand through his well oiled hair.

"So that's how you see it, is it?" said Augustine, who was not interested in the shirt or in Adolph's argument. "I'm going to show this Tom to his mistress and then you take him to the kitchen. And don't you be putting on like you're better than him. He's worth two of you."

"Master is always saying foolish things," said Adolph. "It's good to see master in such good spirits."

"Here, Tom," said Augustine.

He and Tom walked into Marie's room. Tom looked at the expensive rugs and all the mirrors, pictures, and curtains in the room, and he was afraid to put his feet on the rug.

"See here, Marie," said Augustine to his wife. "Don't say that I never think of you when I am away. I have returned with a driver for you who never drinks. Open your eyes and look at him."

Marie opened her eyes and looked at Tom without standing.

"And how do you know he won't drink?" she asked.

"I have papers from his last owner."

"It would be good if it was true, but I've heard such promises before," said the woman.

"Adolph," said Augustine. "Show Tom to the kitchen. And you remember what I said."

Adolph walked lightly out the door. Tom walked heavily after him.

"He's as big as a horse!" said Marie.

"Come now, Marie," said Augustine, sitting down beside the couch. "Can't you say something nice about anyone?"

"You were away two weeks longer than planned," said the woman.

"But I sent a letter telling you the reason."

"Yes, a short, cold letter!" said the woman.

"What do you want me to do? I had five minutes before it was to go. It had to be short or nothing."

"That's the same old story," said the woman. "Always something to make your trips long and your letters short."

"Look at what I have here," he added, pulling a beautiful cloth container out of his pocket and opening it. "Here is something for you from New York."

It was a picture, clear and soft, of himself and Eva.

"The way you are sitting does not look right," she said.

"The way we sit is not important. Do you think it looks like us?"

"If you're not interested in what I think about the way you were sitting, how can you be interested in what I think about anything," she said, closing the picture.

"Hang the woman!" said Augustine to himself. But out loud he said, "Come now, Marie. What do you think of the picture? Don't be foolish about it."

"It's cruel of you to make me talk and look at things. You know I have a pain in my head, and all the noise from people coming and going is making it worse."

"Do you have pains in your head?" asked Miss Ophelia, standing up from the big chair that she had been sitting in as she was studying all of the expensive furniture in the room.

"Yes, and it's killing me," said the woman.

"Berry tea is good for it," said Miss Ophelia, "or so I hear."

"We have some berries growing down by the lake. I will have the servants make some tea from them," said Augustine as he pulled the bell for a servant. "But for now, Ophelia, you must be wanting to go to your room and rest after the long trip."

QUESTIONS ON PART 15

1. What did Augustine use to cover his broken heart? (page 127)
2. What was the name of Augustine's wife? (page 127)
3. What did Augustine's wife turn to as a way to force him to think of her? (page 128)
4. Who was travelling on the boat with Augustine and Eva? (page 128)
5. What was the name of the slave that acted as the leader of all the other slaves in the St. Clare house? (page 129)
6. What was the name of the woman who showed most happiness that Eva had returned? (page 130)
7. What was Adolph wearing that was really Augustine's? (page 131)
8. What did Augustine bring back from New York for Marie? (page 132)
9. Do you think Augustine was happy with Marie? Why?

16. Tom's New Mistress

"And now, Marie," said Augustine at the breakfast table a few mornings after Miss Ophelia had arrived, "you can be free from all the work of the house. For Ophelia has agreed to take the job off your hands."

"She is welcome to the job," said Marie, leaning her head on her hand. "And she will find that we are the slaves, and not the other way around."

"Oh, I think she will learn that and much more," said Augustine.

"People talk of having slaves like we do it for ourselves. If that was true, we would sell them all today, for they are so much work."

Evangeline fixed her big serious eyes on her mother's face and said, "So why do we keep them, mother?"

"I don't know. I just don't know. I believe my sicknesses come from worrying about them more than about any other thing. And our slaves must be the worst ones in the country."

"Oh, come, Marie! You have the blues this morning," said Augustine. "What would you do without Mammy?"

"Mammy is the best of them," said Marie. "But she too is more interested in herself than in me. It's the Black way to think only of themselves."

"Yes, it is bad to think only of yourself," said Augustine seriously.

"You take Mammy," Marie went on. "She knows I need help almost every hour through the night when I'm not feeling well, but she sleeps so deeply. I tried so hard to wake her last night, and I had to do it so many times, that I think I'm worse this morning than if she had not helped me at all."

"But she was awake with you all night for three nights this week," said Eva.

"How do you know that?" said Marie sharply. "Has she been talking to you?"

"She was telling me about how sick you have been," said Eva.

"You could let one of the other servants take her place for a few nights," said Augustine.

"How can you say that?" asked Marie. "You really do not think of my feelings in these things, Augustine. They don't understand my needs like Mammy does."

Miss Ophelia listened to all of this without saying a word. She squeezed her lips tightly together, not wanting to say anything before she understood things better.

"Mammy can be good if she wants to be," Marie went on. "But she has such a strong will that I cannot control her. Take her husband for a start. When I moved to live here, she came with me. My father needed her husband where he was. I said at the time that the best thing was for her to give him up and I would find her a new husband. But no, she would have nothing of it. She has this selfish way in her that most people never see."

"Does she have children?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"Yes, two. But we couldn't bring them. They were dirty little things. I could not have them around taking all of her time. And I think she hates me for this. Even knowing how much I need her, I do believe that she would return to her husband tomorrow if she was able. So you see, even the best of them is selfish."

"Doesn't it make you sick!" said Augustine dryly. Miss Ophelia looked sharply at him and saw the turn of a smile on the corner of his lips.

"I give her all the best clothes and many other things," said Marie. "And she doesn't know what it is to go without. I never whipped her more than one or two times in her whole life. And they all get coffee or tea with white sugar every day. The truth is that our servants have it too good. And Augustine won't do a thing about it. I've talked to him about it until I am tired of talking."

"And I'm tired too," said Augustine, taking up the morning paper.

Eva had been listening very seriously. She walked softly around to her mother's chair and put her arms around her neck.

"Mother, can I stay up with you one night – just one? I can do it, I know."

"Don't be foolish, child!" said Marie. "What a strange child she is!"

"But I want to, Mother. I think," she added shyly, "that Mammy is sick."

"Mammy is like all the others," said Marie. "Any little pain and she thinks I should give her special days off. We must never encourage this," she said, turning to Miss Ophelia. "It's very important. If you encourage servants to give in to every little pain, there will be no stopping it. I go through more than all of them, but no one knows how bad it is, because I go through it quietly."

Miss Ophelia's round eyes could not hide her surprise at the last few words, and Augustine exploded in a loud laugh.

"Augustine always laughs when I say the smallest word about my sicknesses," said Marie with the voice of one who was dying on a cross.

Standing up, Augustine looked at his watch and said he had some important business to do. Eva walked out behind him, leaving Marie and Miss Ophelia alone at the table.

"Isn't that the way he always acts," Marie said. "He never knows, never can and never will, what I have been going through for years. If I was one who talked about it all the time, he would have reason to be angry. But I keep these things to myself to the point where he thinks I can take anything."

Miss Ophelia did not know what she should say to this. But Marie quickly changed to talking about the house. She listed where everything was, and who was to do what and when – in short, how everything was to be carried out; and Miss Ophelia worked hard to remember it all.

"And now I should tell you about Eva," she finished. "She needs special watching."

"She's a very good child," said Miss Ophelia. "I never saw a better one."

"But she's strange," said her mother, "very. She's not one small piece like me, sad to say."

And in her own heart, Miss Ophelia was saying, "I'm happy to hear it."

"Eva always wants to be with the servants. That in itself is okay. I always played with my father's little Blacks. But Eva can't help but think of them as equal to her. I've never been able to break her of it. Augustine, I believe, encourages her in it. The truth is, Augustine is far too soft on every person under this roof – that is, every person but his own wife."

Again, Miss Ophelia could not find words to say.

"There's no way with servants," said Marie, "but to put them down and keep them down. It was easy for me as a child. But Eva will bring this whole house down the way she acts toward them. I don't know what she will do when she's old enough to have servants of her own. I hold to being kind with servants – I always am. But you must make them know their place. Eva never does. You heard her asking to do Mammy's job for her. She would be doing things like that all the time if she was left to herself."

"But don't you think your servants need rest when they're tired?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"Oh yes, yes! I give them all that I can. And Mammy is free to make up her sleep at other times. But I find her sleeping when she should be working all the time. I can't have that. It's not like they're some expensive glass that you must put on a shelf to keep from breaking." And as she was saying this, Marie moved to a long soft couch and fell onto it. She pulled toward her a beautiful cut-glass container with beautiful smelling medicine in it.

"You see," she went on in a soft voice like she was dying, "You see, Ophelia, I don't often talk about myself. It isn't my way. But there are ways that Augustine and I are different. He has never understood me. I think it is at the root of my being sick so much. He tries, but it is the way of men to be selfish, and not to think of how they can be kind to women. That's how I see it."

Miss Ophelia had a strong belief about not joining in on family arguments, and she could see that Marie was going to try to bring her into this one; so she pulled out of her pocket a long piece of cloth that she had been knitting and started to knit very enthusiastically, closing her lips in a way that said, as clearly as words, "Do not try to get me to talk. I don't want to be a part of this argument." But Marie was not going to be stopped so easily. She smelled her medicine again and went on:

"You see, I had my servants before we married, and Augustine had his. But now he tries to put his ways onto me. He won't lift a finger to whip the servants when they need it, and he has made a rule that I not use the whip on my own slaves. Augustine looks friendly enough, but I'm afraid to cross him on this rule when he is around."

"I don't know a thing about it and I thank God that I don't!" said Miss Ophelia.

"But you will learn about it if you stay here. You will see what stupid, foolish, selfish, lazy babies these servants can be. You cannot know how hard it is to lead them. And when I talk to Augustine, he says that we made them this way – that it would be cruel to make the wrong and punish it too. He says we would be the same if we were in their place. But how can you reason from them to us?"

"Don't you believe that God made them of the same blood as us?" said Miss Ophelia.

"No, not for one minute! He made us different, and they need to understand that."

"But don't you believe that they can go to heaven as we do?" asked Miss Ophelia, who could feel her anger growing.

"Oh that?" said Marie, turning her eyes up into her head. "I think we all believe that. But it's not the same as them being equal to us. That's Augustine's problem. He talks of keeping Mammy from her husband being like keeping me from mine. You can't do that. Mammy isn't able to have the feelings that I have. It comes with being white. But Augustine won't see it. Think of it, Ophelia. How can Mammy love those dirty little black babies as I love Eva? At one time Augustine tried to tell me that I should, sick as I am, send her back to her children and find a new servant. That was too much for even me to take. I exploded that time, and he has not been brave enough to talk about it again."

Miss Ophelia was trying not to say anything; but her knitting needles were moving so quickly that Marie could hear them shouting at her if only she would listen.

"So this is what you're taking over," Marie went on. "A house with no rules; and servants who have it all their own way. I'm the only one who can hold it together. I have a whip and I use it when he's away; but it's very difficult, weak as I am. If only Augustine would do what other owners do — "

"And what is that?"

"Send them to the prison or to a whipping house. It's the only way."

"And how does Augustine control them if he never hits them?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"It's easier for men, you know. When he's angry, you can see it in his eyes. I'm afraid of him myself; and the servants know they must obey when he's like that. But around me, they're so bad, so cruel, so lazy."

"The same old song," said Augustine as he walked into the room. "Just wait until God gets his hands on the bad bad slaves and starts punishing them for being so lazy! You see, Ophelia," he said, lying down full length across a couch opposite to the one that Marie was lying on, "there is no reason for them to be lazy when you think of how hard Marie and I work."

"Stop that, Augustine!" said Marie.

"But I'm only trying to back up what you're saying."

"You never stop laughing at me, do you," said Marie.

"Is it really so wrong for the poor dogs to want to be like their masters?" asked Augustine as he turned to Ophelia.

"I see that owning slaves is a very serious business," said Miss Ophelia, who was about to say what had been building up in her mind all morning. "I would not want your job for a thousand worlds. They will stand with you before God. And you must answer for what you have been teaching them. If you have not been teaching them well, it will not go well with you before God."

"Oh, come, come," said Augustine. "What can you know about all this?" And he sat down at the piano to play a fast piece of music. He was very good at it, and all talk stopped as he played, giving him time to think about what Ophelia had said.

When he had finished he looked up. "What you said is true, Ophelia. I think well of you for having said it. It is like you hit me in the eye with a diamond of truth, and I was not able to receive it well at first."

"For my part, I don't see any use for such talk," said Marie. "I don't know of anyone who is kinder to their slaves than us, and it still doesn't do them any good. They get worse and worse for it. I've tried talking to them, and they are free to go to church, but they don't understand a word of it any more than so many pigs. It's the way they were made, and there isn't any way to change them. You see, Ophelia, I've tried and you haven't. So who are you to come and tell us what to do?"

Miss Ophelia believed that she had said enough, so she did not answer.

The sound of laughing out on the grass gave Augustine a reason to leave the room and Miss Ophelia followed him.

Tom was sitting on a bench with a flower in each of his button holes, and Eva was putting a circle of flowers around his neck. When she finished, she sat on his knee, laughing.

"Tom, you look so funny!" she said.

Tom had a quiet, kind smile on his face, and looked in his own way to be having as much fun as his little mistress. He looked up to see Augustine and his face said, "What can I do with her?"

"Do you think it is right for her to be playing with him like that?" said Miss Ophelia.

"Why not?" asked Augustine.

"I mean, is it safe?"

"You would see no danger in her hugging a big dog, even if it was black. But a man who can think and feel, and who has the spirit of God in him... you think he is dangerous because his skin is black. You people from the North think that we are cruel to our slaves, but you yourselves would not so much as touch them. You would send them back to Africa where your missionaries could clean them up without you ever having to come close to them. Isn't that the truth?"

After thinking for a second or two, Miss Ophelia answered, "Now it is you who are throwing diamonds of truth in my direction."

* * *

Things were going well for Tom at this time. Little Eva liked him so much that she had asked her father if he could be with her any time that she needed a friend. So the rules were that Tom was to look after the horses, but to drop everything any time that Eva needed him. Even his job with the horses was one of telling other workers what to do. This was because Marie had said he must not have the smell of horses on him when he came around her. She said that bad smells made her sick. And Augustine gave him good clothes to wear. Tom loved the flowers, the birds, the big beautiful house with its many pictures and mirrors and its expensive furniture. It was like he was living with a king.

But he would give it all to be back in his humble cabin with his wife and children.

It was Sunday morning and Marie had her best clothes on for the coach trip to church. Marie was always very serious on Sundays. And beautiful clothes and a diamond necklace made her feel very close to God. Eva and Miss Ophelia were with her, waiting for the coach to pull up.

"Augustine, are you coming with us?" asked Miss Ophelia.
"No, thank you."

"I tell him that he should go, but he never does," said Marie.

"You two can get enough religion for the three of us," he answered. "Tell me, Eva, do you like to go to church?"

"It's a little boring, father," said Eva. "But Aunt Ophelia said that God wants us to do it. He gives us so much that I think it isn't too much to do for him."

"That's very sweet of you," said Augustine as he helped Eva into the coach.

Later that day, when the females of the house had returned from church and they were all comfortable around the meal table, Augustine asked what they had learned at church that morning.

"The preacher said some beautiful things this morning," said Marie. "He said perfectly what I myself think."

"It must have been a very long talk," said Augustine.

"What I mean is that he said perfectly what I think. He talked about people staying with their own groups. The reading was about there being a right time and place for all things. He showed how all the differences between the rich and the poor come from God. It's so beautiful how God has made some of us to be high and some to be low. And the preacher showed how the Bible is on the side of us owning slaves and teaching them to know their place. You should have been there, Augustine."

"I don't need to go to church to hear people argue that what they are doing is right. I can find such arguments in any newspaper and be able to smoke a cigar as I read them too. That's something I can't do in church."

"Do you mean that you don't agree with what the preacher was saying?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"If I was to say anything about owning slaves, I would be straight about it," said Augustine. "I would say, 'We own them because we want to own them and we plan to keep it that way. It is for our good and not for their good.' That's the long and the short of it if you take away all the Bible talk."

"You should not be talking that way about the Bible," said Marie.

"But isn't it what they do? All this talk about a right time and place for anything. Why don't they argue that there is a right time and place for drinking too much alcohol or robbing or killing? Can they talk about how beautiful those things are too? What you hear at church can bend and turn the truth. It can go up or go down or in any other direction that people want it to go as long as it says they're right in the end. Bad as I am, I'm more generous, more honest, and kinder than them without what they're selling in church. No, if I want religion, I'll be looking for something that makes me better, and not something that makes me worse."

"Are you saying that the Bible is against people owning slaves?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"I can't say that I know," said Augustine. "But if a thing is wrong, it's wrong, and any number of sayings from the Bible won't change it. There are a lot of things that are not good in the world; a person who says 'I do what is wrong because it makes my life more comfortable,' is being more honest than a person who tries to teach that being selfish is the Christian way to live."

"You're very hard on the church," said Marie.

"All I know," said Augustine, "is that if it was to happen that we had to pay more to own slaves than what we were getting from it, we would see a big change in the church. In no time at all they would find teachings all through the Bible to say that we should stop owning slaves."

"Say what you like, but I for one am happy that I live in a place where we can have slaves. I could not live without them," said Marie.

"And what do you think, my little one?" Augustine asked Eva, who came walking in with flowers in her hand.

"About what, father?"

"What do you like best, a house full of servants or a house without servants?"

"Oh, with servants is best," said Eva, "because then you have more people to love."

"Very good answer," said Augustine. "And where were you when we were eating?"

"I was with Tom, hearing him sing. He sings such beautiful things about angels and heaven and God."

"That's nice," said Augustine.

"And I help him read the Bible. Then he teaches me what it means."

"Listen to that!" said Marie in surprise. "A black man thinking he can teach my Eva the Bible when he can't even read it for himself."

"I believe he's a very good Bible teacher," said Augustine. "I think he really knows God. I wanted the horses out early this morning, so I went up to Tom's room and heard him praying. I never heard anyone pray so honestly. He put in strongly for me too."

"He must have heard you coming and was putting on a show. I've heard of that trick before," said Marie.

"If he did, he wasn't being very smart about it, because he was telling God freely what he thinks of me, and it came across that he thinks I need to do a lot of changing."

"You take what he was saying to heart," said Miss Ophelia.

"We'll see... won't we Eva? We'll see."

QUESTIONS ON PART 16

1. What job had Miss Ophelia agreed to take off Marie's hands? (page 134)
2. Marie believed that Mammy hated her. What reason did Marie think Mammy had for feeling that way? (page 135)
3. Why do you think Augustine laughed when Marie said that she goes through pain quietly? (page 136)
4. Marie told Miss Ophelia that she had never been able to break Eva of one strange thing. What was that? (page 137)
5. On what rule did Marie say she was afraid to cross Augustine? (page 138)
6. What musical instrument did Augustine play very well? (page 140)
7. What was the "diamond of truth" that Miss Ophelia said to Augustine? (page 140)
8. What job did Tom have that was more important than looking after the horses? (page 141)
9. How often did Augustine go to church? (page 142)
10. Who said this: "If a thing is wrong, it's wrong, and any number of sayings from the Bible won't change it." (page 143)
11. What had Tom been teaching Eva? (page 144)

17. A Free Man's Fight

It was almost dark at the house of the Friends. George and his wife were sitting in their bedroom. Little Harry was on George's knee. Eliza had been crying.

"I know what you say is true," said George. "I'm going to try to act like a Christian now. God knows I wanted to in the past. I tried to do what was right when things were against me. But now I'll forget the past and put away my hard feelings. I'll read the Bible and learn to be a Christian."

"I'm so happy for you," said Eliza.

"Yes, Eliza. These people do not know how good it is to know that you and Harry are mine now. I cannot understand how people who have wives and children can worry about anything. We haven't a thing, but I feel rich and strong knowing that I have you. How can I ask God for more."

"But we are not out of danger," said Eliza. "Not until we have arrived in Canada."

"True," said George. "But I smell free air and it makes me strong."

At this time voices were heard in the kitchen. There was a knock on the bedroom door and Eliza opened it.

Simeon was there with another Friend -- Brother Phineas. Phineas was a tall, red-haired man. He did not have the quiet look of the other Friends. He was always looking around.

"Phineas stopped at a hotel down the road last night and he learned some things you should know," said Simeon. "Tell him, Phineas."

I was sleeping on some buffalo skins in the corner, waiting for them to prepare my room when I heard some men in the room say something about the Friends. I didn't open my eyes, but I opened my ears. They were looking for slaves that had run away, and they had learned that the slaves were here. I listened to their plans. They said they knew two policemen in a town between there and here who would come with them, and they know what way we'll be going if we leave from here."

"What can we do, George?" Eliza whispered.

"I know what I will do," said George as he stepped into the little room to find his guns.

"You see, Simeon," said Phineas. "This is how it looks like going."

"I pray that it will not come to that," said Simeon sadly.

"I'm not asking you to be part of this," said George. "If I can use your wagon, I'll drive it to the next hiding place myself. My friend Jim is very strong and very brave. We'll fight if we must."

"But," said Phineas, "you don't know the way. You can do the fighting yourself, because we don't believe in it. But I know a thing or two about the road and I can help you in that way."

"Phineas is a very smart man," said Simeon. "You'll do well to work with him, George. And," he added with a kind hand on George's shoulder and pointing to the guns, "do not be wanting to use these. Young blood is hot."

"All I ask is for them to stay away. I will leave this country quietly if they do. But," and his face turned dark, "I am not going to stand by and see them take my wife and child. No! God help me! I'll fight to the last. Can you say that is wrong?"

"As one man to another, I cannot," said Simeon. "That is how the spirit of man thinks. But God has a higher way."

"But you would do the same for your wife and children, wouldn't you?" said George.

"I pray that I will never be forced to find out," said Simeon. "I don't know how strong I would be."

"I think I would be very strong if it happened to me," said Phineas, holding up two big strong arms. "George, I should not hit another person, but I could hold one for you to hit if you had a problem with him."

"Our leaders do not teach us this way," said Simeon. "The anger of man does not do what is right to God. But we must pray for his strength to do what is right."

"I do that," said Phineas. "But if it doesn't come, it is best that those men coming after us look out for me!"

"It's easy to see that you were not born a Friend," said Simeon smiling. "The old ways are still strong in you."

The truth is that Phineas had been a very rough man before falling for a beautiful young Friend woman. He joined the group to marry her, and he was a very honest and enthusiastic Friend; but he was slow to change many of his old ways of thinking.

"Friend Phineas will always have ways of his own," said Rachel, smiling, "but his heart is in the right place."

"It's best that we leave quickly," said George.

"I left the hotel at four this morning," said Phineas. "We must have two or three hours on them. It isn't safe to leave before dark, but it'll be dark in an hour. I'll get Friend Michael to come behind us on his horse. His horse is a very fast one, and if he sees them coming he can ride up to tell us. After seeing Michael, I'll get Jim and his mother, and then we can leave. Don't worry, George. This isn't the first close one I have been through with your people."

"Phineas is very smart," said Simeon after Phineas had left. "He will do his best for you. And now Mother, we must not send these people away hungry."

As Rachel and her children were putting food on the table, Eliza and George were talking in their room.

"If God will only help us to get out of this country together," said Eliza, "I will not ask him for another thing."

"Is God on their side?" said George, more to himself than to his wife. "He sees what is happening. Why doesn't he do something? They say the Bible is on their side. The government is. The laws are. They're rich and healthy and happy. They fill the churches and believe they will go to heaven when they die. Why does it all go their way, when good honest Christians with black skin are forced to put their faces in the dirt under their feet? They buy us and sell us and make money from our blood and our tears."

"Friend George," said Simeon from the kitchen, "can you join us in a Bible reading before we eat?"

George pulled his chair over to the door and Eliza came to stand behind him and listen as Simeon read:

As for me, I almost left the road through wanting to be like the foolish people who have become rich by doing what is wrong. I wanted to be like them because they do not have the problems of other people. They are filled with pride, and they hurt all that they touch. They have so much that they have become very fat from it. They have no feeling for others, but they talk like they are better than other people. God's people see this and they have so many problems that they say, 'Does God know anything at all about what is happening?'

"Is that the way you feel, George?" asked Simeon.

"It says perfectly the way I feel," said George.

"Then listen to how it finishes."

I wanted to know the truth about this, so I asked God. And he showed me where it was leading. They are in a spiritually dangerous place that will destroy them in the end. What is happening in this life is only a dream. When we are awake with God he will feel nothing but hate for what they have been doing. But he will be at our side to help us and to protect us. He will teach me and give me life that will go on for ever. In the end I could see that it is best to follow God and to put my faith in him.

These words were like beautiful music as they went into George's heart, making his spirit quiet, and bringing strength to his new faith.

"If this life were all that we had," said Simeon, "we could ask, Where is God? But he often chooses those who have very little in this life to live with him in the next. Put your faith in him, and even if the worst happens to you in this life, he will make it right in the next life."

It is easy for anyone to say the same words that Simeon was saying, to people in danger, without it having much effect. But because Simeon was putting his life on the line with the people he was preaching to, the words worked a miracle in their spirits as they received them into their hearts.

When Simeon was finished it was time to eat. And a short time after eating, a big covered wagon pulled up in front of the house. Phineas was driving it and inside were Jim and his old mother. George, Eliza, and little Harry were quickly in beside them.

"Do you have your guns?" George whispered to Jim.

"Yes, I do. And I am ready to use them," he said with a serious look on his face. "They'll not take my mother again."

"God be with you all!" said Simeon from outside as the wagon started to move.

"And God be with you too!" said the people inside.

The wheels of the wagon were too loud for the people inside to talk, so in a short time they were asleep. But Phineas, who was driving, was wide awake.

At about four in the morning the wagon pulled up. George opened his eyes to hear the sound of a horse coming up beside them. It was Michael.

"There are eight or ten of them, full of alcohol and coming for you like so many wolves," he said. They're so near that you can hear them if you listen closely."

"If we're going to fight, this is no place for it. I know a better place. Hang on!" said Phineas as he whipped the horses into action. The wagon jumped over the cold ground, throwing the people inside up into the air. George and Jim pulled out their guns and Eliza hugged her child as the old woman prayed.

The men following them were getting closer when they turned a sharp corner. On the right was a steep hill covered with big stones. This was the place that Phineas had been trying for.

"Out with you!" he shouted as he pulled the wagon to a stop and jumped down from where he had been sitting. "Take the women and the boy up through that opening in the cliff. Michael, tie your horse to the wagon and take it on to Amariah's place. We're only two miles from it now. Bring Amariah back to see if he can talk to these people."

They all obeyed him and the wagon was soon moving on toward the next hiding place, with Michael driving it. Phineas ran to the head of the group and showed them where to go. The opening between the big stones turned into a shelf on the side of the cliff, wide enough for only one person at a time, but leading to some big round stones where they could hide. As they were each finding a safe place in the stones, the men who were after them pulled up on their horses and pointed in their direction.

"Here we are," said Phineas looking out through an opening in the stones toward the men at the bottom of the hill. "If they try to get to us here they must come one at a time around that shelf on the side of the cliff."

"I see," said George. "As this is our problem, we will take over now and do the fighting."

"You're welcome to do the fighting," said Phineas chewing a leaf as he talked. "But I'll have the fun of looking on. Looks like they're talking about coming up now. I think you should tell them of the danger they'll find if they do."

Leading the men below were Haley's friend, Tom Loker, Marks, and two policemen. The others were drinkers from the nearest hotel who were there for the fun – nothing more.

"I think we have them caged now, Tom," said one of them.

"This is where they went up," said Loker. "I'm for going right up. It won't take long to find them."

"But if they have guns, they can shoot at us from behind those stones," said Marks. "It would be very ugly if they did."

"Marks, you're always for protecting your own skin," said Loker, with an angry turn of his lips. "There's no danger. Niggers are too afraid to shoot at a white man. They know it'll mean the death of them."

"Why shouldn't I protect my skin? It's the only one I have," said Marks. "And I've had niggers fight like the devil in the past."

At this time George put his head up from behind a stone above them and shouted in a clear voice:

"We have guns and we plan to use them if you come close enough."

"Oh, come, come!" said a short, fat man who stepped forward, blowing his nose as he did. "Young man, we are policemen. We have the law on our side. You cannot stay here forever."

"I know you have the law on your side, and the government too," said George angrily. "You want to take my wife and my boy from me and to send Jim's old mother back to be whipped. You have the law on your side, but you will not have us. We don't own your laws or your government or your country. We stand here as free people under God's blue sky. And by the loving God who made us we will fight to our death to stay free." George lifted his hand to heaven as he finished what he was saying.

Marks was not moved by what George had said. He pointed his gun at George and a bullet exploded from it.

"We get as much for him dead as we do alive," he said to the others.

George jumped back, and Eliza shouted. The bullet had come close to his head and hit a tree branch.

"I'm okay," said George quickly to the others.

"You've said enough. They're dangerous men," said Phineas.

"Put your guns in front of you, Jim," said George. "And when they come around that shelf toward us, I'll shoot the first one. You take the second, and so on. We don't have enough bullets to use two on one person."

"But what if you don't hit them?"

"I will hit them," said George coolly.

The group below were talking: "I heard a shout," said one of them. "I think we hit one of them."

"I'll go first," said Tom Loker. "I never was afraid of niggers and I won't start now. Who'll come behind me?"

One of the bravest men in the group followed Tom up the steep hill, and the others followed behind, pushing the leaders to go more quickly. It was a very short time before Tom was working his way around the shelf.

George pointed his gun at Tom, shooting him in the side. Tom shouted out in pain, but he did not stop. He ran up to where the women and Phineas were hiding, with his gun in his hand.

"Friend," said Phineas, stepping out from behind a big round stone, and giving him a push with his long arms, "you are not wanted here."

Down Tom fell, hitting on the branches of small trees growing on the side of the cliff before hitting the ground thirty feet below. The fall could have killed him, but the branches slowed him on the way down.

"They'll kill us all!" said Marks, who was leading the run back down the hill and away from George's gun.

When they were at the bottom he said, "You go and pull Tom over to where he'll be safe. I'll get on my horse and go for help." Without answering the shouts and arguments of the others, Marks was as good as his word, riding away on his horse and leaving the others to help Tom Loker.

"How can he do that after asking us to help him?" said one of the men. "He's left us to do his job for him!"

"We can't leave his friend over there to die," said another.

So they ran to where Tom was on the ground and pulled him over to where the horses were. "Help me get on my horse so I can ride back to the hotel," said Tom.

From where George was standing he could see the men try two or three times to lift Loker up on his horse. But he was so big that they could not get him on, and when they did, he fell off again because he was not strong enough to ride. At this, the others left him on the ground and headed off on the horses themselves.

"I pray that he's not dead," said Eliza, who was watching with the others by this time.

"Why is that?" asked Phineas.

"Because he's not prepared to face God," said Eliza.

"It's true," said the old woman who had been praying out loud through the whole fight. "It would be very bad for him to stand before God now."

"I think we should run for it," said Phineas. We aren't much more than two miles from the next hiding place, and Michael should be on his way back by now.

By the time the group was back on the road, they could see Michael coming with the wagon and two men with him. "We're good as there now," said Phineas. "I think we're safe."

"Then we must do something for the poor man on the ground," said Eliza.

"Yes, it would be the Christian thing," said George. "We can carry him on to where he can find help."

"Won't that be something!" said Phineas. "The Friends helping you and him at the same time!" Phineas was soon on his knees beside the man, looking at the hole in his side.

"Marks," said Tom weakly. "Is that you, Marks?"

"I'm afraid Marks and your other friends left," said Phineas. "Now take your hand away so I can help you." Phineas was putting a cloth from his pocket into the hole to stop the bleeding.

"You pushed me," said Tom weakly.

"True," said Phineas. "You see, it was you or us. But we don't hate you. We'll take you to a house where you will be nursed as well as if your own mother was doing it."

Tom closed his eyes and fainted.

The wagon was beside him now and four men lifted him into it, putting him on some buffalo skins. The old woman sat at one end with the man's head on her legs.

George sat with Phineas at the front of the wagon on the way to the next Friends house. "How is he?" he asked Phineas.

"He did a lot of bleeding. That's the worst part," said Phineas. But the bullet only went into the muscle. He'll be okay in a few days, and it could be that he'll learn something from it."

"I'm happy to hear that," said George. "I would feel bad all my life if I was the reason for another man dying."

"Yes," said Phineas, "killing a person is an ugly business. I don't think our people are wrong with their rules about not fighting, even if I do find them hard to follow myself at times."

"What will they do with this man?" asked George.

"They'll keep him at Amariah's for a few weeks."

At the end of their ride, they were welcomed with a very big breakfast, and Tom Loker was put into a much cleaner and softer bed than he had been in for a very long time.

QUESTIONS ON PART 17

1. One of the Friends heard that Loker and Marks knew Eliza was staying with them. What was the man's name? (page 146)
2. The teaching of the "Friends" is to not hit or kill anyone. But one of them was not very strong about keeping this rule. Who was he? (page 147)
3. Phineas had left the hotel two or three hours before Loker and Marks, and travelled all day to tell Simeon that the men were coming. What time had Phineas left the hotel? (page 148)
4. Why did the Bible reading work a miracle in George's heart when Simeon was the one reading it? (page 149)
5. Who travelled inside the wagon with George, Eliza, and Harry? (page 150)
6. Loker and Marks were coming after them with about six other men. Where did Phineas take the slaves to hide? (page 150)
7. Who were the four men leading the group that came to take George and the others back? (page 151)
8. Who said that he would go first up the hill against George and Jim? (page 152)
9. What did Marks do after Loker fell from the hill? (page 153)
10. Loker's friends left him to die by the road. Who helped him? (page 154)

18. Tom Quietly Preaches

Our friend Tom, would often think of himself as Joseph in the Bible, who moved up from being a prisoner to being a leader in his country, because of his good life and because of his good spirit. Tom had good reason to think like this, as it happened to him in much the same way with his new master.

Augustine had no understanding of how to use money. He left his business to Adolph, who was as bad as his master. Between the two of them, they quickly used up all of Augustine's money. Tom, who had learned to think of Mr. Shelby's money as his own, looked in surprise and fear at how the money was being wasted by his master. He would find little ways to say how money could be better used, and Augustine liked what he heard. In time he had put all of the business into Tom's good hands.

In his new job, Tom used big sums of money with no need to tell his master how the money was being used. Augustine never asked for prices, and he never counted what was returned to him. It would have been easy for Tom to keep some money for himself, but Tom's Christian faith made him honest in all of his business.

Tom had mixed feelings toward his new master. He liked Augustine's friendly spirit, and he believed it was right to work for him with his whole heart. Tom loved young Augustine like he was a son, but it was difficult to think of him as a Christian. Augustine never went to church, never read the Bible, and he laughed at anything that was serious. On Sunday nights he would go out with his friends to drink. All of this would often lead Tom to pray for his master in his little room.

But he had other humble ways to teach his master too. One Sunday night Augustine went out drinking with his friends. They had to carry him back to the house at one in the morning because he was not able to walk from having had too much alcohol.

Tom and Adolph helped to put him in bed. Adolph had a good laugh at his master's foolishness and at Tom's worry over it. But Tom was up most of the night praying for his master.

"What are you waiting for, Tom," said Augustine the next morning after giving Tom some money and a list of things to buy. "Is something wrong?"

"Yes, I'm afraid it is, Master," said Tom with a serious look on his face.

Augustine put down his newspaper and cup of coffee, and looked at Tom.

"Tom, what's the problem? You look as serious as death."

"I feel very bad, Master. I always did think of Master as being good to everyone."

"Haven't I been, Tom. Is there something that you want from me? Go on and say it."

"Oh, no. Master has always been good to me. I'm very happy for myself. But there's one that Master isn't good to."

"What do you mean, Tom? Tell me what you're talking about."

"I started thinking about it very late last night, at one or two in the morning," said Tom. "I studied on it and I could see that Master isn't good to himself."

Tom said this with his back to his master and with his hand on the door handle. Augustine's face turned red, but he laughed.

"Oh, is that all?" he said happily.

"All?" said Tom, turning around and falling on his knees in front of Augustine. "Oh, good Master, I'm afraid you will lose it all – your body and your spirit. The good Book says that alcohol can bite you like a snake. Please, Master, don't hurt yourself!"

Tom's voice was breaking and tears started to run down his face.

"You poor man," said Augustine with tears in his own eyes. "Get up, Tom. I'm not worth crying over."

But Tom stayed on his knees waiting for a better answer.

"Okay, I won't go out drinking with them again, Tom. I promise I won't. I don't know why I didn't stop earlier. I never liked it and I never liked myself for doing it. Now, Tom, you can dry your tears and go about your business. I'm not saying I'll be perfect, now," he said as he softly pushed Tom to the door. "But I will promise that you won't see me again as you did last night."

"And I'll do my best to keep that promise," he said to himself after Tom had left.

And he did.

* * *

One day when Miss Ophelia was in the kitchen, a tall, thin black woman came in with a basket of bread on her head.

"Hello, Prue," said Aunt Dinah.

Prue had her own special sad face and angry voice. She put the basket on a table, then sat down on the floor, resting her elbows on her knees. "God knows, I'd be happier if I was dead!" she said.

"Why would you want to die?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"My pain would stop then," said the woman roughly, not taking her eyes away from looking at the floor.

"You make it for yourself, by drinking so much," said one of Dinah's light-skinned helpers.

Prue looked up with anger in her eyes. "You could have a master like mine one day too," she said. "And then you'd be happy for a drink, to help forget the pain."

Dinah looked into the basket, taking out what bread she needed. "Here are the tokens," she said to Prue.

"Tokens? What are they for?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"We buys tokens from her master, and she gives us bread for them," said Dinah.

"And they counts the tokens when I'm finished to see if they's right. If they aren't, they half kills me," said the bread seller.

"And so they should," said Dinah's helper. "They do it because she takes the money to buy drink, Mrs."

"And it's what I will do again if I can," said Prue. "I can't live no other way. Drink, and forget my pain."

"It's very wrong and very foolish," said Miss Ophelia, "to rob from your master to destroy yourself."

"Foolish it is," said the woman, "but I will do it if I can. Yes, I will. Oh God, I want to die and end the pain!" Very slowly she pushed herself up off the floor. She put the basket back on her head and started to leave. But then she turned to Dinah's helper: "You think you're very smart looking down on others. But you could live to be a poor animal like me. I pray that you will; then see if you don't drink." With an angry shout she left the room.

"Ugly old woman," said Adolph who had just come in to get some water for his master. "If I was her master, I'd cut her up worse than she is."

"You'd have a difficult time doing that," said Dinah. "Her back's covered with cuts."

Tom, who had been in the kitchen through all of this followed Prue out the door. He watched her walking, and as she did she would make a quiet sound of pain. When she was at a good place to rest, she put her basket on the ground and moved the old scarf that covered her shoulders.

"I'll carry your basket a piece," said Tom lovingly.

"Why should you," said the woman. "I don't want no help."

"You look like you're sick or in pain," said Tom.

"I'm not sick," said the woman shortly.

"Please," said Tom, "Please can I say something to help you leave off drinking. Don't you know that it will destroy your body and your spirit?"

"I know I'm going to hell. You don't need to tell me that. I's ugly. I's bad. And I's going straight to hell when I die."

Tom was shaking to hear anyone talk about hell without any fear of God in her.

"But God can forgive you, you poor woman," he said. "Did you never hear of Jesus Christ?"

"Who's he?"

"Why he's the Son of God," said Tom.

"Oh, I did hear tell of God and hell and all that."

"But didn't anyone ever tell you that Jesus Christ loved us and died for us that do bad things?"

"I don't know nothing about that," said the woman. "No one ever loved me after my old man died."

"Where were you born?" asked Tom.

"Up in Kentucky. A man used me to make children to sell. He would sell them as fast as they were big enough. When he was finished with me he sold me too."

"What put you into drinking this way?"

"To close out the sadness. I had one child after coming here, and I was thinking this was one I could bring up as my own. It was the most beautiful little thing. And Mrs. liked it enough at first. But Mrs. turned sick and it was my job to be with her. The sickness landed on me too and my milk dried up. My baby turned to skin and bone but Mrs. wouldn't buy any milk for it. She wouldn't believe I had no milk, and she said it was old enough to eat what others were eating. It cried day and night, and she said I couldn't have it in the room with her. I had to sleep in her room and my baby had to sleep in a little room off by itself. One night it just cried itself to death. It did. And I started drinking to keep its crying out of my ears. And I will drink any time I can. I'll do it if I do go to hell for it. I'm in hell now."

"You poor woman!" said Tom. "Didn't you know that Jesus died for you, that he'll help you, and you can go to heaven and have rest in the end."

"Isn't heaven where the white people go?" said the woman. "Do you think they'd want me there? No, I think I'd be happier in hell if I could get away from Master and Mrs. I really would," she said as she put her basket on her head and, with the same sad sound of pain, she walked off.

Tom turned and walked sadly back to the house. Eva came out to meet him with flowers on her head.

"Oh there you are, Tom! Father said we can go for a ride!" she said, catching his hand. "But why are you looking so sad?"

"I feel bad, Miss Eva," said Tom sadly. "But I'll get the horses for you."

"But do tell me, Tom, what is the problem? I saw you talking to angry old Prue."

Tom in clear strong words filled Eva in on Prue's story.

"I don't feel like going for a ride now," said Eva.

"Why not, Miss Eva?"

"These things go into my heart, Tom," said Eva. "They go in, and now I don't feel like riding." She turned from Tom and went into the house.

A few days later a different woman came in old Prue's place, carrying the bread in her basket.

"Prue won't be coming no more," she said.

"Why's that?" asked Dinah.

"She's in her room," said the woman, looking quickly at Miss Ophelia.

After Miss Ophelia had left with the bread, Dinah followed the woman to the door.

"What's the truth about Prue, now?" she asked.

The woman answered in a low voice. "It's a secret, but she was drinking again and they locked her in that dark room under the house to punish her. Left her there all day, and I heard them saying that flies had dropped their eggs in her! She's dead!"

Dinah lifted her hands in surprise, and then turned to see the spirit-like shape of Evangeline, her big eyes wide open in fear, and all the blood out of her lips and face.

"God help us! Miss Eva's going to faint away! She should never hear such talk. Her father's going to be real angry."

"I won't faint, Dinah," said the child clearly. "Why shouldn't I hear it? It's easier for me than for poor Prue."

"No way! It's not for sweet, soft, young girls like you to hear these stories. It's enough to kill you!"

Eva breathed deeply and then walked slowly up the steps.

Miss Ophelia learned the truth about Prue by the end of the morning and she talked to Augustine about it.

"Those people... they whipped Prue to death!" said Miss Ophelia.

"It had to happen sooner or later," said Augustine, going on with reading his newspaper.

"Sooner or later? Aren't you going to do something about it!" she asked. "Don't you have policemen down here, who will look into it?"

"When a thing like that happens down here, always the most important question is who owns what. Most people think that people can do what they like with what they own. When you think that she was a robber and that she was a very heavy drinker, you won't get many people to stand up for her."

"But it's not right! They can't just kill her! Augustine, God will punish you for this!"

"Ophelia, I didn't do it, and I can't help it. I would help if I could. But I can't. If low-minded people will be cruel, what am I to do about it? They have perfect control over what they own. There is no law to help us. The best thing to do is to forget what we know."

"How can you close your eyes and ears?"

"My child, what do you want me to do? I can't buy every slave that I see. And I can't right every wrong in the world. The best I can do is to stay out of the way of it. There was a time," he went on, "when I had plans of doing something more than blow in the wind. I wanted to free my land of this business, of owning people. Most young men go through such a time, but then –"

"Why didn't you go on with your plans?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"Things didn't go the way I wanted them to, and I gave up. I changed from a man of action to a man of words."

"And are you happy being only a man of words?" asked Ophelia.

"Happy? No, I hate it. But there are many of us who hate what we see happening in the world around us, without ever doing anything to really change it. My mother used to tell me of a time in the future when Christ will return and change the world into what it should be. She said to me as a boy that I should pray for this day to come. I do want it to come, but I know that I myself am not ready for it. There is so much that is wrong in my life."

"Augustine, at times I think you're closer to God than you know," said Ophelia.

"Thank you," said Augustine. "But it's up and down for me. I can come close to heaven with my words, but I find myself in the dirt of earth with my actions. I hear the bell for tea. But now you cannot say I have never talked seriously with you."

* * *

About this time our humble friend Tom was in his little room above the horses. In the room was a bed, a chair, and a little table with Tom's Bible and song book on it. He was sitting at this table working at writing something.

Tom had wanted so badly to hear from his family that he had asked Eva for a piece of paper, and he was trying to remember what little he had learned from Master George about writing, to send a few words to Chloe.

He was trying very hard, but not getting very far. Some letters he could not remember at all. But when he was close to giving up, Eva came like a bird and landed on the back of his chair where she could see over his shoulder.

"Oh, Uncle Tom, what funny letters you're making!"

"I'm trying to write to my poor old woman, Miss Eva, and to my little children," said Tom, rubbing his eyes with the back of his hand. "But I'm afraid I can't do it."

"I can help," said Eva.

She put her yellow hair close to his and the two of them talked over each word that they were to write, until in time they were starting to feel that their letter was saying something.

"Yes, Uncle Tom, it's starting to look beautiful," said Eva, looking happily at it. "Your wife and children will be very happy with it. I'll ask father if you can go back to them some time."

"Mrs. Shelby said she would send money for me when they can get it together," said Tom. "I believe she will. Young Master George said he would come for me. He gave me this dollar as a sign," and Tom pulled the dollar out from under his clothes.

"Oh, I believe he will come then," said Eva.

"I wanted to send a letter to tell them where I am and to stop Chloe from worrying."

"Hello, Tom," said Augustine, who had come in at the door.

Tom and Eva jumped.

"What is this?" asked Augustine, coming over to look at what they had been working on.

"It's Tom's letter. I'm helping him to write it," said Eva.

After looking at it quickly, Augustine said, "I don't want to discourage you, but I think it would be better if I write your letter for you, Tom. I'm going out for a ride now, but I'll do it when I return."

"It's very important, Father," said Eva. "His mistress is going to send money to buy him back when she has enough. She must know where he is."

Augustine was thinking that many owners would say things like this to make it easier on a servant that was being sold; but very few ever seriously acted on such a promise. But he did not think it was smart to say this to Tom.

When he finished his ride, he did a letter for Tom and sent it off to the Shelbys.

QUESTIONS ON PART 18

1. What new job did Augustine give Tom to do? (page 156)
2. Who was the person that Tom said his master had not been good to? (page 157)
3. What did Augustine promise Tom that he would not do again? (page 158)
4. What was the name of the woman who would bring bread to Augustine's house, carrying it on her head? (page 158)
5. What reason did Prue give to Ophelia for robbing money to use for alcohol? (page 159)
6. What did Prue tell Tom was her reason for drinking? (page 160)
7. What happened to Prue after her master had punished her and locked her in a dark room under the house? (page 161)
8. Who did Ophelia think should go to the police about Prue's owner whipping her to death? (page 162)
9. Who was Tom trying to write a letter to? (page 163)
10. Who ended up writing the letter for Tom? (page 164)

19. Topsy

One morning Augustine shouted up the steps to Miss Ophelia, "Come down here, Ophelia. I have something to show you."

"What is it?" she said as she came down the steps.

"See here," Augustine said as he pushed toward her a little eight or nine year old black girl.

The girl was as black as she could be. Her big round eyes were alive, looking in all directions. She was wearing a very old and very dirty dress.

"But why did you bring her to me?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"For you to teach her in the way that she should go. Here, Topsy," he said, giving a whistle as a man would do to bring his dog close to him. "Give us a song, and show us some of your dancing."

Her face lighted up, and she started to sing a strange Black song, keeping time with her hands and feet, turning around, hitting her hands together, and knocking her knees together in a strange, wild dance that ended with a jump high into the air. She stopped as quickly as she started, with her hands crossed in front of her and an empty look on her face, apart from little looks out of the corners of her eyes.

Miss Ophelia was so surprised that she could not move.

Augustine was having a good time, and he said to the child, "Topsy, this is your new mistress. I'm giving you to her, and you must be good for her."

"Yes, Master," said Topsy, her voice serious, but her eyes full of tricks.

"What are you talking about?" asked Ophelia. "You have more than enough children in this house as it is. Why buy another one?"

"Like I said, this one is for you. You say that we should teach our slaves. Now you can show us how to do it with one of your own."

"I don't want her. I have more to do with them now than I want."

"That's you Christians, all over! You get up a group to send some poor believer over to Africa to give his life teaching them there. But not one of you will take one into your house with you and do the job yourself. When it comes to that, they're too dirty for you, or the job is too hard."

"I didn't think of it like that," said Miss Ophelia. She was thinking about Augustine's words, and she was becoming softer. "It could be an interesting test."

Augustine had touched the right string. Miss Ophelia was always wanting to do what she should. "But," she added, "why did you buy another one? Don't we have enough here to work on?"

Pulling Ophelia to the side, Augustine said, "Her owners run a restaurant that I go by each day, and I became tired of hearing them shout at her and hit her all the time. She looked smart, and funny too, so buying her was a way to protect her from them and give you a clean piece of paper to write on yourself. I'd like to see what you can do."

"I'll try," said Miss Ophelia, who looked at little Topsy like a person planning to teach a big black spider to sing.

"She's very dirty. And she needs new clothes," she said.

"That's a good place to start," said Augustine. "Tell the servants to wash her and give her some clothes."

Miss Ophelia carried Topsy to the kitchen.

"Don't see what Master wants with another nigger!" Dinah said. She was looking at the girl with an air that was anything but friendly. "I won't have her around under my feet, I know!"

Dinah's helpers had the same feelings. In the end Miss Ophelia was forced to do most of the washing and dressing herself. She did not feel comfortable touching the girl, and the language the girl used against being washed was very hard on Miss Ophelia's ears. But when she saw the big sores on the girl's back from the whippings that she had received, her heart opened a little more.

When at last Topsy was dressed in new clothes, with her hair cut short, Miss Ophelia started to believe that she would be able to teach her.

"How old are you, Topsy?" she asked.

"Don't know, Mrs." said the girl with a smile that showed all of her teeth.

"You don't know how old you are? Didn't your mother ever tell you?"

"Never had a mother!" said the child with another smile.

"Never had a mother? What do you mean? Where were you born?"

"Never was born, Mrs.!" said Topsy with another smile, that looked so much like a little devil that Miss Ophelia could have easily believed that she really was a spirit from another world. But Miss Ophelia was not one to believe such things.

"You mustn't answer in that way, child; I'm not playing games with you. Tell me where you were born, and who your father and mother were."

"Never was born," the little animal answered again. "Never had no father or mother or nothing. I was with a lot of other children that a buyer owned. Old Aunt Sue gave us food and things."

Breaking into a laugh, Dinah's helper, Jane, said, "There's lots of them like that, Mrs. Buyers get them cheap when they're little and feed them until they're big enough to sell."

Miss Ophelia returned to her questions. "How long have you lived with your master and mistress before us?"

"Don't know, Mrs."

"More than a year? or less than a year?"

"Don't know, Mrs."

"Mrs., low blacks, they can't tell. They don't know anything about time," said Jane. "They don't even know what a year is."

"Did you ever hear anything about God, Topsy?"

The child did not answer, but smiled again.

"Do you know who made you?"

"No one, as I knows," said the child with a short laugh. The question interested her, and she added, "I think I growed. Don't think no one never made me."

"Do you know how to stitch?" asked Miss Ophelia, who was changing her questions to things that were less spiritual.

"No, Mrs."

"What did you do for your master and mistress?"

"Get water, wash dishes, and do things for people."

"Were they good to you?"

"I think they was," she said, looking closely at Miss Ophelia. Augustine was in the room listening by this time.

"You have a clean piece of paper there," he said. It'll be easy enough to put in your own teachings, because she doesn't have many other teachings to rub out."

Miss Ophelia's understanding of teaching children was that they should learn to obey, learn about God, learn to read, learn to stitch (if they were girls), and learn to tell the truth. If they did not, they should be punished. So this is where she started.

Because the other servants did not like Topsy, Miss Ophelia moved Topsy into her room, where she did her teaching and where Topsy's first jobs were to be.

On the first morning, Miss Ophelia said to Topsy, "Now, Topsy, I'm going to show you how to make my bed. It's very important for me that my bed be made right. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Mrs." said Topsy breathing deeply and looking very serious.

Miss Ophelia went on from one thing to another, and Topsy said, "Yes, Mrs." at each point on the way. But what Miss Ophelia did not see as she was showing Topsy all the steps in making a bed was that Topsy had put two gloves and a beautiful piece of cloth up her sleeves when Miss Ophelia's back was turned.

"Now, Topsy, it's your turn to do it," said Miss Ophelia, pulling all the blankets back.

Topsy then went through the exercise just as Miss Ophelia had been teaching her to do it, and Miss Ophelia was feeling very happy. But just at the end, a part of the cloth up Topsy's sleeves dropped out. Miss Ophelia said very quickly, "What's this! You have been robbing from me. You're a very bad girl!"

Miss Ophelia pulled the cloth out of the sleeve, and Topsy looked at it with nothing but surprise.

"Look there!" she said. "Why that's your cloth, isn't it. How did it ever get up my sleeve?"

"Topsy, you bad girl. You know how it was there. You robbed it, and now you're lying about it."

"Oh, no, Mrs., I'm telling you the truth. I never did see it before now."

"Topsy, don't you know that it's very wrong to tell lies?"

"I never tell no lies, Mrs.," said Topsy with the face of an angel. "It's just the truth I been telling and nothing more."

"Topsy, I will have to punish you if you are going to tell lies."

"Mrs., if you whips me all day, I could answer no other way," said Topsy, starting to make crying sounds. "I never seed that cloth. It must've catched in my sleeve when I was making the bed."

Miss Ophelia was so angry at the child's lying that she started to shake her. As she did, the gloves dropped to the floor from the other sleeve.

"Look there! Are you going to tell me now that you didn't rob the cloth."

Topsy could see that she was losing, so she went for a half truth. She agreed that she had robbed the gloves, but stayed with her story about the cloth.

"Now, Topsy," said Miss Ophelia, "if you will say that you robbed the cloth, I won't whip you this time." Topsy liked the agreement when it was put that way, and she said that she did rob both the cloth and the gloves, and said it was very wrong of her to do it.

"Now," said Miss Ophelia, "you were running free all day yesterday and you must have robbed other things. If you will tell me, I won't whip you for it."

"Mrs., I robbed Miss Eva's red thing that she wears on her neck," said Topsy.

"That was wrong, Topsy. Did you take any other things?"

"Yes, I robbed those things Jane wears on her ears."

"You go and bring them to me this minute," said Miss Ophelia.

"Oh I can't do that," said Topsy. "I burned them up."

"You burned them? What a story. Go get them or I'll whip you."

Topsy cried and shouted that she could not get them. "They's burned up, they is!"

"Why did you do that?"

"Because I'm bad. I've very very bad. I can't help it."

At this point Eva walked in wearing her necklace.

"Eva, where did you get that necklace?" said Miss Ophelia.

"Get it?" asked Eva. "Why, I've had it on all day."

Miss Ophelia did not know what was happening. And to top it off, Jane walked in with two pieces of red stone hanging from her ears.

"What am I to do with you?" Miss Ophelia asked Topsy. "Why did you say you robbed those things?"

"Mrs. said I must say I robbed something or I would get a whipping. I couldn't think of anything but those things."

"But I didn't want you to say you robbed something if you didn't," said Miss Ophelia. "That's a lie as much as the other."

"Is that true?" said Topsy with a look of surprise.

"There's not an honest bone in her body," said Jane. "If I was Master, I'd whip her until her blood runs. I would. She'd catch it good!"

"No, no, Jane!" said Eva, who was listening to it all. "You must not talk that way. I don't want to hear it."

"Miss Eva, you's so good you don't know nothing about how to teach niggers like this one. There's no way but to cut them up."

"Jane," said Eva, "you stop that talk right now!" And the look in her eye was enough to stop Jane before she said another word against Topsy.

"Miss Eva has her father's blood in her. She sounds, for all the world, just like her father," Jane said as she was leaving the room.

Over the next few weeks Miss Ophelia tried everything that she knew to teach Topsy. But the job was a big one.

"I don't see how I can teach her without whipping her," she said to Augustine one day.

"Whip her if you like. You make the rules and I'll not fight you on them," said Augustine. "But I should tell you that she has been whipped with fire-irons and shovels. Your whippings will need to be very strong to change her now."

Miss Ophelia returned to her teaching to find that Topsy learned what she wanted to learn very quickly. But when she did not want to learn, all the whippings in the world could not change her.

QUESTIONS ON PART 19

1. What was the name of the eight or nine year old black girl that Augustine gave to Ophelia to teach? (page 166)
2. What did Augustine ask Topsy to do to entertain Ophelia? (page 166)
3. What did Ophelia see on Topsy's back that opened her heart a little? (page 167)
4. What did Topsy answer when Ophelia asked how old she was? (page 168)
5. What five things did Ophelia think children should learn? (page 169)
6. What did Topsy hide up her sleeve? (page 169)
7. Why did Topsy say that she had robbed things when she did not? (pages 170 and 171)
8. Topsy was able to learn some things very quickly, and other things she did not learn at all. What made the difference between what she learned and what she did not learn? (page 172)

20. Back in Kentucky

We will now take a short look at what is happening back at Mr. Shelby's farm in Kentucky.

Mr. Shelby was leaning back in one chair with his feet on another, smoking a cigar. Mrs. Shelby was behind him stitching. She had something on her mind and was looking for the best time to say it.

"Did you hear that Chloe has received a letter from Tom?" she asked.

"Oh, has she? Tom must have a friend down there to help him write it. How is he?"

"It sounds like he's with a very kind family. He says his work is very easy."

"I'm happy to hear that," said Mr. Shelby. "If he's doing well, we won't need to bring him back here."

"It's not like that," said Mrs. Shelby. "He showed a lot of interest in how long it will be before we have enough money to bring him back."

"I couldn't say," said Mr. Shelby. "When business starts going down, it takes a long time to turn it around. You end up taking from one to give to another, and then you take from still another to pay back the first one."

"We must do something to stop it. What if we sell the horses, and part of the farm. Then we would have enough to square up with everyone."

"Don't be foolish, Emily! You're the best wife any man could have, but you don't understand business. Women never do and never can."

"But if you would tell me more about what's happening," said Mrs. Shelby, "I could start to understand our business. We could make a list of everyone who wants money from us, and another list of where we are getting our money from, and I could help you to work them out, one against the other."

"You can't just cut things off the way you cut the border off a pie, Emily. It's not that easy. I tell you, this is no business for women."

And Mr. Shelby, not knowing any other way of winning the argument, lifted his voice almost to a shout – a way of arguing that husbands around the world use most often when trying to make a point with their wives that is not really strong enough to stand on the truth behind it.

Mrs. Shelby stopped talking at this point. The truth is that she had the better mind for handling business, but her husband was too proud to give in to it. She wanted to make good on her promise to Tom and Aunt Chloe, but it was not looking good for her.

"Isn't there some way to get enough money to buy Tom back? Poor Aunt Chloe wants him so badly!"

"I feel bad about it, but I think we should have never made the promise in the first place. I think if we were to tell her the truth now it could be the kindest thing in the long run. In time she'll get used to it, and in a year or two Tom'll have another wife. If she can forget him, she can take up with another man."

"Mr. Shelby! How can you say that? I've been trying all these years to teach them that God wants us to stay with the one we marry. I could never think of telling Chloe to marry another man."

"It's too bad, wife, but the truth is you've been teaching them rules that they could never follow."

"But it's the rules of the Bible, Mr. Shelby."

"I'm not against religion, Emily. But knowing the way that they must live, I don't see that the rules can work for them."

"So you change the way that they must live; you don't change the rules!" said Mrs. Shelby. "From my heart I hate the whole thing. I tell you that I cannot just forget the promise that I made to them. If there is no other way, I will take in music students and make the money myself."

"I could never agree to my wife working. It would make you look bad."

"Look bad? Could my working as a music teacher be any worse than my lying to people who cannot help themselves? No, I am going to do what I must do to make good on my word."

"You should think about it seriously before you start such a thing," said Mr. Shelby.

At this point, Mrs. Shelby looked up to see Aunt Chloe at the door.

"If you please, Mrs., could you come out and look at these chickens."

When Mrs. Shelby arrived in the kitchen she saw dead chickens on the table.

"I don't know if I should make a pie of these chickens, or if we should eat them on their own," said Aunt Chloe. "I need help from you to do the right thing."

"Really, Aunt Chloe, I don't see that it's important one way or the other. You do what you want with them."

Chloe was thinking deeply as she handled one of the chickens. It was clear that the chickens were not what she was really thinking about. At last she gave a worried little laugh and started to say what she was really wanting to say.

"Mrs., I been thinking: What should Master and Mrs. be worrying about money for when they's not using what's right in their own hands?" And she laughed again.

"I don't understand," said Mrs. Shelby, who did understand by now that Chloe had heard what she and Mr. Shelby had been saying about buying Tom back.

"Why think about it, Mrs." said Chloe, laughing again. "Other people sends their niggers out to work for them and they makes them some money. You keep too many of us here, eating you out of your house."

"Okay, Chloe. So who do you think we should send out to work, and where?"

"Now, I'm not the one to tell you how to do your business,

Mrs.," said Chloe, "but Sam said there's a big cake shop in Louisville that's looking for a cook, and they'll give four dollars a week for one."

"Go on."

"So I's a thinking, Mrs., it's time Sally was put to doing something. I been teaching her for some time now and she's almost good as me. If she did the cooking here, I could get that money for you."

"But what about the children?"

"The boys are big enough to start working themselves. And the baby's such a good one, Sally can watch her easy."

"It's a long way to Louisville, Chloe, but if it's what you want, then I'll put every cent of what you make in a safe place to be used to buy your husband back."

Chloe's dark face lighted up. "Oh, it's too good of you, Mrs. I won't need no clothes or shoes. You can keep every cent. How many weeks is in a year, Mrs.?"

"Fifty-two," said Mrs. Shelby.

"So how long would it take me to work it out, Mrs.?"

"Some four or five years, Chloe; but I'll add something to it."

"No, I won't hear of you teaching music or nothing. Master's right about that. It's not right for a married white woman to have a job. It won't come to that as long as I have hands."

"Okay, Chloe. We'll keep Master happy. But when do you want to go?"

"I wasn't planning nothing, but Sam's going to the river with some horses tomorrow. If I put my things together tonight, I could go with him. I would need a letter from Mrs. too."

"I'll get you the letter if Mr. Shelby agrees to it. But I must talk to him first."

And Mrs. Shelby left to talk to her husband.

QUESTIONS ON PART 20

1. Mrs. Shelby said that in Tom's letter to Chloe, he showed a lot of interest in something. What was it? (page 173)
2. What did Mrs. Shelby say they could sell to buy Tom back? (page 173)
3. Who had the better mind for business: Mr. Shelby or Mrs. Shelby? (page 174)
4. Mrs. Shelby said she could get a job to help buy Tom back. What was the job she said she could do? (pages 174 and 175)
5. What was Chloe really thinking about when she was asking Mrs. Shelby about how to cook the chickens? (pages 175 and 176)
6. Who did Chloe say would look after her baby and do the cooking if she started working at the cake shop in Louisville? (page 176)
7. How many years was it going to take Chloe to make enough money to buy Tom back? (page 176)

21. Eva's Sickness

The days went by slowly for Tom until it had been two years from the time that he left the Shelbys. It wasn't all bad. He never stopped praying to see his family, but his life in Louisiana had been much better than it could have been.

In his Bible readings, Tom had one saying that he liked very much. It said, "I have learned to be happy at all times – when things go well, and when they do not go so well."

His letter to Chloe had been answered by Master George in big letters that Tom said you could read "across the room". It said that Aunt Chloe was working as a cook in a cake shop in Louisville and making good money that was to be used to buy Tom back. The boys, Mose and Pete, were doing well, and the baby was running all over the house. Sally was looking after it between cooking for the family.

The cabin was closed up for the time being. But George promised that he himself was going to add many beautiful things to it when Tom came back.

The letter listed what George was studying at school, and the names of four new baby horses that had been born after Tom left. George said that his mother and father were well. All in all, Tom believed it was the best letter in the world, and he wanted to hang it on the wall, but could not find a way to show both sides at the same time, so he didn't.

Tom and Eva became the best of friends. Tom loved her as a weak child that he must protect; but he could not help thinking of her as an angel who was protecting him too.

He would look at her the way a Catholic would look at a picture of Baby Jesus. Tom was happiest when he could do things to make Eva happy. When he was doing business at the shops he would always keep an eye out for a beautiful flower or piece of fruit to bring back for her. He was always happy to see her yellow hair flying down the road toward him when he returned from the shops, and asking, "What did you bring today, Uncle Tom?"

Eva, too, liked to do things to make Uncle Tom happy. She was a very good reader, and could read the Bible in a way that Tom had never heard before. At first she did it to please her humble friend. But soon her spirit joined with the spirit of the book, and she loved it because it did something to her that made her feel very close to God.

The parts that she liked best were in The Revelation. She could not understand much of it, but, like Tom, she could feel that it was talking about another world, where all that is wrong in this world would be fixed.

At this time in our story, the whole St. Clare family had moved to their house on the lake. The hot weather had forced them out of New Orleans for the summer.

The sun was going down, and it was like the whole sky was on fire. The silver water of the quiet lake was like a second burning sky below it.

Tom and Eva were on a bench under some trees, reading the Bible: "And I saw a lake of glass, mixed with fire," it said.

"Tom," said Eva, stopping and pointing to the lake. "There it is."

"There is what, Miss Eva?"

"Don't you see? There!" she said, pointing to the glass-like water of the lake as it mirrored the fire of the sky. "It's the lake of glass mixed with fire."

"True enough, Miss Eva," said Tom, who started singing:

*If I had the wings of the morning,
I would fly to Canaan's beach.*

Angels would carry me from there to the new Jerusalem.

"Where do you think the New Jerusalem is, Uncle Tom?" asked Eva.

"Oh, it's up in the clouds, Miss Eva."

"I think I can see it," said Eva. "Look in those clouds. The big round ones are the doors, and you can see that there's gold behind them. Tom, sing the song about the happy spirits."

Tom started singing again:

*I see a group of happy spirits.
They know how good it is with Him.
They are dressed in snow-white robes
and carry palms that say they win.*

"Tom, those spirits have come to me," said Eva.

This did not surprise Tom at all. If Eva had said that she had visited heaven, he would have believed that too.

"The happy spirits come to me when I'm sleeping," she said. Then Eva started quietly singing the song to herself.

"Uncle Tom," she said when she finished. "I'm going there."

"Where, Miss Eva?"

Standing up, she pointed her hand to the sky. "I'm going there," she said, "to be with the happy spirits. I'm going. It won't be long."

Tom's heart jumped. Over the months Eva's hands had been growing thinner, her skin more white, and her breathing shorter. When she played she quickly became tired. Miss Ophelia's medicines had not been able to stop a dry cough that was becoming worse. And even now, her skin was hot from the sickness. But Eva's own words were the first sign that it was so serious, and they made Tom afraid.

Eva was slowly moving closer to heaven, but the ones who loved her most did not know it.

"Eva!" shouted Miss Ophelia from the verandah of the beach house. "Eva, it's almost dark. You mustn't be out in the night air!"

Miss Ophelia with her nursing abilities was the first to see the danger. She tried to tell Augustine about her fears, but he would throw her words back at her.

"Don't be crazy. I don't want to hear such talk. She's growing. Children always lose strength when they grow quickly."

"But the cough!"

"Foolishness! It's nothing! Keep her away from the night air, and stop her if she tries to play too hard. Do that and she will do well enough."

But he worried secretly. He stayed with her more, went for rides with her more, and every few days he would bring from town some new medicine that promised to bring strength – “not,” he said, “that she needed it, but then it couldn’t hurt her to take it.”

What most worried Augustine was the change in Eva’s spirit. She was still a child in most ways, but she would say things at times that sounded like they were straight from God. At such times he would hug her as if the hug itself could protect her from death.

Eva’s life became one of kind loving acts. She had always been generous, but now her actions were more adult.

She loved to play with Topsy and the other children, but now she was more of an on-looker than an actor. She would sit for half an hour at a time laughing at Topsy’s tricks, and then her face would become sad and serious.

“Mother,” she said on one of these days, “why don’t we teach our servants to read?”

“What a question, child! People never do that.”

“Why don’t they?” asked Eva.

“Because servants have no need for it. It won’t make them work harder, and that’s what God made them to do.”

“But they could read the Bible, Mother, to learn what God wants them to do.”

“Oh. But others can read to them as much as they need.”

“But we all need the Bible, and I think they must need it more than most. Miss Ophelia is teaching Topsy to read.”

“Yes, and you see how much good it does. Topsy is the worst animal I ever saw!”

“What about Mammy?” asked Eva. “She loves the Bible so much. What will she do when I can’t read to her?”

Marie was looking through a drawer and not listening closely.

“Yes, in time you will have other things to do. It’s good of you to read the Bible to servants. I did it a time or two myself before I became sick. But you’re getting older now, and you’ll need to start mixing with other people.

"Look here!" she added. "This diamond necklace is one I had on at my first big dance. It was the talk of the dance."

Eva lifted the necklace from the little box that it was in. Her eyes were on it, but her mind was in another place.

"Are these worth very much money, Mother?"

"Yes, they are. My father sent to France for them."

"I would like to have them, to do with as I please."

"And what would you do with them?"

"I would sell them and buy a place in the North, and take all our people there, and pay teachers to teach them to read and write."

Marie's laughing cut Eva short. Eva left; but from that day on she started teaching Mammy to read.

QUESTIONS ON PART 21

1. Turn to the map on page 293. What are the names of the big parts of the country between where Tom was and where Aunt Chloe was, in Louisville, Kentucky? (page 178)
2. Tom had been with the St. Clare's for two years. When was he happiest? (page 178)
3. Where were the parts of the Bible that Eva liked best? (page 179)
4. What was the name of the town that Uncle Tom said was up in the clouds? (page 179)
5. What did Eva say had come to her when she was sleeping? (page 180)
6. Who was the first to see the danger in Eva coughing so much and being tired so easily? (page 180)
7. What did Eva want to teach the servants? (page 181)
8. What did Eva want to do with the diamond necklace? (page 182)

22. Bad News Coming

A short time later, Eva's strength dropped quickly. For a day or two she was so sick that she had to stay in the house. Augustine at last asked for a doctor to come.

Marie St. Clare did not even know that Eva had been sick, because she had been studying a sickness or two herself – ones that she believed she was catching. It was the first rule of Marie's beliefs that no one could ever be sicker than she was. In her thinking, any talk of someone around her being sick could only be coming from a lazy spirit. If people could feel the pain that she was feeling, she said, then they would know the difference between real pain and just being lazy.

Miss Ophelia had tried a few times to encourage Marie to show some interest in Eva, but with little effect.

"I can't see that she's sick," Marie would say. "She runs about and plays well enough."

"But she has a cough."

"Cough? You don't need to tell me about a cough. I've had one all my life. Eva's cough is nothing."

"But she gets weak and it's difficult for her to breathe."

"I've had that for years. It won't hurt her."

Miss Ophelia stopped trying in the end. But now that the doctor was coming and it was clear that Eva was very sick, Marie's thinking moved in a different direction.

"I knew it," she said. "No mother has been through what I've been through. First my own sickness, and now I am forced to see the daughter I love dying before my eyes." And she used this new problem as a reason to wake Mammy at night more than ever.

"Marie, do not talk about her dying," said Augustine. "We shouldn't give up so quickly."

"You don't have the feelings of a mother, St. Clare! Even if you don't feel when your only child has such a dangerous sickness, I do. It's too much for me, with all that I was carrying before."

"It's true that Eva is not a strong girl," said Augustine. "And this sickness is serious. But the doctor says there is room to believe that she could get over it."

"If you can see good in it, then do. But my feelings are so strong that I cannot take these things as easily as others do."

And the "other people" had reason to pray that Marie could take things more easily; for she used Eva's sickness as a reason to talk against every word and every action of those around her who did not have the "feelings" that she did for poor Eva.

In a week or two Eva was up walking around again. But Miss Ophelia and the doctor knew it was not the end of the sickness. Eva herself was the only other person who understood what was happening. In her heart she knew that heaven was near. She quietly looked forward to it. She was not at all afraid of dying, for her reading of the Bible with Tom had changed the stories of Jesus from words in a book to a living Friend. His love filled her little heart, and it was to Him, she said, that she was going — to the place where He lived.

But Eva was sad about leaving the people that she loved. She loved her father most. She never did clearly think about it, but in her heart she had a feeling that he loved her more than any other person too. She loved her mother as all children do, but her mother's selfish spirit made her sad.

Children do not often make general rules in their minds about things. But Eva's thinking was far above her years, and her love for the servants made her want all slaves to be free.

"Uncle Tom," she said one day when she was reading to him. "I can understand why Jesus wanted to die for us."

"Why, Miss Eva?"

"Because I feel the same way."

"What do you mean, Miss Eva? I don't understand."

"You remember those slaves on the boat with you, when you were coming to New Orleans? Some of them were leaving their mothers, some their husbands, and some mothers were crying for their little children. I had that feeling for them too."

And then there was poor Prue. When I hear about people like her, I think it would be easier if I could die so that they could be happy. I would like to die for them if I could."

Tom looked at the child without saying a word. There was no question in his mind that the love of Jesus was in her little heart.

A short time later he was talking to Mammy. "It's no use trying to keep Miss Eva here," he said. "She has God's mark on her head."

"Yes," said Mammy. "She never was like a child that's to live. There was always something deep in her eyes. We all sees it every day of her life. She's such a sweet little child!"

Eva walked lightly up the steps to her father. He lifted her and hugged her.

"Eva, you're getting better, aren't you?"

"Father," said Eva, looking at him very seriously, "I have something I must say before I become too weak to say it."

Augustine sat down, holding Eva. She put her head on his chest and started: "I can't keep it secret any longer, Father. I'm going to be leaving you, and I won't be coming back."

"Don't talk like that," said Augustine, who was shaking. "You shouldn't think about such sad things."

"No, Father," said Eva. "You shouldn't hide from the truth. I know perfectly well that I'm not any better. But I'm not sad, and I'm not afraid. If it wasn't for you and my friends, I would be perfectly happy. I want to go!"

"Why would you want to leave here? You have everything to make you happy here."

"But it will be better in heaven. There are many things here that make me sad. The only thing sad about going to heaven is leaving you and my friends."

"What makes you sad here?" asked Augustine.

"I feel sad for our poor people. They love me and they are good and kind to me. I want them all to be free."

"But Eva, don't you think we're kind to them?"

"Yes, Father, but if you die, what will happen to them? Other owners are not kind. Look at Prue's owners."

"My poor girl! You should've never heard such a story."

"No, it's not right, Father. You want me to live so happy and never have any pain – not even hear a sad story – when others have nothing but pain and sadness all their lives. It's so selfish. I should know the truth. And I should feel what they are feeling. I think about them all the time, Father. Isn't there some way we can make all slaves free?"

"It would be a very big job, my love. It's true that it's wrong. Very many people would agree with you. I do too. But I don't know what we can do about it."

"Father, you're very good with words. You can make anyone listen to you. You could go around and talk to people. Tell them to do what is right. After I die, please, do it for me. I would do it if I could."

"After you die?" said Augustine sadly. "Oh, child, don't say such a thing. You're all that I have."

"Poor old Prue's child was all that she had. But she had to hear it cry itself to death. Father, these poor people love their children as much as you love me. Please, do something for them. I've heard Mammy crying when she talked about her children that she was pulled away from to work here. And Tom loves his children too."

"There, there, my love," said Augustine. "I'll do anything that you ask, if you will not talk about dying."

"Then promise me that you will make Tom free."

"Yes, Eva, I will. I'll do anything that you ask."

"Oh Father, I would be so happy if we could go together."

"Where, Eva?" asked Augustine.

"To live with Jesus. It's so beautiful there. Everyone loves each other there." She talked like one who had been there often. "Do you want to be there with me, Father?"

Augustine hugged her closer to him, but he said nothing.

"You will come to me. I know it," she said quietly.

The sun was going down now, and as Augustine hugged his little daughter, he remembered his past life. He remembered how he wanted to do good when he was a boy. He remembered his mother praying for him. Between then and this hour had been years of selfish living and many arguments against faith. He carried Eva to her room, but he did not put her in her bed. He hugged her in his arms, singing quietly to her until she was asleep.

QUESTIONS ON PART 22

1. What was the first rule of Marie's beliefs about sicknesses? (page 183)
2. How did Marie use Eva's sickness to put other people down, and to lift herself up? (page 184)
3. Was Eva afraid of dying? (page 184)
4. What part of dying made Eva sad? (page 184)
5. What secret truth did Eva tell to her father? (page 185)
6. What did Eva believe that her father could do to stop people from owning slaves? (page 186)
7. What did Eva ask her father to promise her? (page 186)

23. The Little Preacher

It was Sunday afternoon. Augustine was on the verandah, smoking a cigar. Marie was on a couch near him. A prayer book was in her hands. She was holding it because it was Sunday, and she believed that she was reading it; but the truth is that each time she started to read it, she dropped off to sleep. Miss Ophelia and Tom and Eva were away at a church meeting.

"I say, Augustine," said Marie after waking up again. "I must send to town for Doctor Posey. I know there's something wrong with my heart."

"Why send for him? You can ask Eva's doctor."

"No, I don't have faith in him for anything serious. I must have Doctor Posey. I've been having pains for the past two or three nights now."

"Oh, Marie, you worry too much. I don't think there's anything at all wrong with your heart."

"No you wouldn't," said Marie. "I knew you wouldn't. One cough from Eva and you come running, but you never think of me."

"If it makes you happy to have a problem with your heart, I'll try to back you up in what you believe," said Augustine.

"I think it's all the work I've been through with Eva's sickness that has brought this on," said Marie.

It would be difficult to say what the work was that Marie had been doing. Augustine returned to smoking his cigar.

Tom pulled up in front of the verandah with the coach a minute later. Eva and Miss Ophelia stepped out.

Miss Ophelia went straight to her room to put away her hat as she always did, and Eva ran to sit on Augustine's knee and tell him about what had happened at church.

In a short time there were loud shouts from Miss Ophelia's room. She was shouting at Topsy.

"What new trick is Topsy doing?" Augustine asked himself.

A few seconds later Miss Ophelia came into the room, pulling Topsy behind her. "We will see what your master has to say about this," she was saying to Topsy.

"What's the problem?" asked Augustine.

"The problem is that I cannot live with this child one more day! It's more than I can take. You see, I locked her in the room and gave her a song book to read when we were at church. But she must have learned where I put the key to my drawer, because she was into it and pulled out the cloth I was going to use to make a new hat. Now she has cut it into dresses for her doll. I never saw anything like it in my life!"

"It's like I said," put in Marie. "You can't teach them a thing without whippings. If I had my way, I'd send that child out and have her whipped until she couldn't stand up!"

"Yes, I believe you would," said Augustine. "Tell me about how beautiful the world would be if women were the leaders and not men. There are few women who would not half kill a horse or servant if they had their way. And what would they do with us men if they could?"

"Talk all you like, St. Clare!" said Marie. "But Ophelia is a smart woman. She sees what is needed now as well as I do."

Miss Ophelia was angry about Topsy destroying the material, but what Marie was saying helped her to cool down.

"I wouldn't do that for the world," she said. "But I don't know what to do. I've talked to her until I'm blue in the face. I've hit her myself. I've punished her in every way that I can think of, but I don't think she has changed at all."

"Come here, Topsy, you little monkey!" said Augustine, pulling the child up to him.

Topsy looked up at him with her big round eyes, waiting to hear what he was going to say.

"What makes you act this way?" asked Augustine, who could not help but smile at the look on the girl's face.

"I think it's my bad heart," said Topsy sweetly. "Miss 'Phelia says so."

"Don't you see how much Miss Ophelia has been trying to help you change your bad heart?"

"Oh, yes, Master! My old Mrs. used to say the same things. She whipped me a lot harder, and pulled my hair, and knocked my head against the door. But it didn't do me no good. I think if you pull every hair out of my head, it won't do no good. I's too bad! I's nothing but a nigger, no ways!"

"I will have to give her up," said Miss Ophelia. "I can't put up with her any longer."

Dropping his hold on Topsy, Augustine turned to Ophelia. "Before you do, can I ask you one question?"

"What is it?"

"If your faith is not strong enough to change one child that you can live with and teach every hour of the day, what's the good of sending a few preachers off to Africa to change thousands of them? I don't think this child would be any harder to change than the thousands in Africa."

Miss Ophelia did not answer. Eva, who had been listening to what was going on, made a quiet sign to Topsy to follow her. There was a little room with windows at the corner of the verandah, and the two girls went into it.

"What's Eva doing now?" said Augustine to himself. And he walked very quietly over to the window of the room to look in. Putting one finger on his lips, he made a sign with his other hand for Miss Ophelia to come and look. The two children were sitting on the floor facing each other. Their faces were turned away from Augustine and Ophelia. Topsy did not show much interest, but Eva's big blue eyes were filled with tears.

"Why don't you try to be good, Topsy? Don't you love anyone?"

"Don't know nothing about love. I loves lollies and such, that's all," said Topsy.

"But you must love your father and mother."

"Never had no father and mother. I telled you that, Miss Eva."

"I know," said Eva, sadly, "but didn't you have a brother or sister or something?"

"No, not a one of them. Never had nothing or no one."

"But Topsy, if you would try to be good..."

"Can't be nothing but a nigger, even if I ever tried," said Topsy.
"If I could be skinned and come out white, then I'd try."

"But being black won't stop people loving you. Miss Ophelia would love you if you were good."

Topsy gave a short laugh that she used when she did not believe something a person was saying.

"Don't you think so?" asked Eva.

"No. She can't stomach me because I'm a nigger. She'd be happier to touch a frog than touch me. Can't no one love niggers. Niggers can't do nothing! But it don't hurt me!" And she started to whistle to hide her true feelings.

"Oh, Topsy, you poor girl. I love you!" said Eva, putting her little thin, white hand on Topsy's shoulder. "I love you because you don't have a father or mother or friends. I love you and I want you to be good. I'm very sick, Topsy, and I don't think I'll live much longer. And it makes me feel very sad to see you being bad. Will you try to be good for me. It's only a short time before I'll be going."

The eyes of the black child were filling with tears. The tears dropped, one by one, onto the little white hand on her shoulder. One thin piece of heaven-sent love had worked its way into her heart. She put her head down between her knees and cried her heart out, as the child bending over her looked for all the world like an angel leaning down to lift up one of God's children.

"You know," said Eva, "Jesus loves us all the same. He loves you as much as he loves me. And he loves you more than I do, because he's better than me. He'll help you to be good if you ask him. And when you die, you can come to heaven and be an angel with me. Think of it, Topsy! You can be one of those happy spirits that Tom sings about."

"I'll try, Miss Eva! I will!" said the child. "I never did want to try before; but now I do."

Augustine backed away, and Ophelia moved with him.

"It makes me think of something my mother said to me when I was a boy," he said. "She said that if we want to really help people, we must do like Christ did, and put our hands on them."

"It's true that I never liked having her touch me," said Ophelia. "But I didn't think she could tell."

"It's not a thing you can hide from a child," said Augustine. "And I believe that all the good works in the world, and all that you could ever give to a child will never change her if she feels that spirit in you."

"But how can I help it?" asked Ophelia. "I don't like her, and I can't stop feeling that way. It comes so easy for Eva. She has the spirit of Christ in her. I should learn from her."

"It wouldn't be the first time he has used a child to teach an adult," said Augustine.

QUESTIONS ON PART 23

1. Why did Marie think that she needed a different doctor to the one who was looking after Eva? (page 188)
2. Where had Tom, Ophelia, and Eva been when Marie was talking to Augustine about her heart? (page 188)
3. What did Topsy do wrong when Miss Ophelia was away at church? (page 189)
4. What did Marie think that Topsy needed before she would learn? (page 189)
5. Augustine said that he did not think Topsy would be any harder to change than thousands of other people. What other people was he talking about? (page 190)
6. What did Topsy say about Miss Ophelia's love for her? (page 191)
7. What was Ophelia's answer to what Topsy had said about Ophelia not wanting to touch her? (page 192)

24. Death

Eva's bedroom was a very big one. Like all the rooms of the house, it opened out onto the wide verandah. On one side of it was Eva's parents' room, and on the other was Miss Ophelia's. Augustine had tried over the years to make the room as beautiful as the child. The curtains were pink and white. The rug had pictures of leaves and flowers around the border and in the middle. The bed, chairs, and couch were of the best timber. The shape of a beautiful angel was at the top of the bed. A curtain of pink and silver protected the bed from mosquitos. Big soft pink pillows were on the chairs and couch. A beautiful container, itself shaped like a white flower, was on a table and was always filled with flowers. There was a fireplace in the room, and on the shelf above it was a picture of Jesus holding the little children. On each side were more containers, and it was Tom's job to fill them with flowers each morning. Pictures of children were on the walls. In short, Eva's eyes never opened in the morning without seeing something that was happy and beautiful. She had been spending more and more time in this room as her strength had been leaving her.

One morning she was lying on the couch when she heard her mother's sharp voice on the verandah.

"What are you doing now, you good for nothing! You've been into the flowers, haven't you?" and Eva could hear the sound of a sharp hit with a hand on someone's face.

"Please, Mrs. They's for Miss Eva," answered Topsy.

"Miss Eva, my foot! You think she wants your flowers? Now get out of here, you nigger!"

Eva was quickly up off her couch and out onto the verandah.

"Don't, mother! I do want the flowers. Please give them to me."

"But you have a room full of flowers now."

"I can never have too many flowers," said Eva. "Topsy, do bring them here."

Topsy, who had been standing with her head down, now came up to Eva with the flowers. She was very shy about it, not the way she used to be.

"They are very beautiful," said Eva, looking at them.

There were two flowers, one white with big green leaves, and one red. They were tied together.

Topsy was pleased when Eva said the flowers were beautiful. Eva went on, "Topsy, you put them together very well. Here is one container that does not have any flowers. Could you bring something for it each day?"

Topsy smiled and did a little bend of her knees toward Eva before turning to leave, and as she did, Eva saw a tear run down her face.

"You see, Mother, I knew poor Topsy wanted to do something for me," Eva said to her mother.

"Foolishness. She likes to break up the flowers, and now she has a reason to do it. But if that's what you want, then so be it."

"Mother, I think Topsy's different now. She's trying to be good."

"She'll have to try a lot harder before she'll ever change her ways," said Marie with a laugh.

"She has a lot against her, Mother."

"Not here, she doesn't. Everyone and everything is on her side here. She's been talked to and preached to so many times, and still she doesn't change. She's so ugly, and she always will be."

"But, Mother, it's different to grow up as I have, with so many friends and so many things to make me good and happy. Before coming here, Topsy didn't have any of these things."

"If you say so," said Marie with little interest.

"Mother, do you believe that Topsy could become an angel if she was a Christian?"

"Topsy? No one but you could think of such a thing."

"But isn't God her Father as much as ours? Didn't Jesus die for her too?"

"God is everyone's Father. Now where are my smelling-salts?"

"It's very sad. It's too sad!" said Eva, looking out on the lake and talking half to herself.

"What's too sad?" asked Marie.

"It's too sad that someone who could be an angel should be down, with no one to help them up. It's very sad."

"We can't help it, Eva, so there's no point in worrying about it. Just thank God for what you have."

"How can I be happy with so much when others have so little?" asked Eva.

"How strange!" said Marie. "Our religion teaches us to thank God for what we have. I know that I do."

"I want to cut off some of my hair," said Eva.

"What for?" asked Marie.

"I want to give some to my friends. Won't you ask Aunty Ophelia to come and cut it for me?"

Marie shouted for Ophelia to come from the other room.

Eva lifted herself up on the couch, shaking out her beautiful gold hair. "Come, Aunty, and cut my hair!" she said with a smile.

"What's happening?" asked Augustine, who had been out getting some fruit for Eva.

"Father, I asked Aunty to cut some of my hair off. I have too much and it makes my head hot. And I want to give some of it away."

"Cut under the best parts, where it won't show then," said Augustine to Ophelia. "Her hair is so beautiful."

As Ophelia was cutting, Eva made a movement with her hand to bring her father closer.

"Father, I know you don't like me to talk about it, but I want to say and do some things before I go. Can you bring our people together in here, where I can talk to them?"

Augustine agreed, and in a short time all of the servants were together in Eva's bedroom. Everyone was very quiet, knowing that this was a very serious meeting.

Eva lifted herself up on the bed, and looked around at all the people.

"I sent for you because you are my friends," she said. "I love you all. I will be leaving you in a few weeks and I want to say some things that I believe are very important. I want you to remember them."

Some of the servants started to cry loudly, and Eva waited for a minute for them to stop.

"Please don't cry for me," she said. "I want to talk to you about God. I'm afraid that many of you don't think much about him. But I want you to remember that there really is a beautiful world where Jesus lives. I'm going there and you can go there too. But if you want to go there, you must live your lives as Christians. Each one of you can become angels, forever. If you want to be Christians, Jesus will help you. But you must pray to him. You must read..."

And here she stopped, remembering that they could not read.

"Don't worry about that," she said. "I have prayed for you, and I know Jesus will help you even if you can't read. Do the best you can. Ask Him to help you, and ask others to read the Bible to you when you can. Do that and I believe I will see you in heaven one day."

People sitting on the floor were crying with their heads on their knees.

"I know," said Eva, "that you all love me."

They all quickly answered with words like, "Oh yes, we do!" and "God love her!"

"You have all been kind to me, and I want to give you something that you can remember me by. I am going to give you each some of my hair. When you look at it, I want you to remember that up in heaven I'm waiting for you."

Words cannot tell what was happening in the hearts of all these people as they pushed around little Eva to receive the last mark of her love. They fell on their knees; they prayed; they cried; and they kissed the border of her dress.

Miss Ophelia, who was worried about what effect all of this would have on Eva, made signs for each person to leave after receiving a piece of Eva's hair. Tom and Mammy were the last ones in the room.

"Here, Uncle Tom, is a beautiful one for you," said Eva. "I know I'll see you in heaven. And Mammy – good, kind Mammy!" she said, throwing her arms around her old nurse. "I know you'll be there too."

"Oh, Miss Eva, I don't see how I can live without you," said Mammy. And she gave way to more tears.

Miss Ophelia pushed her and Tom softly out of the room, thinking that they were the last of the servants. But when she turned around, there was Topsy.

"Where did you come from?" said Miss Ophelia?

"I was here," said Topsy, rubbing the tears from her eyes. "Miss Eva, I've been a bad girl, but can I have some of your hair too?"

"Yes, yes, Topsy! And each time you look at it, you remember that I love you and I want you to be a good girl. Okay?"

"Oh, Miss Eva, I is trying. I is!" said Topsy. "But, oh, it's so hard to be good! Looks like I'm not used to it no ways."

"Jesus knows that, Topsy. He forgives you as long as you don't stop trying. And he'll help you too."

Miss Ophelia quietly showed Topsy out of the room, and then closed the door.

Augustine had been sitting through all this, and his face was buried in his hands now.

"Father," said Eva.

Augustine jumped a little, but did not answer.

"Father," she said again.

"I can't take it," he said, standing up. "How can He take you from me?"

"Augustine, God has a right to do what he wants with his own," said Ophelia.

"True, but it doesn't make it any easier to take," he said.

"Father, don't talk like that. You're making me sad," said Eva, getting up off the couch and running to him. She cried so much that Augustine's thinking changed from his own sadness to her sadness.

"There, there, Eva. Don't cry. I was wrong. It was very bad of me to question God. I'll do what you ask, but please stop crying."

Eva stopped, and moved into a more comfortable place in her father's arms.

"Are you going to give me some hair?" asked Augustine.

"It's all yours," she said smiling. "Yours and Mother's. And you must give Aunty as much as she likes. I was only giving it to the poor people, because I'm afraid someone will forget them after I leave."

"Are you a Christian, Father?" she asked sadly.

"Why do you ask?"

"I don't know. You're so kind that I don't see how you can help but be a Christian."

"What is a Christian?" he asked.

"A person who loves Jesus more than anything," said Eva.

"Do you love him more than anything, Eva?"

"Oh yes, I do."

"But you never saw him," said Augustine.

"It makes no difference," said Eva. "I believe him. And in a few days I will see him." Her face filled with happiness.

Augustine said no more.

From this day on, Eva's strength dropped sharply. Miss Ophelia was the best nurse she could ask for. And Uncle Tom was often in her room bringing flowers, carrying her from place to place, or singing to her.

Poor Mammy wanted to do something to help too, but Marie made her life a hell. Twenty times in a night she would call out for her to rub her feet, put water on her head, see what the noise was in Eva's room, pull a curtain because it was too light, or open it because it was too dark. And when it was day, Marie had other jobs for her to do too.

For Augustine it was easy not to think about Eva dying. She had no pain, and she was so quiet and happy that her spirit rubbed off on him. He was with her most of the time, happy to live only for the present.

But the friend who knew most what Eva was thinking was Tom. To him she could say what her father did not want to hear, about the happy future that she was looking forward to. Toward the end, Tom would not sleep in his room. He would sleep on the verandah, near her door.

"Uncle Tom, why are you sleeping out here like a dog?" asked Miss Ophelia one night.

"I can't say it out loud," he whispered to her, "because Master St. Clare won't like it. But you know we have to watch for Jesus to come."

"What do you mean, Tom?"

"You know, it says in the Bible that he'll come at midnight, and people should be ready. Miss Eva talks to me, and it looks to me like she's one of his angels. I's thinking that when she goes, they'll open the doors so wide that I 'll be able to look into heaven. Even if he comes at midnight, I want to be there."

"Uncle Tom, did she say she was feeling worse tonight?"

"No, but this morning she said it was coming close. There's spirits that tell her, Miss 'Phelia.

This happened between ten and eleven at night. Earlier that day Eva was telling Ophelia who should receive each of her toys and other things. She had looked better than she had for some time, and Augustine had said to Ophelia before going to bed, "She's much better. She could be going to stay with us after all."

But at midnight there was movement in the bedroom. Ophelia had had a feeling, and she had stayed in Eva's room after talking to Tom. At midnight there was what nurses call "a change" in Eva's breathing. Ophelia walked quickly to the door, and Tom was up before she opened it.

"Go for the doctor, Tom," she said. "Don't lose a second." Crossing the room she knocked on Augustine's door.

"I think you should come," she said.

Her words said it all. Augustine was in the room in a second, bending over Eva. It was quiet in the room, apart from Eva's heavy breathing. Tom returned with the doctor, who gave one look and then waited with the others.

"When did this change take place?" he said in a low whisper to Miss Ophelia.

"Right on midnight," was the answer.

Marie came in from the other room.

"Augustine! Ophelia! What's happening?"

"Be quiet," said Augustine roughly. "She's dying!"

Mammy heard and went to tell the servants. Lights came on and worried faces moved out to the verandah. But Augustine heard and said nothing. He leaned down close to Eva's ear. "Eva, my love!" he said.

A smile filled her face. And then she was fighting to breathe.

"Oh God, this is more than I can take," he said, turning away from her and toward Tom. Holding Tom's hand, he said, "Tom, it's killing me. Pray that it'll be cut short! It's breaking my heart."

"Oh, thank God, it's over," said Tom after a few seconds. It's over, good Master!" said Tom. "Look at her."

The child's head was back, her eyes open and fixed. But the smile still filled her face. She was with Jesus!

"Eva," said Augustine quietly.

She did not hear.

"Oh, Eva, tell us what you see! What is it?" prayed her father. But she did not answer.

QUESTIONS ON PART 24

1. What had Topsy been trying to do when Marie hit her? (page 193)
2. Eva said that she believed Topsy was “different now”. In what way did she think that Topsy was different? (page 194)
3. Who said this: “How can I be happy with so much, when others have so little?” (page 195)
4. What did Eva want to take from herself and give to her friends? (page 195)
5. Who were the last three people to receive a piece of Eva’s hair? (page 197)
6. Who knew most what Eva was thinking? (page 199)
7. Why had Tom started sleeping on the verandah outside Eva’s room? (page 199)
8. Who had stayed in Eva’s room on the night that she died? (page 200)
9. Whose hand was Augustine holding when Eva died? (page 200)

25. Those Left Behind

"Oh, Miss Eva! Miss Eva! I wants to be dead too. I do!"

Topsy was crying wildly on the verandah outside Eva's room, as Miss Ophelia tried to lift her from the floor.

"Get up, child," she said in a soft voice. "Don't cry now. Miss Eva is in heaven. She's an angel."

"But I can't see her!" said Topsy. "I'll never see her!" And she returned to her crying, as she had been doing for two days.

Augustine came out to see what was happening.

From the time Eva stopped breathing, life for Augustine had become one dark cloud. He could hear people talking, and he answered questions, but his heart was not in what he was saying. It had been left to the servants to prepare her body for burying. But now he was taking some interest in Topsy.

"She loved me," said Topsy. "She did! No one ever did that for me before. Now I don't have no one!"

"Can you do something to help the poor girl?" he said to Miss Ophelia.

"I never wanted to be born no ways," said Topsy. "I don't see no use in being alive. I want to die!"

Miss Ophelia lifted her lovingly, and as she did, tears fell from her eyes.

"Topsy," she said as she carried her into her own room. "Please don't give up. I'm not as nice as Eva, but, Topsy, I really want to love you. I want to love you as Eva loved you, and I want to help you to grow up to be a good Christian like her."

Topsy heard something in Miss Ophelia's voice that she had never heard before. She was touched by the honest tears falling down Miss Ophelia's face. And from that hour on, the two were the closest of friends.

At the same time, Augustine was thinking about all the lives that Eva had touched in her few short years.

"Oh, Eva," he was thinking, "what do I have to show for my long years?"

The following day, Eva's body was buried down at the bottom of the grounds, close to a bench where she and Tom had sat and looked out at the lake. Augustine listened as the preacher read the words of Jesus: "I am the Life that goes on after death. If you put your faith in me, you too will live on after death."

A few days later, the family moved back to the house in New Orleans. The weather was still hot, but Augustine wanted to be away from the house on the lake, because it made him think of Eva too much. He returned to his business and to going out for long walks as he tried to forget the pain in his heart. People who saw him on the roads or in a restaurant smiling, talking, or reading a newspaper, could not see the dark empty heart under the big smile.

"Augustine is a very hard man," said Marie to Miss Ophelia. "I used to think that if there was anything in the world that he loved it was sweet little Eva. But he did not cry when we buried her, and it looks like he is forgetting her now. I really do think he should show more feeling."

"It's the deepest water that is the quietest," said Miss Ophelia. "I don't believe that. If people have feelings, they will show them. God knows that I have so much feeling for her, and it makes my life so sad being without her now. If Augustine had feelings, he would be showing more interest in me. He must know how much more a mother feels these things."

Marie was one of those people who only know how important a thing is after they lose it. She could only see bad in things when she had them; but now that Eva had left, Marie believed that Eva had been the best thing in her life.

When Marie was saying these things to Ophelia, Augustine was in his reading room talking to Tom.

Tom had been worried about Augustine. He had started following him around at a distance for fear that he would do something to hurt himself. Augustine had been in the reading room for a long time, and Tom had been waiting outside. After some time he quietly opened the door.

His master was lying on his face on the couch at the far end of the room. Eva's Bible was open beside him on the floor. Tom walked up and Augustine sat up. Tom's honest, loving face looked down on his master. Augustine put his hand on Tom's and leaned his head down on it.

"Tom," he said sadly, "my world is so empty."

"I know, Master. I know," said Tom. "But if Master could only look up – up where Miss Eva is – up to the sweet face of Jesus."

"Tom, I do look up. But I don't see a thing when I do. I'd like to. Believe me, I would."

Tom breathed heavily.

"Children and poor honest people like you can see what we can't," said Augustine. "Why is that?"

"The good Book says he hides from the smart people what he shows to babies," said Tom. "Says he does it because he thinks it's right to do it that way."

"Tom, all my life I worked at not believing. Now I want to believe and I can't."

"Good Master, pray to God and say, 'I'll try to believe; but you help me when I can't.' That's the best I can say."

"Who knows what's real and what isn't?" said Augustine to himself. "Were her beautiful faith and love only emotions, with no real truth behind them? Was her dying the end of it – no more Eva, no heaven, no Jesus, nothing?"

"Oh Master, no! There's more, I know," said Tom, falling to his knees. "Do, please, believe that there is."

"How do you know Jesus is real, Tom? You never saw him."

"I feel him in my heart, Master. I feel him now. Master, when I was sold away from my old woman and the children, I was all broken up. It was a feeling like there was nothing left in the world. But then Jesus was standing by me, and he said, 'Don't be afraid, Tom.' And he filled me with love and happiness, until all I wanted was to do what he wanted, and to be where he wanted to put me. I know it didn't come from me, because in my spirit I wasn't happy at all. But I know he can do it for Master too."

Tom talked quickly, and his voice was breaking with the strong emotion behind what he was saying. Augustine leaned his head on Tom's shoulder and hugged him.

"Tom, you love me, don't you?" he said.

"I's happy to give my life this very day to see Master be a Christian," he said.

"You poor foolish boy!" said Augustine. "I'm not worth the love of a good, honest heart like yours."

"Oh, Master, there's more than me that loves you. Jesus loves you too."

"And how do you know that, Tom?" asked Augustine.

"I feels it in my heart, Master. It says in the good Book that the love of Jesus is far above just knowing a thing."

"Interesting!" said Augustine, turning away. "To think that a man who lived and died hundreds of years in the past should have such an effect on so many people today. If only I could believe and pray as I did when I was a boy!"

Tom asked Augustine to read the story about Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life. When Augustine finished, Tom was on his knees in front of him with his hands together.

"Tom," said his master, "this is all real to you, isn't it?"

"I can almost see it, Master."

"I would like to have your eyes, Tom."

"I would like for you to have them too!"

"But, Tom, you know that I am much smarter than you. What if I said that I don't believe the Bible? Would it shake your faith?"

"Not one inch."

"And why is that, Tom, when you know I'm smarter than you?"

"Like it says, Master, He hides from smart people what he shows to babies. But Master don't really not believe the Bible, does he?" Tom asked with a worried look on his face.

"No, Tom. I don't not believe it. I see good reason for believing it. But something holds me back."

"If Master would only pray!"

"How do you know I don't, Tom?"

"Does Master pray?"

"I would, Tom, if I could believe there was someone listening to me. But when I do, I feel like I'm talking to a wall. Can you pray for me, Tom?"

Tom's heart was full, and he poured it out in prayer. And it was clear to anyone who listened that Tom believed Someone was listening. The truth is that Augustine himself had the feeling he was being lifted up to the door of heaven as Tom prayed.

And when Tom finished, Augustine thanked him. "I feel much better," he said. "You can go for now, but I'll talk with you again some other time."

Tom quietly left the room.

QUESTIONS ON PART 25

1. Who really wanted to love Topsy as Eva had loved her? (page 202)
2. Where was Eva buried? (page 203)
3. What saying did Ophelia give to Marie about Augustine, that was the same as saying his feelings for Eva were too deep for him to put them into words. (page 203)
4. Why had Tom been following Augustine around after Eva's death? (page 203)
5. What people did Augustine say had more faith than himself? (page 204)
6. What Bible story did Tom ask Augustine to read? (page 205)
7. What feeling did Augustine have when Tom prayed for him? (page 206)

26. Together in Heaven

Weeks went by, and Augustine returned to the business of living. For so long his reason for all that he did had been Eva, that now, without her, he did not have much interest in life. There were times when he believed that he could hear her quiet voice calling him to the skies, and he could see her thin little hand pointing the way. But in his sadness, he was too heavy to move.

Augustine was one of those who could understand the truth behind religion better than many who lived it for their whole life. But because he could see the truth so much better, it was so much more important that he not just think and talk, but that he act. He was one who would be without stopping if first he could get started in his faith.

He was in many ways changed after his time of prayer with Tom. He read little Eva's Bible seriously and honestly now. And he started thinking seriously about teaching his servants. He even sent for papers to make Tom a free man.

He loved to be with Tom, because Tom was the closest thing he had to Eva. He did not show his feelings to other people, but he did to Tom. And it was not surprising that he did, when anyone looked at how much Tom loved and followed his young master.

"Tom, I have sent for papers to make you a free man," he said one day. "So put your things in a suitcase and be ready to leave for Kentucky when it comes through."

Tom's look of happiness as he lifted his hands to heaven and shouted "Thank God!" made him think again about his plan. It was difficult to think that Tom would be so happy to leave him.

"Has it really been so bad here, Tom?" he asked dryly.

"No, it's not that, Master. It's being a free man! That's what I'm happy about."

"But be honest, Tom. Don't you think you've been better off here than if you had been free?"

"No way, Master," said Tom strongly. "No way!"

"How can you say that, Tom. You could never make enough as a free man to buy the clothes and food and room that you have here with me."

"I knows that, Master St. Clare. Master's been too good to me. But poor clothes and a poor house that's mine is better than the best of everything, if it's another man's."

"I think I can understand what you mean, Tom. And when the papers come through, you'll be leaving me," he said sadly. "But then why not!" he added with a smile to cover his sadness.

"No, I won't leave Master if he needs me. I'll stay as long as he wants."

"As long as I need you, Tom?" asked Augustine, looking out the window. "And when will I stop needing you?"

"When Master St. Clare is a Christian," said Tom.

"And you really mean to stay waiting for that day?" said Augustine, half smiling as he turned from the window to put his hands on Tom's shoulder. "Tom, you soft, foolish boy! I won't keep you that long. You go back to your wife and children and give them my love."

"I believe that day will come," said Tom. "God has a work for Master to do."

"A work is it, Tom?" said Augustine. "And tell me what work you think I can do for God?"

"Even a poor man like me has a work to do for God. So Master St. Clare, with his learning and wealth and friends – how much he can do for God!"

"Tom, you think God needs help, do you?"

"We help God when we help others," said Tom.

"Good teaching, Tom! Better than in most churches!"

A visitor arrived at this point, ending the talk.

Marie St. Clare had few feelings for anyone but herself; but she did feel worse for being without Eva, and when she was feeling bad, Marie made it her job to make others feel bad too. For the servants, life was worse than it was before.

Miss Ophelia was sad about Eva dying too. But in her good and honest heart, there was an important change that came of it. She still had her rules and ways of doing things, but she was softer, kinder, and more humble about it. She worked hard to teach Topsy, and she learned to love touching and hugging her. Topsy did not change in a day, but she did change. She had her ups and downs, but on the whole, she tried to be good.

"The child is much better," she said to Augustine one day. "I believe she's going to grow into a very nice young woman one day. But I must ask you one thing, Augustine. Is she yours or is she mine?"

"I said you could have her," said Augustine.

"You said it. But I want papers to show it," said Ophelia.

"And what will they say up North when they hear that you're a slave owner?" asked Augustine with a smile. "They'll have a day of prayer for you, I think!"

"Oh, don't be foolish! I want her to be mine so I can take her back with me and make her free. I don't want all my work to be destroyed. If you really want me to make a Christian of her, you must give me papers to say that she's mine."

"Okay, okay, I will," said Augustine, who sat down and opened his newspaper.

"But I want you to do it now," said Ophelia.

"Why now?"

"Because now is the only time there ever is to do a thing," said Ophelia. "Come, here's paper, and a pen. Just write it down."

When it came to actions, Augustine hated talk of 'now'.

"Why are you so fired up? Don't you believe me?"

"I believe you. But what if you died, and Topsy were to be carried off to be sold. Without a paper I couldn't stop it from happening."

"You really do make a big thing of it," said Augustine, but he agreed and filled out a paper of his own for her.

"There you have it in black and white," he said as he handed it to her.

"Thank you," said Ophelia, smiling. "But we need a second person to put their name on it."

"Oh yes, that's right. Here," he said, opening the door into Marie's room. "Marie, can you put your name on this paper for me?"

"What's this?" asked Marie, looking quickly over the paper. "How foolish. And here I was thinking Ophelia was too good for such things. Well!" she said, writing her name on the paper, "If she likes that one, she's welcome to her."

"Here you are," said Augustine to Ophelia. "She's yours now."

After putting the paper in a safe place, Ophelia returned to the living room to knit beside Augustine.

"Augustine," she said after a short time. "What will happen to your servants after you die?"

"I don't know," he said as he went on reading.

"So all your kindness could come to nothing after you die?"

Augustine had often planned to do something about this, but as we said, he never liked the word 'now' when it came to actions.

"I plan to do something about it by and by," he said.

"And when will that be?"

"Oh, one of these days."

"And what if you should die first?"

"Why this talk, Ophelia? Do I look like I'm going to die?"

"Death can come at any time," said Ophelia.

Wanting to end the argument, Augustine put down his newspaper and walked out onto the verandah. It was a warm night and at the far end of the verandah Tom was trying to read his Bible, pointing to each word as he sounded it out to himself in a whisper.

"Would you like me to read for you?" asked Augustine, sitting down by Tom.

"If Master pleases," said Tom. "Master makes it so much clearer."

Tom handed the book to Augustine, who started to read one of the parts that Tom had put a line around:

When I return with my angels, all the people on earth will come before me, and I will separate them, the way one separates sheep from goats.

Augustine read on to the end of the story:

Then the king will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, into the fire that burns forever. I was hungry and you did not feed me. I was thirsty and you did not give me a drink. I was a stranger and you did not give me a place to sleep. I was without clothes and you did not give me any. I was sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they will say, "Master, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or without clothes, or sick or in prison and not help you?" And he will say, "Each time you did not help the smallest or weakest of my brothers, you did not help me."

The words did something to Augustine. He read them a second time, more slowly, going over them in his mind.

"Tom," he said, "These people that God is angry with were only doing what I do – living a good, easy life and not thinking much about the pain of others who are hungry or thirsty or sick or in prison."

Tom did not answer.

Augustine walked up and down the verandah, thinking deeply. He did not turn up at tea that night, but after tea, when Ophelia came into the living room, he was sitting at the piano and looking through an old music book.

"This is one of my mother's books," he said. Here's a song that she would often sing." And he started singing:

*Christ, you went through hate and anger
just to keep me from hell's danger.
On the cross you did death taste.
Please don't let it go to waste!*

Out on the verandah, Tom listened to the words and smiled softly to himself as he moved closer to the living room door. Augustine was putting his whole heart into singing the song.

When he finished, he sat with his head on his hands for a short time. Then he walked around the room as he talked.

"I've been thinking about the teaching that God will one day judge the earth," he said. "Think of it! A day when he will make right all the wrongs on earth. He'll fix all the problems. It's something to think of!"

"Yes, it is," said Ophelia.

"It'll be a bad day for me," said Augustine. "I was reading to Tom, and I was surprised to hear that we don't have to kill and rob to be punished forever. He'll punish us just for doing nothing.

"Doing nothing is all it takes for many bad things to happen," said Ophelia.

"And what will God say," Augustine said. "What will he say of a man who had everything – schooling, wealth, friends – but he did nothing with it? A man who talked, but never acted!"

"I think a man like that should be asking God to forgive him, and be changing his ways," said Ophelia.

"You never waste time, do you, Ophelia?" he said with a smile. "If you had waited, I could have arrived at the same answer. But for you, everything is now."

"Now is all the time I ever have," said Ophelia.

"Eva had a plan for my life," he said. From the time of her death he had not been able to say much more than her name, and even now he was holding in his strongest feelings.

"My understanding," he said, "is that you cannot take part of Christ without taking all of him. What I mean is that I cannot call myself a Christian if I'm not prepared to give all I have to it. I know many who don't agree, but they've turned me away from the church more than any other thing."

"So if you had this understanding, why didn't you act on it?" asked Ophelia.

"Because I'm a person who lies on a couch and tells the church what they should be doing. From there it's very easy to see what's wrong with those who are doing something."

"So, are you going to change now?" asked Ophelia.

"Only God knows the future," said Augustine. "But I believe I'm braver now than I was before. I have nothing to lose now."

"And what will you do?"

"I want to help the poor and lowly, starting with my servants. It could be that one day I will be able to change others."

Augustine was quiet for a minute or two before talking again.

"I don't know what makes me think of my mother so much tonight," he said. "I have a strange feeling like she's near me. I keep remembering things that she said to me."

After walking up and down the room a few times, he said, "I think I'll go for a walk and see what's happening in town."

Tom followed him out to the front fence and asked if he should go with him.

"No, my boy," said Augustine. "I'll be back in an hour."

Tom sat down on the verandah. It was a beautiful night. He was thinking about his family. In a short time he would be a free man. As a free man he could work and make money. If he worked hard enough, one day he could pay for his wife and children to be free too. As he was thinking, he fell asleep and dreamed of Eva coming to him with flowers in her hair. But his dreaming ended with voices shouting at the front of the house.

Tom jumped up and ran to meet the men who were there. They were carrying a body that was covered with a coat and lying on a board. Tom gave a wild cry of surprise and sadness that could be heard through all the house, as he looked down to see that it was Augustine.

Augustine had stopped at a restaurant to read a newspaper when two men in the room started to fight. They had both been drinking. Augustine and one or two others tried to separate them, but one of them pushed a big knife into Augustine's chest.

The house was filled with cries and shouts and the news went from servant to servant. They were pulling their hair, throwing themselves on the ground, or running in all directions. Marie too was acting crazy. Only Tom and Miss Ophelia were quiet enough to be of help. Augustine was put on a couch in the living room. He had fainted, but Ophelia used smelling salts to wake him up.

The doctor arrived and looked at him, but it was clear from the look on his face that he did not believe Augustine would live long. He and Tom and Miss Ophelia worked at stopping the blood and covering the hole in Augustine's side, and the servants cried loudly on the verandah.

"We must turn these people away," said the doctor. "He needs rest and quiet."

Augustine opened his eyes and looked out the door at the servants as Ophelia tried to send them away. "Poor animals!" he said sadly.

He closed his eyes, but much was going through his head. After a time he put his hand on Tom's who was on his knees beside him, and said, "Tom, I'm dying. Can you pray for me?"

"I'll send for a preacher," said the doctor.

Shaking his head toward the doctor, Augustine said, "Tom, please pray!"

And Tom did pray, with all his mind and strength and heart, for the life that was leaving them.

When Tom stopped, Augustine whispered softly to himself, stopping often to breathe roughly or to cough: "Christ, you went through hate and anger... Please don't let it go to waste!" Not all of the words were loud enough to hear.

"His mind is going," said the doctor.

"No, it's coming... coming to Jesus at last!" said Augustine strongly.

Saying this used up all the strength that he had left. His face turned very white, and his eyes closed as he dropped deeply into the couch.

But then his eyes opened again with a light of happiness in them. He could see what others in the room could not see. “Jesus!” he said, and then he died.

QUESTIONS ON PART 26

1. Fill in the missing word. For Augustine, if he was to have faith, “it was important that he not just think and talk, but that he _____. ” (page 207)
2. What three things did Augustine do that showed he had changed from his time of prayer with Tom? (page 207)
3. Who said this: “We help God when we help others”? (page 208)
4. What papers did Ophelia want from Augustine? (page 209)
5. Who said this: “Each time you did not help the smallest or weakest of my brothers, you did not help me”? (page 211)
6. Fill in the missing words: “_____ is all it takes for many bad things to happen.” (page 212)
7. What did Augustine tell Ophelia he was going to change in his actions? (page 213)
8. What happened to Augustine when he tried to stop two men from fighting? (page 213)
9. What did Augustine want Tom to do for him before he died? (page 214)

27. Those Not Protected

Slaves often feel sadder than the family and friends of a kind master who dies. The reason for this is that a child without a father still has friends, family, and laws to protect it. But the slave does not. The law looks on a slave as no more than a suitcase or a box of books. The only good that can ever come to a slave must come through a kind master. If such a master dies, nothing is left.

The number of people who know how to use kindly and generously the strength that comes with owning another person, is very small. The slave knows this more than anyone. And this is why the slaves cry hardest when a kind master dies.

When Augustine died, every room in his house was filled with the sound of servants crying. But Tom, as he worked to prepare Augustine's body for burying, did not think at all about the death ending his plans to become a free man. He was too happy thinking of how his master had become a Christian at the last minute. He was thinking only of Augustine and Eva together in heaven.

But after he was buried, the whole house turned to thinking, "What next?"

Miss Ophelia started plans to return North and to take Topsy with her.

A week or two after Augustine died, Ophelia heard a quiet knock on her door. She opened it and there was Rosa, one of Dinah's helpers from the kitchen. She was very beautiful and had very light skin. She had been crying.

"Oh, Miss 'Phelia," she said, falling on her knees and taking hold of the border of her dress, "do please talk to Miss Marie for me. She's going to send me out to be whipped. Look here!" And she handed Miss Ophelia a paper.

It was a letter from Marie to the master of a whipping house, telling him to cut her fifteen times with the whip.

"What have you been doing?" asked Miss Ophelia.

"I was very bad," said Rosa. "Miss Marie hit me and I talked back to her. She said she'd bring me down and have me know that I wasn't to be like I've been in the past. She give me this letter and says I should take it with me."

Miss Ophelia looked at the paper, thinking.

"You see, Miss 'Phelia," said Rosa, "I can take the whipping if you or Miss Marie does it. But to have a man take my dress off and whip me! I can't have a man do that. It's better that I should die."

Miss Ophelia knew that many owners sent their women and young girls to whipping houses. The men who worked there were the lowest of men. They made their living by pulling the clothes off these women and whipping them. Miss Ophelia knew this, but now it was much more real and she could see how wrong it was. Squeezing the letter in her hand, she did her best to control her emotions before walking off to talk to Marie.

"Animals!" she said to herself as she walked.

Marie was sitting in a soft chair with Mammy fixing her hair and another servant rubbing her feet.

"How are you today?" asked Ophelia.

Marie breathed out heavily, closed her eyes, and then said, "I don't know. I'm as well as I ever will be," and she touched the corners of her eyes with a cloth.

"I came," said Ophelia, with a short, dry cough, the way people do when they are going to say something that is difficult to say. "I came to talk with you about poor Rosa."

Marie's eyes opened wide, and she said sharply, "Well, what about her?"

"She's very sad about talking back to you."

"She is, is she? Well, she'll be sadder when I've finished with her! I've put up with her proud spirit long enough. Now I'll bring her down."

"Could you punish her in some other way – one that will not destroy her spirit, by letting a man see her body?"

"But it is her spirit that I want to destroy," said Marie.

"All her life she has believed that she's equal to white women because she's beautiful. Now I'll teach her that she's not."

"But, Marie, think of it. If you destroy her spirit, then you make her into an animal. Is that what you want?"

"I want her to know she's no better than the poorest black woman on earth. I don't want her thinking she is equal to me!"

"You'll answer to God for such a cruel action!" said Ophelia with all the feeling that she had been holding in.

"You see it as cruel because of your feelings, Ophelia. But these people they get used to it. It's the only way to teach them. If you let them start thinking they should have the same feelings as us, they'll run all over us. I've started to bring the servants under now, and sending Rosa to be whipped will teach them all that they should stay under."

Ophelia looked like she was about to explode, but she could see that it would do no good, so she closed her lips tightly and walked out of the room.

It was difficult to go back to Rosa and tell her that she could not help. One of the men servants came to say that it was his job to take Rosa to the whipping house, and they left with Rosa crying.

A few days later, Adolph came to Tom and said he had heard Miss Marie talking to her lawyers about selling the house and the servants and returning to live with her father.

"We'll never get another master like Master St. Clare," said Adolph. "But I don't think we can get much worse than Mrs."

Tom was thinking now of the promise from Augustine about making him a free man. He tried to pray and to be happy about anything that God wanted for him, but he had started thinking about being free, and now it was hard to stop. He turned to Miss Ophelia, who had been very close to him after Augustine died.

"Miss 'Phelia," he said, "Master St. Clare promised to make me a free man. He sent for the papers to do it. If Miss 'Phelia would talk to Mrs. about it, she would want to go through with what Master wanted, don't you think?"

"I'll talk to her," said Miss Ophelia, "but if it's up to Mrs. St. Clare, I don't know how much good it will do. I'll try my best, Tom."

When Ophelia came into Marie's room, Marie was looking at material for dresses.

"I'll be leaving in a few days for my father's house," said Marie. "I don't have a thing to wear. Tell me, what material do you think would be best?"

"You can judge better than I," said Ophelia. "Are you leaving so soon?"

"Yes. The lawyers can sell the servants and the furniture."

"There's one thing I wanted to talk about," said Ophelia. "Augustine promised Tom that he could be free. He had sent for the papers. Can you finish the paper work for him?"

"I will do no such thing!" said Marie sharply. "Tom is one of the best servants on the place. He'll bring a very good price. What does he want with being free? He's much better off as he is."

"But he does want it, and his master did promise it," said Ophelia.

"Oh, they all want it," said Marie. "That's their way – always wanting what they can't have. But what do they do when they get it? They become lazy and won't work, and they take to drinking. You don't help them by making them free."

"But Tom isn't lazy, and he never drinks."

"No need to tell me. But it's being owned that keeps him that way. He'd lose it all if he was free."

"But if you sell him, how do we know he won't get a bad master?" said Ophelia.

"Foolishness!" said Marie. "For all the talk about bad masters, there's not one in a hundred that doesn't have the best interests of their slaves at heart. I've lived here all my life and I know what I'm saying. You have no fear on that part, Ophelia."

"But your husband promised Eva as she was dying that he would make Tom a free man, and I know myself that he died wanting to keep that promise. I'm surprised that you don't want to do that much for him, if for no other reason."

Marie started crying and talking loudly. "You're all against me!" she said. "You bring up these things to add to my pain. My only daughter died, and now my husband, and you have so little feeling for me that you bring up their deaths now, when I need time to get my strength back."

Marie went on to the point where Ophelia could see that she was losing the fight, and she left. But she did the next best thing and that was to write a letter to Mrs. Shelby, telling her what was to happen to Tom, and asking her to do what she could to help him.

The next night, Tom and Adolph and five or six of the other servants were carried off to the slave house to be sold.

QUESTIONS ON PART 27

1. Why do slaves often feel sadder than the family of a kind master when he dies? (page 216)
2. When Augustine died, it put an end to his promise to make Tom a free man. But Tom was too happy to think of this. What was Tom thinking about to make him so happy? (page 216)
3. What did Marie do to punish Rosa for talking back to her? (page 216)
4. For Rosa, what was the worst part of being sent to the whipping house? (page 217)
5. Ophelia said to Marie that if she destroyed Rosa' spirit, she would turn her into what? (page 218)
6. Who told Tom that Marie was planning to sell the servants? (page 218)
7. Was Ophelia able to stop Marie from selling Tom? (pages 219 and 220)
8. What was "the next best thing" that Ophelia did for Tom? (page 220)

28. The Slave House

Many people think of a slave house as a dark, ugly place. But the truth is that most of them are neat and clean. Some men, like Haley, bring groups of slaves down from Kentucky or some other place, and they leave them at a slave house for a few days or weeks, until they become fat and healthy. The owners know that people will pay more for a slave that is fat and happy, so they feed the slaves well and they encourage music and dancing. If a slave chooses to think about his family, or some other thing that makes him sad, the owner will punish him for it. So slaves about to be sold learn to be happy for two reasons: to get a good owner, and to keep from being punished.

Tom, Adolph, and the other St. Clare servants each had a suitcase full of clothes when they arrived at the house. There was a lot of laughing and foolishness going on, and the leader in most of the foolishness was a big Black by the name of Sambo. Tom pulled his suitcase over to a corner of the room and sat on it with his head leaning against the wall.

"And what do we have here?" said Sambo, walking over to where Tom was sitting. He lifted Tom's head and said, "What you doing, nigger? You praying?"

"I'm to be sold tomorrow," said Tom quietly.

"You're to be sold, are you?" he said, laughing loudly. "And what do you think we's here for?"

He put his hand on Adolph's shoulder and said, "And is this one going to be sold with you?"

"Please, go away," said Adolph, standing up straight.

"Oh, look here! This is one of your white-faced niggers now. Don't he smell nice!" he said, pushing his nose up close to Adolph's face.

"I say, keep off me!" said Adolph, who was getting angry now.

"Oh, we are angry, aren't we!" Sambo said, trying to sound like Adolph. "And he comes from a good family too, I do believe."

"Yes, I do!" said Adolph. "My master could buy the lot of you ten times over if he wanted to."

"But he don't want to, does he? And now he's selling you off with his broken dishes and other furniture, isn't he? That's how much he thinks of you, white nigger!"

Adolph jumped on him, hitting and shouting as the others in the room laughed and shouted too, bringing the owner to the door.

"What's happening in there?" he shouted. "Quiet down now! Quiet down!" He came in with a whip in his hand, sending Blacks running in all directions. Sambo, who was confident that the owner needed him on side, did not run.

"It weren't us, Master," he said. "It's these here new hands. They's making problems for us."

At this the owner turned on Tom and Adolph, kicking and hitting them a few times before telling them all to be good and go to sleep.

At the same time that this was happening in the men's room, about forty or fifty women – both young and old, and of all colours from the blackest black to almost white, were sleeping all over the floor of the women's room.

In one corner were two well dressed women who were not sleeping. One was Susan, a part-Black in her forties, with soft eyes and a healthy body. By her side was a young girl of 15 – her daughter, Emmeline. Emmeline was almost white, with long brown hair. They were both to be sold the following day in the same sale with St. Clare's slaves. And the money from their sale would go to a good Christian man from the North, who didn't believe in owning slaves!

Susan and Emmeline had worked for many years for a kind Christian woman from New Orleans. The woman had made it her business to teach them to read and write, and to teach them Christian ways. But her son handled the business of the farm that the woman owned, and he did a very poor job of it.

In the end, the woman was forced to give the farm and her workers to a bank in the North that they had borrowed from. The bank was run by a good Christian man who did not believe in owning slaves. He was not comfortable about receiving money from the sale of God's children, but when forced to choose between God and his job, God was clearly in second place.

"Mother, put your head on my legs and you'll be able to sleep better," said Emmeline.

"I don't have the heart to sleep tonight, Love. Not knowing it's our last night together."

"Oh, don't say that, mother. Who knows but what we'll be sold together. The man promised we would get a good price."

Susan remembered the man's looks and words. He had moved his eyes up and down Emmeline's body first. Susan knew what he was thinking, and she had the same sick feeling that any mother would have if she knew that her daughter's body would be going to the man who had the most money, and that he would be able to do anything he should choose with it. Susan had no way to protect her daughter... and no one to turn to.

"Mother, wouldn't it be good if we could get jobs with the same family? You could cook, and I could stitch or clean the house. If we look happy and enthusiastic tomorrow it'll help," said Emmeline.

"You pull your hair back straight tomorrow," said Susan. "You hear me?"

"But it doesn't look good that way, Mother."

"Good people will be happier to buy a girl who is not too beautiful," said the mother. "I know their ways better than you, Emmeline."

"Then I'll do what you say," she said.

"And if we go separate ways, Emmeline, you remember all that Mrs. learned you. You take your Bible and song book, and if you do what God says, he'll help you."

The next morning the owner of the slave house was running from slave to slave to see that they were all looking their best.

"What's this?" he said, stepping in front of Susan and Emmeline. "Where's your long beautiful hair, girl?"

The girl looked shyly at her mother, who said quietly, "I was telling her last night to put her hair up smooth, so it won't be flying about. Looks more like a rich person that way."

"I won't have that," said the man, turning to the girl. "You let your hair down right now, you hear? And be fast about it too!"

"You go help her," he added to the mother. "That long hair will bring another hundred for her, I can tell you."

The sales went on in a very big building with people from many countries there. Two sales were going on at the same time and another was soon to start. This last one was the one with the St. Clare servants and Susan and Emmeline.

"Hello, Alf! What brings you here?" said a young rich man, putting his hand on the shoulder of another well-dressed young man who was looking closely at Adolph.

"I need a servant to look after my clothes. I heard St. Clare's lot were going."

"You won't catch me buying any of his. He was so soft on them that you won't get them to do a touch of work."

"I'm not worried about that!" said the first. "I'll soon whip the proud spirit out of them and they'll know I'm not Augustine St. Clare. I think I'll buy this one. I like the shape of him."

Tom had been looking at all the faces to see if he could find a kind master, but he could not find one that would come close to Augustine St. Clare.

Just before the sale was to start, a short, strong man in dirty pants elbowed his way to the front to see what was being sold. When Tom saw him he had a sick feeling of fear. The man's mouth was full of tobacco juice. He would spit from time to time. His big hands were dirty. He pulled Tom's mouth open to look at his teeth, made him pull up his sleeve to show his muscles, turned him around, and then made him jump to show his strength.

He moved by Adolph, spitting tobacco on Adolph's clean black shoes, and stopped at Susan and Emmeline. He put out his big dirty hand and pulled the girl toward him. He touched her neck and breasts, looked at her teeth, and then pushed her back against her mother.

The sale started and it wasn't long before it was Tom's turn.

"Up with you, boy!" said the man who was doing the selling.

Tom stepped up and looked around at all the people who were buying. Some were shouting in another language, and the seller was talking very quickly. There was so much noise and movement. Tom did not understand what was happening, and before he knew it, he was sold. He had a new master!

Tom was pushed down from the stage, and the short, dirty man squeezed his shoulder, pushing him to one side. "You stand there, you hear!" he said roughly.

In a minute or two Susan was sold too. Her new master looked kind enough.

"Oh, Master, do please buy my daughter!" she said.

"I'll try," he said, but I don't have much money left."

Emmeline stepped up onto the stage and her mother was filled with pain to see that she was more beautiful than she had ever been before. The seller could see this too, and he did his best to make something of it.

People were quickly shouting prices for her, and the kind man who now owned her mother gave a shout or two before he was forced to drop out. In a short time only two men were shouting. One was a rich old man, and the other was Tom's fat, dirty owner. As the price moved higher, the old man dropped off too, and Tom's new master now owned the girl, body and spirit.

Two days later, the lawyer acting for the good Christian man from the North sent the money on to his bank. The dirty work was finished without the man ever having to look on what he had been a part of.

QUESTIONS ON PART 28

1. Why did the people at the slave houses feed the slaves well? (page 221)
2. What are two reasons why slaves act like they are happy when they are being sold? (page 221)
3. What was the name of the slave in the slave house who tried to make Adolph angry? (page 221)
4. What was the name of the fifteen year old slave in the women's room of the slave house, who was almost white? (page 222)
5. What was the reason for the sick feeling that Emmeline's mother had for her? (page 223)
6. Of the three sales happening that day, what one was Tom in? (page 224)
7. What did the short, dirty buyer do to see if Tom was good enough to buy? (pages 224 and 225)
8. What two people did the short, dirty owner buy? (page 225)

29. Simon Legree

At the back of a small rough boat moving slowly up the Red River, sat Tom, with chains on his wrists and chains on his feet, and a spirit that was heavier than chains could ever be on his heart. He could see his past life going by like the trees on the border of the river. His little cabin, with his wife and children and the Shelbys; and the big beautiful house in New Orleans with Eva and Augustine and Miss Ophelia. In both places he had had many happy hours. But now what?

The name of Tom's new master was Simon Legree. He owned a big cotton farm up the Red River from New Orleans, and he was returning there now with eight new slaves. He came up to Tom, who had been wearing his best clothes and shoes for the sale.

"Stand up!" he said.

Tom jumped to his feet.

Legree had been going through Tom's suitcase and he pulled from it some old pants and an old coat. He handed these to Tom, then opened the handcuffs and pointed to an opening between some boxes.

"You go there and put these on," he said.

Tom obeyed and in a few minutes he returned.

"Take off your shoes," said Legree.

Tom did so.

"There," said Legree, throwing him two rough old shoes, like the ones most slaves wear. "Put these on."

When changing clothes, Tom had moved his Bible from the pocket of his good clothes to the pocket of the old coat. It was just as well that he did, because Legree went through the pockets of his good clothes, to see what he could find. Finding the little toys that Tom made from cherry seeds, he dropped them into the river. Tom did not remember to move his song book, and Legree pulled it from the pocket and turned it over.

"Oh no! Not another one of those!" he said. "You there! Are you a Christian?"

"Yes, Master," said Tom confidently.

"I'll soon have that out of you. I want no crying, praying, singing niggers on my place. You remember that!" he said, hitting his foot loudly on the floor of the boat. "I'm your church now! You understand? You'll do what I say."

Tom said nothing, but something in his spirit answered No! He could hear the voice of God saying to him, "Do not be afraid. I have paid the price for you. I have called you by my name. You are MINE!"

But Simon Legree did not hear a thing. The voice Tom was hearing was one that Legree would never hear. He only looked at Tom with anger and then walked off, carrying the big suitcase of Tom's clothes to the front of the boat. Workers on the boat came around and each said what he would give for some of the clothes. When all of the clothes were sold, Legree sold the suitcase. And through it all they laughed at "niggers that think they can dress like white people."

When the sale was finished, Legree returned to Tom.

"As you can see, Tom, I've sold all of your other clothes," he said. "Be kind to the clothes that you have, because they're all you'll get for the next year. You get only one change of clothes a year on my farm."

Then Legree walked over to Emmeline, who was chained to another woman.

"Keep your spirits up, Love," he said, lifting her head with his fist under her face.

"The look of fear in the girl's eyes did not make Legree happy.

"Don't try those tricks on me, girl," he said. "You smile when I talk to you, do you hear? And you, you old yellow dog!" he said to the light-skinned woman that Emmeline was chained to, "don't you carry a face like that. You must look happy too!"

"I'm telling all of you," he said backing off a step or two, "look at me, now! Look me straight in the eyes!" he said, hitting his foot down on the floor again.

They all looked at the angry green eyes of Simon Legree.

"Now," he said, showing them a fist that was like a big hammer. "You see this fist? Feel it!" he said, bringing it down on Tom's hand. "Look at these bones! I'll tell you now, how this fist has become so hard is from knocking down niggers. I never did see the nigger I couldn't bring down with one hit from these," he said, bringing his fist so close to Tom's face that Tom pulled back.

"I don't pay anyone to watch you lot. I do my own watching. And if you don't toe the mark, you answer to me for it. You won't find no soft bone in my body. Remember that. I don't forgive no one."

Simon turned away and walked up to the front of the boat for a drink.

"That's the way I start with my niggers," he said to a man who was not from the South, but who showed an interest in what Legree had been saying to his slaves. "I find it helps to start strong, so they know what they're in for."

"Is that true," said the stranger, who looked at Legree like he was studying an animal that was very different from any other animal in the world.

"Yes, it is. I'm not one of these soft farmers with fingers like flowers, who will let a worker watch the niggers and take his money for doing it. I tell you, no one comes over me. I'm hard as nails. Feel my fist. Go on! It's hard as stone!"

"And I should think your heart is much the same," said the stranger.

"Yes, you could say that," said Legree with a laugh. "I think there's as little soft in me as in any one going. Niggers never get around me with their crying and sad stories!"

"They look like a very good lot of workers."

"True," said Legree. "Tom, the big one, they say is one of the best you can get. Think I paid too much for him all the same. But I plan to teach him to push the others around. The yellow woman could be bad news. I think she's sickly. But I could get a year or two out of her before she dies. I don't go for nursing them."

When I first started I did. But what you spend on medicine and blankets and clothes and food to make them comfortable isn't worth it in the end. It's too much work for me, and it's cheaper to use them up, sick or well, and get more when they die."

"And how long do most of them last?" asked the stranger.

"It's different for different people. The strong ones live six or seven years. The weak ones are finished in two or three."

The stranger moved to sit by an older man who had been listening to Legree too.

"You must not think of him as being like most farmers down here in the South," said the older man.

"I'm happy to hear that," said the young stranger. "But it's hard to believe that there are not many more like him."

"Well, there are some like him. But there are many kind owners too," said the older man.

"And if it was not for you kind owners, the world would not put up with these cruel ones. It is you kind owners who cover for the bad ones."

"You could be pushing my kindness a little yourself, with such words," said the older man. "I think you should watch what you say around others on the boat or you will have problems."

The young man backed off at that, and the two were soon happily playing a game of chess.

At the same time, Emmeline was talking to the older woman who was chained to her.

"Was your old master good to you?" Emmeline asked.

"Most of the time. But then he changed with the sickness. Turned crueler every day. I was up most nights with him, and when I fell asleep on him one night he said he'd sell me to the worst master he could find. And here I am."

"Did you have any friends?" asked Emmeline.

"My husband. But he was away working for Master most of the time. They sent me off so quickly I didn't have time to see him. And I's left four children. Oh, God help them," said the woman, covering her face with her hands.

The woman was not very smart, but she had faith in God. Emmeline could read and write, and she knew much of the Bible. But both women, like Tom, were finding their faith tested deeply by what was happening to them at this time.

The boat moved slowly on up through the red, dirty water of the Red River, and sad eyes looked out on the sides of the river as they moved by. At last the boat stopped at a small town, and Legree and his workers stepped out.

QUESTIONS ON PART 29

1. What was the name of Tom's new owner? (page 227)
2. What did Legree do with Tom's best clothes? (pages 227 and 228)
3. What had Tom left in the pockets of his good clothes? (page 227)
4. What did Legree say would be Tom's church now? (page 228)
5. What did Legree plan to teach Tom to do? (page 229)
6. At first Legree had nursed his sick slaves, but he learned that he could make more money in a different way. What way was that? (pages 229 and 230)
7. What game did the young man from the North play with the older man on the boat? (page 230)

30. Dark Places

Tom and his friends walked sadly behind a rough wagon. Legree sat in the wagon, and the two women, still chained together, were lying with the boxes and other things, in the back of the wagon. Together they all moved toward Legree's farm.

It was a very long walk over a very rough road. Ugly black trees were growing up out of black water on the sides of the road, and dangerous snakes moved smoothly and quietly through the water. The trip was a difficult one for Legree, who had good reasons for wanting to arrive at the house at the end of the road. But it was much worse for the others, who knew that only pain and sadness would be waiting for them there.

Legree had a bottle of whiskey that he was drinking from to make his trip easier.

"I say, you!" he said as he looked back at the sad faces of the men behind him. "Sing a song for me. Come, now!"

The men looked at each other, and when Legree said "come" a second time he made it stronger with a hit from his whip. Tom started a Christian song:

*Jerusalem, oh happy place,
the name I love to hear.
When all my sadness has an end,
I will –*

"Close your face, you black animal!" shouted Legree. "Did you think I wanted to hear your stupid sad Christian songs? I want a loud, happy song. Quickly now!"

One of the other men started up one of those foolish songs with no meaning that slaves often sing when working:

*Master seed me catch a snake.
High, boys, high!
Laughed to death and cooked a cake.
Ho, ho, ho, boys, ho!*

The singer would make new words for the song as he was singing it, with more interest in making the words rhyme than in making them say anything. And they would all sing together after every four lines:

*Ho, ho, ho, boys, ho!
High-ee-oh! High-ee-oh!*

The men were singing with enthusiasm, forcing themselves to look happy. But the words were ones of sadness for each of them all the same. With or without words, music was a secret language, a prayer to God that Simon Legree could not hear, and could not punish.

"Well, my girl, it won't be long now," said Simon turning to Emmeline and putting his hand on her shoulder.

Emmeline was afraid of Legree when he shouted, but she was even more afraid when he talked as he was now. She moved closer to the woman beside her.

"Ever have a necklace?" he said, touching her neck.

"No, Master!" said Emmeline, who was shaking.

"Well, I'll give you one when we get to the house, if you're a good girl. You don't need to be afraid. I don't plan to make you work very hard. You'll have good times with me and live like a rich woman – if you're nice to me."

A short time later, the wagon arrived at the wall around Legree's house. The farm had been owned by a man who did much to make the grounds look beautiful. But he died owing money, and Legree had been able to buy the place at a cheap price. From the time Legree moved in, he did nothing to fix things when they were broken, and the plants were never watered. The grass was long and yellow, and everything from old buckets to corn cobs was hiding in it. In places the grass was destroyed by horses being tied there. Windows were broken. Three or four dangerous dogs came running out to meet the wagon, and it was only the hard work of some servants who came with them that stopped them from biting Tom and the men with him.

"You see what'll get you if you try to run away from here?" said Simon, hugging one of the dogs with an angry smile. "These dogs are here to catch niggers, and they'd be as happy to have one of you for a meal as to eat what I give them. So watch yourselves! And now, Sambo!" he said to one of the servants, who was wearing a hat without a border projecting from it. "How have things been going?"

"Perfect, Master."

"Quimbo, did you do the things I said you should do?"

"Yes, I did, didn't I?"

These two men were the leading hands on the farm. Legree had worked as hard at making them like wild animals as he had with his dogs. A slave can be a worst master than a white man if you give him the job, and the reason is that long years of being looked on as an animal can destroy all that is good in a person. A cruel teacher will have crueler students.

To control his people, Legree used a plan that many kings have used in the past. He encouraged Sambo and Quimbo to hate each other. And all the other workers hated them both. So he could play one off against another any time he liked, and one or the other of the three would always tell him if someone was doing what they shouldn't.

We all need friends, and Sambo and Quimbo were a little like friends to Legree. But if one of them did anything that Legree didn't like – and there were many things he didn't like – then Legree would have the other one do the punishing for him. In this way, they never stopped hating each other.

As they were standing before Legree at this time, they looked more like animals than men. Their talk was rough and low like an angry dog. And their old clothes, so full of holes, were like everything about the place.

"Here, Sambo," said Legree. "Take these boys down to the rooms. And here's a girl for you," he said as he separated the older girl from Emmeline and pushed her toward Sambo. "I promised to bring you one, didn't I?"

The woman jumped and pulled back.

"Oh, Master, I left my old man in New Orleans."

"What of it, woman! You'll need another one here. Now don't talk back. Go on!" said Legree, lifting his whip.

"Come, my girl," he said softly to Emmeline. "You can come into the house with me."

A dark wild face looked quickly out through a window of the house. As Legree opened the door, a female voice shouted something from inside the building. Tom, who was worried about Emmeline, saw the face and heard the voice.

"Hold your tongue. I'll do as I please!" Legree shouted back at the voice."

The "rooms" where Tom and the others were to live was a line of rough walls far away from the house. They had no furniture, and the floor was hard ground covered with cut dry grass. There was the smell of people using them as toilets. Tom had been thinking he would have a room that he could make comfortable, with a shelf for his Bible, and a place where he could be alone after a hard day working. But now his heart dropped.

"What one'll be mine?" he asked Sambo humbly.

"Don't know. Can turn in here if you like," said Sambo. "They can squeeze in another there. There's a lot of niggers in each of them now as it is. I don't know where we'll put more of you."

Late in the day the tired workers – men and women – came in from their work, wearing dirty, broken clothes. They were sore and tired, and not interested in meeting new workers. There were only a few stones for making the hard, dry corn into flour for their meal, and people argued over them, telling the people using them to move more quickly. They had been out working from very early in the morning, because it was the time of year when the cotton was ready for taking. Tom looked for a friendly face, but all he saw were animals, fighting and arguing. Far into the night there was the sound of the stones making flour. The weakest old women – those who needed the rest most – were the last to use the stones.

"Here!" said Sambo to the new woman, dropping a bag of corn in front of her. "What's your name?"

"Lucy," said the woman.

"Well, Lucy, you're my woman now. You fix this corn and get my meals cooked, you hear?"

"I'm not your woman, and I never will be!" said the woman bravely. "You go on!"

"I'll kick you!" said Sambo, lifting his foot.

"Kill me if you choose. But I'm not your woman," she said.

"You go to breaking up the workers, Sambo, and I'll tell Master on you," said Quimbo, who was working on his corn after forcing two or three tired women out of the line in front of him.

"And I'll tell him you won't let the women come to the stones!" said Sambo. "You just stick to your business!"

Tom was very hungry after the long trip, and almost faint.

"That's for you!" said Quimbo, dropping a rough bag of corn next to Tom. "Don't waste it. It's all you get all week."

It was very late before Tom sat down by the stone; then, moved by two old women who looked more tired than himself, he agreed to do their work for them. This was something that never happened in a place like this, and it brought the best out in the women. They returned Tom's kind act by making his corn cake for him and doing his cooking on the little fire. Tom sat by the light of the dying fire, and pulled out his Bible — for he needed badly to be encouraged.

"What's that?" said one of the women.

"A Bible," said Tom.

"True? It's the first one I seed this side of Kentucky."

"Are you from Kentucky?" said Tom with interest.

"Yes, from a good family too. Never would've believed I'd come to this," said the woman sadly.

"What's a Bible?" asked the other woman.

"You mean you never heard of it?" said the first woman. "My Mrs. used to read it in Kentucky. But we never hear nothing but shouting and arguing here."

"Read a piece," said the woman who had never heard of a Bible.

Tom read: "*Come to me, all you who work and are very tired, and I will give you rest.*"

"Them's good words," she said. "Who said them?"

"Jesus," said Tom.

"If I could find him, I would," she said. "Looks like I'll never get rested in this life. My bones are so sore, and I gets the shakes. Sambo's always going at me because I don't work fast enough. And nights it's most midnight before I can eat. Then I don't turn over and close my eyes before it's time to get up and at it again in the morning. If I knew where this Jesus was, I'd come to him, I tell you."

"He's here now," said Tom. "But you can't see him."

"You're not going to make me believe that. I know this Jesus man isn't here," said the woman. "No point talking about it, I'm just going to bed down and sleep."

The women went off to their cabin and Tom sat alone by the dying fire. The silver moon looked down from the purple sky, as God looks down on people all over the world. There, with his Bible on his knee, Tom was fighting a most difficult fight. He wanted to believe, with his child-like faith, that God would make everything bad go away, that he would right the wrongs. But here there were no signs of faith or love. All around him were signs of wrong winning out over right.

Tom walked sadly into his cabin. The floor was covered with tired sleepers and the bad smell of the place almost made him go outside. But the weather was too cold, so, pulling an old blanket around himself, he dropped onto the dry grass and was soon asleep.

In dreams Tom could see Eva coming to him, and reading to him from the Bible. He heard her read, "*When you go through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers will not drown you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned. For I am your God, the perfect one of Israel, your Helper.*"

QUESTIONS ON PART 30

1. Who travelled in the wagon with Simon Legree on the long walk to his house? (page 232)
2. Legree wanted the slaves to sing, but he was angry about the song that Tom started to sing. Why was this? (page 232)
3. Were Legree's house and the grounds around it beautiful? (page 233)
4. What were the names of the two men that came out to meet Legree with the dogs when he returned? (page 234)
5. How did Legree use hate to control the slaves? (page 234)
6. Who was to stay in the house with Legree? (page 235)
7. What did the slaves have to use to make flour after working in the cotton all day? (page 235)
8. How did it happen that the two old women cooked Tom's corn cake for him? (page 236)
9. What did Tom have for a bed at Simon Legree's farm? (page 237)
10. Who came to Tom in his dreams on that first night on Legree's farm? (page 237)

31. Cassy

Tom learned his job quickly, and he did his best at everything. He was quiet and humble, thinking that by working hard for Legree he could bring some good to the place. He saw enough that was cruel and bad to make his heart sick, but he did what he could to keep a Christian spirit, and to believe that his faith would help him or those around him one day.

Legree quietly watched Tom. He could see that he was his best worker. But he secretly hated Tom, the way that bad always hates good. It was clear to him that each time he was cruel toward a worker – and this happened very often – Tom would look on and feel bad about it. What others think is so important to people that even without words, this one poor slave was able to have a strong effect on his master. But the effect was not the effect that Tom would have liked.

Legree watched when Tom would show kindness to other workers, and this made him hate Tom too. His plan in buying Tom had been to make him a leader over the other slaves. But in Legree's thinking, the first, second, and third rules for a good leader were that he must be hard. A few weeks after Tom arrived, Legree started thinking that it was time to teach Tom to be hard.

One morning when the workers were going off to work, Tom was surprised to see a new worker. She was a tall, thin woman with long, thin fingers, and she was dressed in good clothes. She looked to be about 40 years old. You could see from her face that at one time she had been very beautiful. But her face was filled with sadness now, and her cheeks were very thin. There was an angry pride in every line of her face.

Tom did not see where she had come from. He first saw her when she was walking by his side on the way to the cotton that morning. She walked tall and proud in the grey light just before the sun came up. It was clear that the other workers knew her.

"Had to come, sooner or later" said one,

"I'm happy to see it, too!" said another.

"You'll see what work is now, Miss Above-us-all!"

"Think they'll whip her like they do us?"

"It'd be just what she needs."

The woman did not answer back, but she walked on like she heard nothing. Tom had always lived with rich people who knew a lot about how to act around other people, and he had a feeling that this woman had that air about her.

As they worked that morning the woman was near where Tom was working. He saw that she was one of the best workers in the group. Her long, thin hands moved so quickly that she made the job look easy.

Later that morning Tom was working near Lucy, the woman that Legree had said would be Sambo's mate. It was clear that she was in much pain, and Tom could hear her praying. It looked like she was close to falling down. When Tom was close to her, he quietly moved some of his cotton from his basket to her basket.

"Don't do that!" said the woman. "They'll punish you."

And then Sambo came up. He had a special hate for this woman, who had said she would die before she would be his mate. "What you doing, Lucy? Trying to trick us, are you?" he said. Then, kicking the woman with his heavy shoe, he hit Tom across the face with his whip. Tom returned to work, but the woman fainted.

"I'll bring her to!" said Sambo with a cruel smile. "I have something better than smelling salts!" Taking a needle from his coat sleeve, he buried it deep into her arm. The woman pulled away from the needle. "Move, you animal, or I'll show you a few more tricks!" he shouted.

She tried hard to return to her work.

"See that you keep at it, or you'll want to be dead tonight," said the man.

"That I do now," Tom heard her say. Then she returned to praying, "Oh, God, how long? Please, why don't you help us?"

Showing no fear of the danger he faced, Tom returned later to put all of his cotton in the woman's basket.

"No, don't! You don't know what they'll do to you," said the woman.

"I can take it," said Tom, "better than you." And he returned to work.

A short time later, the new woman was working close to Tom. She had been watching earlier, and she moved some of her cotton to Tom's basket.

"You don't know what you're doing," she said. "When you've been here a month, you'll know better than to help anyone. You'll find it hard enough to help yourself."

"God help me, I never want to be like that, Mrs." said Tom, who, without thinking about it, was talking to her the way he would talk to a mistress.

"God never comes to these parts," said the woman as she returned to her work.

But Sambo had been looking when the woman gave some cotton to Tom, and he came up to her with his whip in his hand.

"What do we have here?" he said. "You playing games with me, are you? You're under me now, so you watch —"

Fire exploded from the woman's black eyes. She turned to Sambo with her lips shaking, and looking straight through him, she said with the strongest anger:

"You dog! You just try it! I can still have you burned alive, or cut to pieces, if I say the word!"

"What the devil you here for, then?" said the man in fear, moving back a step or two as he said it. "Didn't mean nothing, Miss Cassy!"

"Then keep your distance," said the woman. And Sambo did just that, finding something to interest him on the far side of the workers and going off quickly to do it.

The woman then returned to her work, going faster than ever. Before the day was through, her bag was more than full, and she gave some more to Tom.

After dark, the tired workers walked slowly up to the building where Sambo and Quimbo were waiting to mark down the weight of cotton that they each brought in for the day. Legree and the two men were talking.

"We're going to have problems with that Tom," said Sambo. "Keeps putting his cotton in Lucy's basket. If Master don't watch out, all the old ones'll be wanting special help like that."

"Did he now?" said Legree. "We'll teach him, won't we, boys?"

Both of the men smiled.

"Master's the one to do it, too. The devil himself couldn't do it better!" said Quimbo.

"Well, boys, the best way is to have him do the whipping. That'll take the soft side out of him!"

"Master will have a hard time getting that out of him!"

"It'll come, sooner or later!" said Legree, moving the tobacco around in his big mouth. "And Tom can start by whipping Lucy. It'll be good exercise for him."

Both of Legree's dirty helpers laughed like the little devils that they were.

"But Master, with help from Tom and Miss Cassy, I think Lucy has her weight."

"I say if she has her weight!" said Legree with a smile.

The men both laughed again.

"And how did Miss Cassy go today?"

"She works like the devil and all his angels!"

"She has them in her, too, I believe," said Legree, and he walked over to where the baskets were being emptied.

On a list on the wall were the names of the workers and how much cotton each one brought in. Tom's basket was full enough; but as he walked off, he looked over his shoulder with a worried look, to see if Lucy would make the weight.

She came forward shaking and gave Legree her basket. It was the full weight, as Legree's helpers had said it would be, but Legree acted like it was not.

"You lazy animal!" he shouted. "Short again! Stand over there and wait. You'll catch it soon!"

The woman made a long sad sound before sitting on a bench.

Cassy now came forward. With a cold, proud look, she handed her basket to Legree. He had a questioning look in his eye, like he was waiting for her to say something. Then, looking straight at him, she said something in another language and Legree's face turned to that of a devil. He lifted his hand to hit her, but she turned and walked away.

"Tom, you come here!" said Legree, a few minutes later. "You see, I didn't buy you just to be a worker. I want to make a leader of you. And tonight is as good a time as any to start. You take this girl Lucy, and whip her. You know how Sambo and Quimbo do it, so you do the same."

"Forgive me, Master," said Tom, "but I can't do that. I never did, and there's no way that I can."

"You'll learn a lot of things here that you never did before," said Legree, taking up a whip and hitting Tom across the cheek with it. He followed this up with some strong hits from his big fists.

"There," he said. "Now will you tell me you can't do it?"

"Yes, Master," said Tom, putting up his hand to rub the blood that was running down his cheek. "I'm willing to work, night and day, as long as there's life in me, but this thing I can't feel right to do. And Master, I never will do it. Never!"

Tom's voice was always soft, and he was always humble when talking to any master. Legree had believed from this that Tom was afraid of him, and that he would be easy to break. But Tom said "never" so strongly that all of the workers jumped back in surprise. Poor Lucy put her hands together and said, "God, help him!" as she waited for the storm that they all knew was coming.

Legree could not find words for a few seconds. But then he exploded:

"You stupid black animal! You think you can tell me what you'll do and what you won't do? What business is it of yours? I'll tell you what's right and what isn't. Who do you think you are? I'll soon put a stop to this. So you think it's wrong to whip a girl?"

"I think so, Master," said Tom. "The poor woman is sick and weak. It would be cruel, and it's something I'll never do. Master, if you want to kill me, kill me; but as to my lifting a hand against anyone here, I never will. I'll die first!"

Tom's voice was quiet, but it was clear that there was strong feeling behind it. Legree was shaking with anger. His green eyes were filled with hate. But he stopped himself from jumping on Tom with the whip at this time, choosing to hurt him with words first.

"So we have an angel living here with all of us devils! Come to tell us what's wrong with us. You think you're so Christian. But didn't you ever read in your Bible 'Servants, obey your masters'? Aren't I your master? Aren't you my servant? Didn't I pay \$1200 for all that lives inside your ugly black skin? Don't I own you, body and spirit?" he said, giving Tom a strong kick with his heavy shoe. "Tell me!"

Tom was hurting, but this question filled him with happiness. It was the opening he needed to say the truth that had been hiding inside him for so long. Standing up straight and looking up to heaven as the tears and blood ran down his face, he said with much confidence:

"No, no, no! My spirit is not yours, Master. You can never buy it! My spirit was paid for by one who is able to keep it through anything that you can dish out. You can't take it from my Master in heaven!"

"I can't, can't I?" said Legree, turning up the corner of his lip. "We'll see about that. Here, Sambo! Quimbo! Give this dog such a breaking in that he won't be over it for a month!"

The two big Blacks moved in to take Tom away, and all the other workers were on their feet to look. Lucy shouted out and fainted.

QUESTIONS ON PART 31

1. Fill in the missing words: “Legree secretly hated Tom, the way that ____ always hates ____.” (page 239)
2. In Legree’s thinking, what were the first, second and third rules for a good leader? (page 239)
3. What did Tom do to help Lucy when he was working near her? (page 240)
4. What did Sambo use to wake Lucy up after she fainted? (page 240)
5. What did Miss Cassy do for Tom? (page 241)
6. Was Lucy’s basket heavy enough at the end of the day? (page 242)
7. Did Legree say that Lucy’s basket was heavy enough at the end of the day? (page 242)
8. What did Legree tell Tom to do, to “make a leader” of him? (page 243)
9. What part of himself did Tom say that Legree could never buy? (page 244)

32. Cassy's Story

It was late at night. Tom was lying on the floor of a little old room that had broken machines and other things that were not wanted in it. Hundreds of mosquitos added to the pain of Tom's bleeding cuts. But more than anything he was thirsty. He had been left lying there after the whipping, without food or water. After a hard day in the sun, his body needed water, but he could not stand up to go for it.

"Please, God! Do look down and help me to win through this!" he prayed in his pain.

The door opened and the light of a lantern filled his eyes.

"Who's there? Please, can I have some water?"

Cassy put down the lantern and poured water from a bottle that she had with her. She lifted his head and gave him a drink. Two more cups were emptied with enthusiasm.

"Drink all you want," she said. "I knew this would happen. It's not the first time I've been out here with water for someone after a whipping."

"Thank you, Mrs." said Tom when he was finished drinking.

"Don't call me Mrs.! I'm a slave like you – worse than you could ever be!" she said sadly.

She went to the door and returned with a thin mattress filled with dry grass. Over the mattress were wet cloths. "Try to move yourself onto this," she said.

It was a difficult movement because of his pains, but when Tom was on the mattress, the cool water was welcome medicine for his sore back.

"Now," said the woman when she had lifted his head to put a bag of dirty cotton under it for a pillow, "that's the best I can do for you."

Tom thanked her and she sat on the floor, pulling her knees up and hugging them. She looked off into space with an angry, sour look.

"I must tell you that it won't help!" she said at last. "What you've been trying to do won't help. It was very brave of you. You had right on your side. But it's all a waste to try fighting against him. You're in the devil's hands. He's the strongest, and you must give up."

Give up? Tom could see in the woman's wild eyes and hear in her sad voice the very thing he had been fighting so hard against. She was like the devil in a body.

"Oh, God!" he prayed. "Help me not to give up!"

"It won't help to call on God. He never hears," she said slowly. "I don't believe there is a God. If there is, he's against us. Everything is against us. Everything is pushing us into hell. So why should we fight it?"

Tom closed his eyes and tried to close his ears to the words of the devil.

"You see," said the woman, "I've lived here five years under this man's foot. I hate him as I hate the devil! But we can't do a thing about it. We're ten miles from any other farm. All around are lakes filled with deadly snakes. There's no other white person around to see what's happening and go for help. He could burn you alive. He could pour hot water on you, cut you into pieces, feed you to the dogs, hang you up, and whip you to death. There's no law here to stop him. And this is a man who wouldn't be afraid to do any of those things. Do you think I want to live with him? It's just that I'm not free to choose. I've lived with him for five years and hated every second of it. Now he has a new one, a young thing, and she has religion like you. She can read, and she has her Bible with her. But she'll go to hell too, you wait and see!" And the woman laughed a wild, crazy laugh that had the sound of the devil in it.

Any way he looked, it was a dark future for Tom.

"Oh Jesus! Jesus, don't forget us poor slaves! Help me, God, before I lose my faith," he prayed.

The woman went on:

"And why should you help these dogs that you work with?

There isn't a one who wouldn't turn against you if they could get something from it. They're all as low and cruel to each other as can be. What's the good of helping them?"

"Poor people," said Tom, as God helped him to see the picture more clearly. "If I give in," he said, "I'll grow little by little to be like them. No, Mrs. I was forced to leave my wife and children, and a kind master. I don't have anything left in this world. But I won't lose heaven. I mustn't stop now – not after coming this far."

"But God can't punish us for doing wrong when we're forced to do it," said the woman. "He'll punish the ones that forced us to do wrong, won't he?"

"I do believe he'll punish them," said Tom, "but that won't make us any better for it. If I get to be as bad as Sambo it won't make no difference how I come to be that way. It's just the being that I don't want."

The woman opened her eyes wide, as the truth of what Tom had said came through to her. "Oh God, what did I do with my life?" she said as she put her head on her knees and cried.

There was only the sound of deep breathing for a few minutes and then Tom said, "Please, Mrs., I saw them throw my coat in that corner. In the pocket is my Bible. Can you get it for me?"

Cassy went to get it and Tom opened to the story of Jesus dying.

"If Mrs. would be so good as to read that there – it's better than water for the pain."

Cassy looked over the page with Tom's markings in it, and then started to read in a soft voice, but with much feeling, as only the best readers can do. Often her voice would start to break, and she would stop and wait. Then she would go on. When she came to the touching words, "Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing," she put the book down and buried her face in her hands and cried loudly.

Tom was crying too. "If only we could keep up to that!" he said. "It sounds so easy for him, and we have to fight so hard for it. God, help us! Sweet Jesus, please help us!"

"Mrs.," said Tom after a time. "I can see that you're much above me in most things. But there's one thing I'd like to tell you. You said it looks like God is against us because he lets us be knocked around. But you see what he let come on his own Son? Wasn't he always poor? And did any of us ever go through anything worse than what he went through here? He never did forget us — I know that. He says if we go through pain with him, he'll remember us. But if we turn against him, he'll turn against us. Didn't Jesus and all his people go through pain. It says they were stoned and cut up. They were poor and sick and in much pain. So pain's no reason to make us think God has turned on us. The opposite is true. It's what brings us closer to him."

"Why does he put us where we can't help but do wrong?" asked the woman.

"I think we can help it," said Tom.

"You'll see," said Cassy. "Tomorrow they'll be at you again. I know them. I don't want to think of what they'll do to you. They'll make you give in."

"Please, Jesus!" said Tom. "Please protect my spirit, Jesus. Don't let me give in!"

"I've heard them pray before," said Cassy. "But they were all brought under. Emmeline's trying, and you're trying. But if you don't give up, they'll kill you by inches."

"Then I will die!" said Tom. "Take as long as they like, but in the end I'll die, and after that they can't do no more. I'm clear now. I know God'll help me and bring me through."

The woman did not answer. She just looked at the floor.

"I think you're right. We who gave up are alive now, but we hate ourselves and we want to die. We'd kill ourselves, but we're afraid to meet God. We have nothing left. This new girl now... she's just as old as I was!"

"You see me," she said to Tom, talking quickly now. "See what I am now? Could you believe I was born into a rich family? My father was a white man, but he never did think of me as a slave. He gave me beautiful clothes, and sent me to a Catholic school.

I played with his other children. But when I was 14, he died. One day he was strong and healthy; the next he was dead. There were no papers to say that I was free. His wife hated me, so when it came time to sell his slaves, I was sold with the others.

"My new master forced himself on me and I had a baby from that. When the baby was three or four years old, my master sold him. There were other babies, but one by one he sold them. The last one, I promised he would never get. When it was just two weeks old I gave it too much medicine and watched it die as I was hugging it. I cried and cried over it, but it's one of the few things I did that I'm happy about today. The child died in its sleep, and it feels no pain today.

"But my master was very angry with me, and I was sold from hand to hand, finishing up here with this man."

She stopped talking, but thinking about her past had fired up her spirit. She was walking up and down in the little room.

"You say there's a God that looks down and sees all these things? I want to believe that. The sisters at the school used to tell me of a day when God would make everything right. Won't there be some things to pay then! I'll stand up there and tell what these people did to me and to my children.

"When I was a girl I used to love God and prayer. Now the devils are after me day and night. They keep pushing me to..." and she stopped before going on, talking more to herself and the devils than to Tom. "I'll do it one of these days. I'll send him to where he should be. They can burn me alive for it too!" A long, wild laugh came from her throat, but then she fell on the floor shaking and crying deeply.

The crying stopped after a minute or two, and then Cassy acted like it had never happened. She came to Tom and said, "Can I do anything more for you? Do you want more water?" Her voice was soft and sweet.

Tom had some water and then looked lovingly into her face.
"Mrs., can't you go to the One who has living water?"

"Who are you talking about? Where?" said Cassy.

"The one you were reading about. Jesus."

"I used to see pictures of him at the school," she said. "But he isn't here! There's nothing here but sadness."

Tom was going to say something, but she cut him short.

"Don't talk, my poor man. Try to sleep if you can."

She put some water by his side, and then left the room.

QUESTIONS ON PART 32

1. More than anything, what did Tom want after the whipping? (page 246)
2. Who gave Tom what he was needing? (page 246)
3. What was all around Legree's farm, to stop the slaves from running away? (page 247)
4. Cassy said that Emmeline was like Tom in one way. What was that? (page 247)
5. Did Cassy try to encourage Tom to be kind? (page 248)
6. Fill in the missing word: " _____ is no reason to make us think God has turned on us. The opposite is true. It's what brings us closer to him." (page 249)
7. Tom said, "After that, they can't do no more." What was he talking about? (page 249)
8. Cassy's father was a rich white man, and she was like a daughter to him. But what happened to change all of that? (pages 249 and 250)
9. When Cassy said, "I'll send him to where he should be," what do you think she was secretly trying to say? (page 250)

33. Things from the Past

The sitting room of Legree's house was a big, long room with a wide fireplace. In the past it had expensive paper on the wall, But now the paper was very dirty, and hanging loose. In places there was writing, where Legree had used it to do sums or to write something that he wanted to remember. There was a bad smell in the house of a place that had been closed up for too long. The night was not cold, but Legree always had a fire in the fireplace at night. He used it to light his cigars and to heat water for drinks. Around the room were saddles, riding whips, ropes, coats, and other clothes. In the middle of it all were Legree's dogs.

We go back now to the time just after Tom was whipped.

"Why did I let Sambo push me into fighting with the new hands?" Legree said to himself. "Now this Tom won't be able to work for a week, and just when I need him most!"

"Just like you," said a voice from behind his chair. It was Cassy, who had walked in on Legree talking to himself.

"Ah, you devil! You've come back, have you?"

"Yes, I have," she said coolly. "But I've come to have my own way!"

"I'm afraid you won't get that. You do what I say or you stay down with the workers."

"I would be far happier with them than to be under your foot!"

"But you are under my foot, after all," said he, turning on her with an angry smile. "So sit on my knee and like it," he said, taking hold of her wrist.

"Simon Legree, look out!" said the woman, with a wild, crazy look in her eye. "You're afraid of me! And with good reason – because I have the devil in me!"

She whispered the last words in his ear.

"Get away from me!" said Legree, pushing her from him. "I believe you do have a devil in you. Why can't we be friends like we were in the past?"

"Friends?" she said with a laugh in her voice. But she stopped short of saying what she wanted to say.

Cassy had always been able to control Legree in little ways. Of late she had been showing signs of going crazy. Legree, like many people, feared crazy people. So through it, Cassy had learned to control Legree even more.

When Legree brought Emmeline into the house, Cassy did what she could to help her. A big argument started between Cassy and Legree over Emmeline, and Legree said he would send Cassy to work with the others if she did not stay out of his business. Cassy, who was very proud, said she was not afraid of working in the cotton, and she worked there that day to show that she was not lying.

All day Legree had been secretly afraid that he would lose Cassy. When she came up with her basket at the end of the day, he was listening for some sign that she had changed her thinking. But all he received was more anger.

His action against Tom did not help the spirit between them. She had followed him to the house just now only to tell him how cruel she believed he was.

"Cassy, why can't you be nice to me?" Legree asked.

"You're one to talk about being nice! Look at you! You're trying to destroy one of your best workers just when you need him most – and all because you can't control your anger!"

"It's true that it hasn't helped me," said Legree. "But what could I do? He was forcing his will against mine. I had to break him."

"I don't know if you're going to be able to break this one!"

"Oh, won't I?" said Legree loudly. "If I don't, he'll be the first one to stand up against me. I'll break every bone in his body, but he will give up in the end!"

Just then the door opened and Sambo came in. He came forward holding out something in a paper.

"What's that, boy?" asked Legree sharply.

"It's a witch thing, Master."

"A what?"

"A thing that niggers gets from witches. Stops them from feeling pain when they's whipped. He had it around his neck with a black string."

Legree, like most cruel people, believed in things like witches. He opened the paper slowly. Out of it dropped Master George's silver dollar and a long piece of yellow hair. The circle of Eva's hair went around Legree's finger as he opened the paper, filling him with fear.

"Oh, hell!" he shouted, pulling at the hair like it was burning him. "Take it off! Burn it up!" he shouted, pulling the hair from his finger and throwing it in the fireplace. "What did you bring this to me for?"

Sambo and Cassy both looked at Legree with perfect surprise. It was the first time that he had ever showed so much fear.

"Don't you bring me any more of your devil things!" he said, shaking his fist at Sambo, who was backing out through the door. Legree lifted the silver dollar from where he had dropped it on the floor, and sent it flying through a broken window out into the dark night.

Legree knew that he had let the others see his fear, and he was happy to see Sambo go. This is when Cassy left too, to take water and a mattress to Tom.

So why did a little piece of hair send such fear to the heart of this hard old man? The answer starts many years before, when Simon Legree was a young child. His mother had been a Christian woman. But his father was a hard man who easily became angry. Simon followed in the steps of his father. When he was very young, he left his mother to work on a ship. He only returned one time after that, and his mother did all she could at that time to turn him from the rough life that he had started to live.

Young Simon came very close to giving in to his mother's prayers. He almost changed. There was a fight in his spirit. But the worst side of him was the winner, and he put all his strength into fighting the prayers of his mother. He turned more wild and more cruel.

One night, when his mother was making one last try to turn him from his bad ways, on her knees at his feet, he pushed her roughly onto the floor and ran away to his ship. The next thing that Legree heard of his mother was when a letter was put into his hand years later. He opened it and a piece of long hair dropped out, bending itself around his fingers. In the letter was news that his mother was dead, but that her last words were that she loved him.

There is a strange thing about people who choose to run from the truth. The nicest, kindest actions can bring the worst fear to the heart of such a person. And so, the only effect that mother's dying prayer had for her son was a change for the worse. Legree burned the hair and the letter, and as he did, he could not stop thinking about the fires of hell. He tried to drink and laugh away anything that would make him remember his mother. But often at night, he would think that he could see her and feel the soft hair bending around his fingers, and he would jump from his bed in fear. You who cannot understand how the same God can be one of love and one who comes with a burning fire, do you not see how the spirit that fights against love will see all that God tries to do to show his love only as a hated fire?

"Hell!" said Legree to himself. "Where did he get that? If it didn't look just like – no, no, hold on! I mustn't think about that. I need to forget. I need someone to help me forget. There's Emmeline... but then she hates me – the little monkey! But enough of that! I won't wait for her any longer. I'll force her to come to me!"

Legree walked out of the sitting room, to the bottom of the steps leading to the next floor. The steps had no rug, and they were dirty. Boxes and other things were on them, leaving little space for walking. He shouted angrily for Emmeline to come down. Then he stopped at the foot of the steps, hearing a voice singing. It was like the spirit of a dead person coming from the top of the house. The words were from a song that many slaves sing:

It'll be sad, it'll be sad, when Jesus comes to judge.

Parents and children will be forced to separate,

And when they do, they'll never meet again.

It'll be sad, it'll be sad, when Jesus comes to judge.

Legree stopped. His heart was heavy with fear. He believed something white was coming toward him from the dark at the top of the steps. He was afraid that it would be his dead mother.

"I know one thing," he said as he walked, shaking, back into the sitting room. "I'll let that man alone after this! Why did I want to buy him in the first place? Where did he get that hair? It couldn't have been that! I burned it up. I know I did!"

Yes, Legree! A Spirit stronger than you had used that hair to tie your cruel hands, and to protect Tom and Emmeline both a little longer.

QUESTIONS ON PART 33

1. What was the problem that Simon Legree had made for himself by having Tom whipped so badly? (page 252)
2. How had Cassy been able to get more control over Legree? (page 253)
3. Why had Cassy worked that day getting cotton with the other workers? (page 253)
4. What did Sambo take from Tom that he called a "witch thing"? (pages 253 and 254)
5. When Simon Legree had been a very young man, he left his mother. What work did he do after leaving her? (page 254)
6. Eva's piece of hair made Legree afraid because it made him remember another piece of hair. Whose hair was it? (page 255)
7. God had used Eva's hair to do what for Tom? (page 256)

34. Emmeline and Cassy

Cassy returned to the house after helping Tom. She went up the back way to Emmeline's room. Emmeline was sitting in a corner. She jumped as Cassy opened the door. On seeing who it was, she raced over and hugged her. "Oh, Cassy, I'm so happy to see you!" she said. "He was shouting for me and I was afraid he'd force himself on me. Please, can't we get away from here?"

"Not alive," said Cassy.

"I'm not afraid of snakes. I'd be happier sleeping with a snake than with him," said Emmeline.

"Others have tried it," said Cassy. "But he sends the dogs out and brings them back, and when he does – "

"What does he do then?" asked the girl with interest.

"Better to ask what wouldn't he do," said Cassy. "He learned his ways from pirates when he was sailing. You wouldn't sleep if I was to tell you what I know. I've heard people that I couldn't put their cries out of my head for weeks and weeks. God only knows what we'll see tomorrow if that poor man won't give in to him."

"Oh, Cassy, what can I do?" asked Emmeline in fear.

"Do like me. Do what you must and make it up in hating."

"It would've been better if I'd never been born!" said Emmeline.

"Don't I know," said Cassy. "If I wasn't afraid of facing God, I'd kill myself."

"Oh, it's very wrong to kill yourself," said Emmeline.

"No worse than things we do here, day after day."

As this was happening in the the bedroom, Legree was dreaming in the sitting room below. He had tried to drink away his fears, and now he was in a deep sleep. Someone was standing beside him. She put a cold, soft hand on his shoulder. He could not see the face, but he knew who it was. He could feel that hair bending around his fingers. Then it moved smoothly around his neck, growing tighter. He could not breathe. Voices were whispering to him. And the whispers filled his heart with

fear. Then he was at the top of a very high cliff, holding on, to stop from falling. Cassy came behind him laughing, and she pushed him. Her face changed to that of his mother. She turned away from him and he fell down, down, down. Devils were laughing all around him as he fell. Legree sat up on the couch, wide awake. He was still awake when Cassy walked into the room early the next morning.

"I've had a hell of a night!" he said.

"You'll have more one of these days," she said dryly.

"What do you mean, you cat?"

"You'll see. But for now, I want to tell you," she said slowly as she went about moving things in the room, "that you would be smart to leave that Tom alone."

"What business is it of yours?"

"It's not my business, but it is yours, and if you want to pay \$1200 for a slave, then use him up because you can't control your anger, it's no good for your business now, is it?"

"I can do what I like with him."

"Yes, you can. And if you finish up with less cotton than Tompkins this month, he'll have the laugh on you, won't he? And you can take it like a woman when he does. I can see it all now!" And she laughed cruelly.

Legree, like many other farmers, liked nothing better than to show up the others. And there was always a lot of talk about who brought in the most cotton – and a lot of laughing about who came last. Cassy was smart enough to touch the right string.

"Okay, so I'll stop with the one whipping if he asks me to forgive him," said Legree.

"He'll never do that," said Cassy.

"And why is that?" asked Legree, whose anger was quickly heating up.

"Because what he did was right and he knows it."

"It's not important what he knows. He's my nigger, and he'll say what I ask or – "

"Or the other farmers will have the last laugh on you at the end of the month."

"But he will give up. I know niggers. He'll be praying for me to forgive him this morning."

"No, he won't, Simon. Know this before you start. You could kill him by inches, but you won't get one word out of him."

"How do you know?"

"I went to him last night and gave him some water."

"We'll see," he said, leaving the room.

Legree talked with confidence in front of Cassy, but he could feel truth in what she said. His dream did not help. To be safe, he went to Tom secretly. That way, if he could not break him, no one would know. And he could always finish what he had started after the cotton was finished.

In the room where Tom had been lying, the morning sun was just working its way through holes in the wall. Tom was awake and thinking about what the day would bring. His talk with Cassy had encouraged him. This could be the day when he would see for himself what heaven was really like. He showed no fear when Legree kicked open the door.

"Well, my boy," said Legree with a rough kick, "How do you find yourself? Didn't I say that you'd learn a thing or two here? How'd you like your whipping? Does it make you want to do more preaching at me this morning?"

Tom answered nothing.

"Get up, you dog!" said Legree, kicking him again.

Getting up was difficult. As Tom tried, Legree laughed cruelly.

"A little slow this morning, Tom? Must be getting old!" And he laughed again.

By this time, Tom was on his feet and looking confidently at his master.

"So you're able to stand up after all! I don't think you had enough last night. But, Tom, if you'll get down on your knees and ask me to forgive you for the way you were acting last night, that'll be the end of it."

Tom did not move.

"Down, you dog!" said Legree, hitting him with his riding whip.

"Master Legree," said Tom. "I can't do it. I did what I believed was right. If the time comes, I'd do it again. I won't change."

"But you don't know what I can do to you, boy! How'd you like to be tied to a tree and have a slow fire started up around you. Wouldn't that be a nice way to go? What do you think, Tom?"

"Master," said Tom. "I know you can do some very hard things, but" – and he pulled himself up straight and tall, with his hands together – "after you kill my body, you won't be able to do anything more. And I'll have forever to come after that!"

FOREVER! The word filled Tom's heart with strength and light. And it went through the heart of Legree like the bite of a snake. Legree squeezed his teeth together, but said nothing, and Tom went on, in a clear, happy voice.

"Master Legree, because you paid for me, I'll be as good a servant as I can to you. I'll give you all the work of my hands, all my time, all my strength. But my spirit I won't give up to any man. I'll put the laws of God before the rules of any other person – live or die. Master Legree, I don't feel any fear at all about dying right now. I'm as happy to die as not. You can whip me, burn me, do what you like, but it'll only send me sooner to the place where I want to go."

"But before you go, I'll make you give in," said Legree.

"I'll have help," said Tom. "I don't think you can do it."

"Who's going to help you?" asked Legree, thinking that another worker was going to help Tom.

"The God who made you and me both!" said Tom.

"You ugly nigger!" said Legree, as with one strong hit from his fist he knocked Tom to the ground.

And then a cold soft hand touched Legree on the shoulder. He turned in fear, but it was Cassy. The dream returned to his mind, with all the fear that it had brought back to him from his past.

"Don't be foolish," said Cassy. "It's like I said it would be. Leave me to fix him up so he can return to work sooner."

They say animals with the thickest skin still have a place where you can hurt them if you can find it. And the weak place in the hardest heart is often a fear of devils and spirits.

"Have it your way," said Legree as he turned to walk away.

"But remember this," he said to Tom, "When the work is finished, I'll return to you and have what I want from your old black skin. I never forget."

"And there's One who'll make you pay one day too," said Cassy softly as Legree went out the door. "So, how are you this morning, Tom?"

"I think you're the angel that closed the lion's mouth – for now," said Tom.

"Yes, for now," said Cassy. "But he won't let go. He'll be back. I know the man."

QUESTIONS ON PART 34

1. What was the one thing that stopped Cassy from killing herself? (page 257)
2. What was Legree doing in the sitting room below, as Cassy was talking with Emmeline in the bed room above? (page 257)
3. How did thinking about "Tompkins" encourage Legree to stop wanting to whip Tom? (page 258)
4. Cassy knew Tom would not ask Legree to forgive him. Why was that? (page 258)
5. Why did Legree go to Tom secretly on the morning after the whipping? (page 259)
6. What was the word that filled Tom's heart with strength, and went through Legree's heart like the bite of a snake? (page 260)
7. What is often the weakest place in the hardest hearts? (page 261)

35. Love Wins Out

There have been times for each of us when we have wanted to die. When faced with a fast death, people often receive a strength that carries them through what they had feared all their lives. And Tom, when he believed that his day had come, was filled with happiness just at thinking that he was one step away from Jesus and heaven.

But life itself, with its boring problems from one day to the next, can be the biggest test of all. And so it was for Tom: when the danger had left, pain returned to his tired body, and he was forced to face the many problems of the hard life that he lived.

Legree forced him to return to work long before the cuts were better. Tom's body was still filled with pain, and Legree added to it with all that he could think of to make Tom's life more difficult. We all know how pain and sickness can make us hard to live with. It is not easy to keep our spirits up when we are hurting inside. And so Tom started to understand the sour spirit of those around him, for he too was turning sour. He had always been able to find time to read the Bible in the past; but now he had little time. At this time of year, Legree forced his slaves to work seven days a week, so that there was not even time on Sundays to read. Tom tried to read a few words from the Bible each night, but he was often too tired to even do that.

It is not surprising that his spirits dropped to an all time low. For many weeks he was filled with this dark sadness. He remembered Miss Ophelia's letter to the Shelbys in Kentucky, and he would pray deeply that God would send him help. Then he would watch day after day to see if someone would come, but no one came. All around him bad was winning, and God was not stopping it. Tom started to think that God had left him.

At times he would see Cassy, and a few times when he had business at the house, he would see Emmeline's sad face. He never had time to talk with them, but it was clear that they were feeling much like he did.

One night he was sitting by the fire as his corn cake was cooking. He pulled out his old Bible and looked through it at all of the markings that he had put in it over the years. It had lifted his spirits so many times in the past. But now it did not have the same effect on him. Was it the word that had changed, or was it Tom? He breathed out slowly and sadly, then put the Bible back in his pocket. A rough laugh made him look up, and there was Simon Legree standing opposite him.

"So you see," he said, "your religion don't work, does it. I said you would learn some things here, didn't I?"

The cruel words were worse than hunger and cold and whippings. Tom said nothing.

"You were stupid to ever believe in it," said Legree. "I had high plans for you when you first came here. You could've been better off than Sambo or Quimbo. You could've had easy times. But, no, you wanted to be cut up and whipped every day or two. You could have been free to hold it over the other niggers, and have a drink of whiskey from time to time with me. I'll tell you what. Even now, you can throw that old book into the fire and join my church."

"God helping me, I won't never do that," said Tom.

"But God isn't helping you. If he was, he wouldn't let me get you, now would he? I've been through this religion business. It's all lies, for people who can't face real life. What you need is to take hold of me. I'm someone who can help you!"

"No, Master," said Tom. "I'll hold on. God could help me if he wanted to, or it could be that he won't. But I'll hold on and put my faith in him to the end."

"You're so stupid," said Legree, spitting at him. "I'm not finished with you. I'll bring you under – you'll see!" And he walked away.

It is always darkest before the sun comes up, and Tom was at his lowest point just after Legree left him that night. But as he was sitting there looking at the fire, all that was around him turned dark. In their place he could see a man who was bleeding from his hands and head and side. He had been whipped too. Tom's mouth dropped as he looked into the loving eyes of the Man.

Those eyes filled Tom with a love that was bigger than life. He put out his hands toward the Man, and fell on his knees. As he did, the sharp nail-like branches sticking into the man's head changed to branches of light. He was the King of kings. And he said: "If you do not give up, you will sit with me when I judge the world, just as I did not give up and now I sit with my Father."

Tom didn't know how long he sat there, but when he looked up the fire was out. His clothes were wet from the night air. But his spiritual test was over and the happiness that filled him now was much stronger than all of the hunger, cold, sadness, and pain that he had ever received in his whole life. Tom looked up at the stars and they were like little angels looking down on him. He started to sing a song that he had learned in happier days. He was singing it with more feeling now than he ever had before:

*The earth will melt like snow.
The sun will lose its heat.
But God who called me here below,
Will never let me go.
And when this life has ended,
When this heart has finished,
I will take up in heaven
A life of happiness.*

When the grey light of early morning looked down on those poor sad workers going off to the cotton, there was one who walked with the air of a king. His faith in a God of love was now stronger than the ground he was walking on. Try all your forces now, Legree! For all that you can do will only make the time shorter between now and when that man will take his place as a king with Jesus!

From that day on, Tom lived in a little world of his own... a world filled with quiet rest. His body became his church, and his God lived in it. Tom stopped looking toward his happy past and looked only to his far happier future.

All the other workers could see the change in Tom. He was happy and always thinking about those around him now. He had a quiet spirit that no one could take from him.

"What's happened to Tom?" Legree asked Sambo. "He was all down in the mouth, and now he's fast as an ant on a hot stove."

"Don't know, Master. Could be planning to run off."

"Like to see him try that," said Legree. "Wouldn't that be fun?"

"That it would," said Sambo laughing. "I'd like to see him trying to run through the mud with the dogs holding onto him. Remember the time they catched Molly? I was afraid she'd be dead before we pulled them off. She has the marks on her from it to this day."

"Well, you watch this nigger, Sambo. If he has any such plans, you better put a stop to them."

"You can count on me for that, Master," said Sambo. "He won't get around me."

Legree left on his horse for town, returning late that night. Before turning in, he went for a ride down to where the slaves lived to see if all was well. It was a very quiet night, and Legree was still a long way from the rooms when he could hear Tom singing:

*When I know that I am very near
To my place up in the skies,
I'll say goodbye to every fear
Rub tears from tired eyes.
If earth can only bring me danger,
And cut my life apart,
Still I can smile at its anger
And face a hate-filled heart.
Problems hit me like a flood,
And storms of sadness fall.
But soon I'll be up there with God:
My life, my Heaven, my All.*

"So you think you're stronger than me, do you?" said Legree to himself as he came down toward Tom on the horse. "How I hate those songs! Here, you, nigger! What're you doing up? You should be in bed. Now close your ugly face and turn in!"

"Yes, Master," said Tom happily, standing to go.

Legree was so angry about Tom's happy spirit that he stopped the horse near him and hit him many times with the riding whip on the head and shoulders.

"There, you dog," he said. "See if you feel so good now!"

But this time the whip could only hurt the body, and not the heart. Tom received the hits without any show of fear or anger, and Legree knew from this point on that he could never win. As Tom went to his room and Legree turned the horse around, the cruel master understood that it was God himself that was standing between him and Tom. And it was God himself that Legree was fighting. His next words were angry shouts at the skies above him: "What do I have to do to be free from you? Why don't you leave me alone?"

Tom's heart was filled with love for all those around him at this time, and he looked each day for ways to show some love before leaving these people. There were little things that he could do or say on the way to and from work, and even through the day, that would help or encourage others. Little by little, these hard people who had become like animals under Legree's foot, started to come under Tom's control. This quiet, kind man who asked for help from no one, but did all he could to help those around him... who was always last in the line, taking what was left... who would give his little blanket to a sick woman on a cold night... who filled the baskets of the weakest even when it ended in a whipping for him... who never talked against his master... this man surprised the other workers at first. But when it went on for weeks and months, they started to feel a need for love and faith in their own hearts. When the work had slowed enough that they could have Sundays off again, many of them would come and hear Tom preach about Jesus. They

wanted to have a big open meeting with singing and praying, but Legree would not let them, and even when a few people at a time were talking to Tom, Legree would often come and break up their talk. So they learned to listen closely to what Tom said, and then tell it again in their own words to the next group of people. The slaves learned to love and believe the stories of a God who loved them enough to let his Son die for them, a God who had made a safe place for them at the end of this life. Even Cassy's half crazy mind was encouraged by the change in Tom. She started to believe that things could get better.

One night, after all the others in Tom's room were sleeping, a voice from a hole in the wall lifted Tom out of sleep. He looked up to see Cassy's face. She wanted Tom to come out. He quickly did just that.

It was after midnight. Tom could see an enthusiasm in Cassy's eyes that had never been there before.

"Uncle Tom," she said (for many of the workers had started calling him that), "Uncle Tom, we're going to be free! Come with me!"

"What are you talking about?" whispered Tom.

"It's him! I put something in the whiskey and he's in a deep sleep. There's an axe by the back door. We can kill him and be free."

"Not for a thousand worlds, Cassy!" said Tom, jumping in front of her.

"But think of all these poor people," argued Cassy. "We can find an island near here and live there as free people. It won't be easy, but it'll be better than this."

"No!" said Tom strongly. "Good never comes of doing bad. I'd sooner cut my hand off than do this."

"Then I'll do it by myself," said Cassy, turning.

"No, Miss Cassy," said Tom, holding her. "Think of Jesus who died for you. Don't sell yourself to the devil in this way. Only bad can come of it. God doesn't want us hating. We must wait for his time."

"Wait?" said Cassy in a whisper that was closer to a shout. "Haven't I waited? My heart's sick of waiting. He's taking the life blood out of you, and the voices are calling me to do this for you."

"No, no, no!" said Tom, holding her small hands. "No, you poor woman, you mustn't do it. Sweet Jesus never hurt no one but himself, and he did that because he loved those that were fighting against him. Jesus, help us to follow your steps and to love those that hurt us!"

"Love?" said Cassy. "How can anyone love Legree?"

"We can't, in ourselves, Miss," said Tom. "But he can help us to, and that's the way we win out. When we can love and pray over all and through all, then we becomes the winners! Oh, thanks be to God!" And the black man looked up to heaven with tears in his eyes and a smile on his face.

The strength of Tom's quiet spirit slowly changed Cassy's spirit. He could feel her hands and arms losing the tight feeling that she had when she first arrived.

"Didn't I tell you that bad spirits are after me?" she said. "Uncle Tom, I can't pray. I want to, but from the time my children were sold, I haven't prayed. Now when I try to pray, I can only hate. I can't pray."

"You poor woman!" said Tom lovingly. "The Devil wants to have you, but I'll pray for you Miss Cassy, and when God answers and you can pray again, you turn to Jesus, you understand? He helps all those who need his help."

Cassy was quiet for a minute, with her eyes toward the ground, as Tom prayed to himself, asking God what to do.

"Miss Cassy," said Tom when finished. "If you and Emmeline could get away, I think it'd be a good thing to do. But only if you can do it without hurting other people."

"Would you come with us, Uncle Tom?"

"No," said Tom. "Time was when I would, but God has a work for me here with these people. I'll stay with them to the end. But it's different with you. Master's forcing you to do wrong, and it's better for you to go."

“I don’t know how,” said Cassy. “The dogs would find us. Everything is against us.”

Tom was thinking. At length, he said, “Him that helped Daniel when he was in a hole with some lions; that helped the children when they walked through the fire, that walked on the water and could tell the winds to stop, he’s alive now, and I believe he can make a way. Try it and I’ll pray with you.”

As he started to pray a second time, Cassy’s eyes opened wide. She had often looked for a way to get away without the dogs coming after her, and now, with just a few words of prayer, she had a plan that she really believed could work.

“Uncle Tom, I’ll try it!” she said.

“So be it,” said Tom. “And God go with you!”

QUESTIONS ON PART 35

1. Finish this: “Tom started to understand the sour spirit of those around him, for he...” (page 262)
2. What did Legree say that was worse than hunger or cold or whippings for Tom? (page 263)
3. What had Tom been looking at just before he saw something that changed him deeply and made him feel like a king? (pages 263 and 264)
4. What did Sambo think was Tom’s reason for being so happy? (page 265)
5. After Legree heard Tom singing late one night, he saw that he could never win against Tom. He saw that his fight was not with Tom. Who was it with? (page 266)
6. After the deep change in Tom, what happened to the other slaves because of Tom? (pages 266 and 267)
7. What plan did Cassy come to Tom with, for freeing all the slaves? (page 267)
8. How did Tom say that the slaves could become winners over Legree? (page 268)
9. What did Cassy receive when Tom prayed for her? (page 269)

36. The Plan

The room at the very top of Legree's house was filled with dirt and spider webs and things that no one wanted. There was some old furniture and two big timber boxes, and one small window to let in light and air. It was not a beautiful place, and it was made worse by the stories that some of the slaves had heard about what happened there in the past.

They said that a black servant who made Legree angry had been locked up there for a few weeks. She died there, and her body was carried down to be buried. But they said her spirit lived on in the little room, crying out at times for God to punish Legree.

When Legree had learned that the stories were going around, he was very angry and said that the next person to tell the story would learn the truth for themselves, because he would chain them up there for a week. This stopped the talking, but it did not in any way stop the believing.

In time, everyone in the house learned to stay away from the steps leading to that room. But Cassy's plan started by bringing back to life Legree's fear of the room.

Her room was under that little room. One day, without asking Legree, she asked servants to move all of her things from that room to another in the big empty house. People were running about moving things when Legree arrived back from a ride.

"Cassy!" said Legree. "What are you doing now?"

"I'm changing rooms; that's all," said Cassy.

"And can I ask why you're doing this?" he said angrily.

"I just want to get some sleep now and then."

"Sleep? Why can't you sleep in your present room?"

"I don't think you want to hear about it," said Cassy dryly.

"Tell me, you cat!" said Legree.

"It's nothing, really," said Cassy. "Just the sounds of someone in pain crying and moving around on the floor in the little room above me. Goes on half the night at times."

"People in the little room?" said Legree with a false laugh.
"And who are they, Cassy?"

Cassy pointed her sharp eyes straight at Legree's and said,
"You tell me, Simon Legree. Who are they? Don't you know?"

Legree tried to hit at her with his riding whip, but she jumped to
one side and ran through the door. Looking back, she said, "You
can sleep in my room if you like; then you'll know all about it."

Legree shouted a few angry words at her, but he walked into
the sitting room with a worried look on his face.

Cassy had put the neck of an old bottle in a little round hole
in the wall of the top room, so that when the wind was blowing
in the right direction it made a sound through the bottle. When
the winds were very strong, the sound was almost like that of a
dying person shouting in pain.

The servants heard the sounds from time to time and it started
them thinking about the old stories again. No one said a
thing to Legree, but he had a strong feeling that they were re-
membering what he wanted them to forget.

A Christian believes that a God of love fills all the empty places
that he or she does not understand or see. But a person
who has no faith in God sees devils in all the dark places of the
earth. Fear and death is all around them, and Legree was just
such a person. Tom's prayers and spiritual strength only added
to Legree's fears, because he would not give in to the Spirit of
God that was pulling on his heart.

Cassy's control over Legree was strange. She was his slave,
and could not leave him, but in a way he was her slave too.
He needed her and feared her. As she showed signs of going
crazy, this only made her control – and Legree's fear – stronger.

A night or two after Cassy changed rooms, Legree was
sitting in the living room by the open fire. It was a cold night.
It was raining and the wind was blowing outside. The old
house was filled with noises from the wind. Legree had been
reading the newspaper, and he put his newspaper down to
look at a book that Cassy had been reading earlier that night.

It was a book of short stories about killings and the spirits of dead people.

Legree was making fun of the stories as he looked through the book. Then he put the book down and said, "You don't believe that the spirits of dead people come back, do you, Cassy?" He moved the coals on the fire as he was talking. "I had believed that you were too smart to believe such things."

"It's not important what I believe," said Cassy quietly.

"When I was sailing, some of the men would tell stories, trying to put fear into the others. But they never had any effect on me. I'm too smart to believe such foolishness."

Cassy said nothing, but she had a strange look in her eyes that always made Legree afraid.

"Those noises you heard were nothing but rats and wind. I used to hear rats making a devil of a noise down in the bottom of the ship. And wind – God, you can make anything out of wind."

Cassy knew Legree was afraid, so she still said nothing, only looking at him with the same strange look.

"Say something, woman! Don't you agree?" said Legree.

"Can rats walk down steps, open a door when you've locked it, and put a chair against it?" asked Cassy. "Can they come walking up to your bed and put out their hand like this?"

She finished by putting her cold hand on his, and he jumped back in fear.

"Don't do that!" he said. "You can't tell me that happened to you."

"Did I say that it did?" asked Cassy with a smile.

"So, did you – did it really happen to you? Tell me the truth, Cassy."

"Sleep there yourself," said Cassy, "if you want to know."

"Did it come from the top room?"

"Did what come from the top room?"

"Why, what you were talking about."

"I didn't tell you anything," said Cassy.

Legree walked up and down the room.

"I'll find the truth of this myself," he said. "I'll look into it tonight. I'll take my gun and – "

"You do that," said Cassy. "You sleep there."

At that point, the old clock started to sound. It was midnight. Legree did not say a thing.

"Midnight," said Cassy. "A perfect time. Now we'll learn the truth of all this," and she walked out toward the steps, where she put her hand to her ear to listen. "Listen! What's that?" she said.

"It's only the wind," said Legree. "Can't you hear it blowing?"

"Simon, come here," whispered Cassy as she put her hand on his to lead him to the foot of the steps. "Tell me what that sound is. Listen!"

"A high, wild sound like someone shouting out in pain came down the steps from the top room. Legree's knees were shaking, and his face was white with fear.

"Bring your gun and we'll go up there," said Cassy with a smile like a devil. "Now is the perfect time. They're at it, I know!"

"No, I won't be going!" said Legree.

"Why not? You aren't afraid of spirits, are you? Come!" said Cassy as she ran up the steps to the landing where more steps were leading up to the top room. "Come on!"

"You are a devil!" said Legree. "Come back, Cass! There's no need to go."

But Cassy laughed wildly and went on. She opened the door leading to the top room and a wild push of wind came down the steps, putting out the candle Legree had been holding in his hand. At the same time he heard that same strange cry coming from the bottle Cassy had put in the top room.

Legree ran in fear to the light of the fire in the living room. In a few seconds Cassy joined him. He had a look of fear in his eyes.

"Do you feel safe now?" asked Cassy.

"Go to hell, woman!" said Legree.

"Why are you angry?" said Cassy. "I only went up and closed the doors. Someone had opened them. How do you think that happened, Simon?"

"I don't want to talk about it," said Legree.

The truth is that Cassy had planned it all. Earlier that night, seeing that a storm was coming, she went up and opened the window in the little room. She knew that the wind would come down and put out the candle when she opened the door.

This was just one part of the game Cassy played to make Legree's fear of the room grow. By the time she was finished with him, he would sooner have put his head in a lion's mouth than go and look at the top room.

Then, each night Cassy would carry a few things up to hide in the room – food, candles, clothes and books.

By being nice to Legree she had been able to get him to take her with him on a trip to the nearest town, on the Red River. She studied each turn in the road on the way, and worked out how long it would take to walk the distance.

At last it was time to act. It was late one afternoon and Legree was away on business at another farm. Cassy and Emmeline were putting together two bags of clothes.

"These will be big enough," said Cassy. "Now, put on your hat and we can start."

"But it's still light. They'll see us," said Emmeline.

"And so they should," said Cassy coolly. "We must get them running after us. That's part of the plan. We'll go out the back door and down by where the workers sleep. Sambo or Quimbo will see us as we run off into the trees. They won't be able to come straight after us, because their first job is to run and tell Simon; then they'll get the dogs and come after us. When they're doing all this, we'll run to that little river that comes down from the back of the house. We'll walk up the river to where it's closest to the house. By that time the house'll be empty and they'll all be down in the trees in the other direction. The dogs won't be able to smell us in the water. So we'll run in the back door and up to the top room where I have two beds for us in the old boxes up there. We'll have to live there for a long time, because he'll be days looking for us with the dogs."

He's proud that a nigger has never been able to get away from here, and he'll be angry as the devil about this."

"What a good plan!" said Emmeline.

"Come," said Cassy, taking Emmeline's hand. "We must move before the sun is fully down."

The two women moved quietly down to where the workers lived. As Cassy had planned, when they were at the border of the trees, they heard a voice calling to them to stop. But it was not Sambo or Quimbo. It was Legree, and he was racing after them! But it wasn't long before they were far enough into the trees and the sun was far enough down that it would be foolish for Legree to follow them without the help of dogs.

"No problem," said Legree, laughing cruelly to himself. "They're in there now and they won't get out. The dogs'll find them."

"Hello, Sambo! Quimbo! All hands!" he shouted to the workers, who were just returning from the cotton. "Cassy and Emmeline have run away. Five dollars to any nigger that catches them. Bring out the dogs."

The effect was that people started to move in many directions at the same time. Some were getting the dogs. Some were getting lanterns. Some were running toward the trees. Legree gave a gun to Sambo.

"Master, should we shoot them if we catch them?" he asked.

"You can shoot Cassy. It's time she went to the devil. But don't shoot the girl. Now move on, boys. Five dollars to the one who gets them, and a glass of whiskey to you all."

All the workers and all the servants from the house ran out to join in the game, leaving the house empty as planned. Cassy and Emmeline were back in the living room by the time the dogs and lanterns were just starting into the trees. They looked out on it all from the window.

"Look at them," said Emmeline. "If we were still out there, they'd have us in no time. Let's hide ourselves quickly!"

"There's nothing to worry about," said Cassy. "They'll be out there half the night. That's the fun of it. But first," said she, taking a key from the pocket of a coat that Legree had left, "we must take something to pay for our trip."

She opened the lock on the desk and pulled out some money.

"Don't do that," said Emmeline. "It's robbing."

"Robbing?" said Cassy with a laugh. "He robbed our life and our spirit. He robbed this money from the work that each of us did. Let him talk about robbing if he likes! We'll take this and move up to our new room. I know they won't come looking for us up there, and if they do, I'll act the part of a dead spirit for them!"

Up in the little room they moved into one of the big boxes. They had blankets, books to read, and candles to see by. The box, with its opening toward the wall, helped to hide the light of the candle. In the second box were their clothes, food, books, and more candles.

"How do you like your new room?" asked Cassy.

"But what if they come up here?" asked Emmeline.

"They won't," said Cassy. "Legree is too afraid, and the servants would die before showing their faces up here."

Emmeline was tired and she put her head on her pillow. Cassy had a language book and she started to study it. In a short time Emmeline was asleep. But she jumped when she heard loud shouts, horses' feet, and the sound of dogs a few hours later.

"It's only the men returning," said Cassy coolly. "Look here, through this hole in the wall. You can see them. Simon has been forced to give it up for tonight. But they'll be back out in the morning. Ah, Simon, do your best, but it won't be good enough."

"Not so loud," whispered Emmeline. "What if they hear?"

"No danger," said Cassy. "Even if they do hear us up here, it'll only add to the effect and make them more afraid."

Before long everyone on the farm was asleep. But Legree did not go to sleep before promising himself that someone would pay for Cassy and Emmeline running away. And he would be making them pay the next day."

QUESTIONS ON PART 36

1. What did Cassy do to start Legree asking questions that would lead to him thinking about the spirit in the top room? (page 270)
2. What had Cassy put in the top room to give the sound of a person dying in pain? (page 271)
3. What was the book that Cassy had left for Legree to read? (pages 271 and 272)
4. What were two things that Legree said could make strange noises in a house or on a ship? (page 272)
5. When Cassy opened the door to the top room, what happened to Legree at the bottom of the steps? (page 273)
6. Finish this: Cassy's plan was to make everyone believe that they had run off when really they were... (page 274)
7. What did Legree promise to give to the person who was first to catch Cassy and Emmeline? (page 275)
8. Why did Cassy say that it was not robbing for one of his slaves to take money from Legree? (page 276)
9. Why was Cassy not afraid of anyone hearing noises from her and Emmeline living in the top room? (page 276)

37. Faith to Die For

When Legree first shouted the news that the women were running away, he saw a happy look in Tom's eyes. Then Tom had not run out with the others to look for the women. (The truth is that he stayed back with some other servants who were Christians by then, and they prayed for the women.) Legree had not been happy about Tom staying back at the time. But he knew from the past that if he had stopped and tried to "break" Tom, he would only lose time, and Tom still would not have changed.

When he returned without finding the women, his anger was close to exploding; and it was pointed in Tom's direction.

"I hate him!" said Legree that night as he was sitting up in his bed. "I hate him. He's mine, and I can do with him as I like. No one can stop me!" But Tom was his best worker. To hurt Tom would be to hurt himself.

The next morning his anger was forced again to wait for a better time. He borrowed dogs, guns, and workers from other farms, to cover all the ground around his farm. But he promised himself that if the women could not be returned, then he would bring Tom before him, and force Tom to pay with his own life.

People say that masters will help their workers because it helps themselves. But when you think that people will sell their own spirit to the devil, can we think that they will be any smarter when it comes to the life of another person?

"They're off again," said Cassy as she looked through the hole in the wall."

Legree was giving whiskey to friends from other farms who were helping him. With her ear to the wall, Cassy could hear most of what was being said, and she learned of Legree's plan to shoot her if he could.

If it wasn't for you," she said to Emmeline, "I'd go out there and ask them to shoot me. What good would it be for me to be free? Can it give me back my children, or make me what I used to be?"

Emmeline was afraid, and she said nothing. But she softly rubbed Cassy's hand.

"Don't," said Cassy, pulling away. "You'll only get me loving you, and I don't plan to love anyone again."

"Don't feel so, Cassy," said Emmeline. "If God can free us, he can give you a reason to live too. I'll never see my mother again, but I can love you as my mother."

The child's quiet spirit went into Cassy's heart. She hugged her and rubbed her soft, brown hair, with tears in her eyes.

"Oh Emmeline!" said Cassy. "My heart's so empty without my children. I can't even pray."

"Believe God, Cassy," said Emmeline. "He's our Father."

"But he's angry with me, and he's left me," said Cassy.

"No, he'll never leave us," said Emmeline. "He's all we have."

* * *

It was a hard morning for Legree and his helpers. When he returned in the middle of the day, he was very tired and angry.

"Now, Quimbo," said Legree, as he dropped down on the couch in the living room. "You just go and walk that Tom up here right now! He's at the bottom of this whole thing, I know, and I'll get it out of his black heart or I'll know the reason why! Bring him to the room out in the back."

Sambo and Quimbo hated each other, but one thing they agreed on was that they hated Tom. They knew from the start that Legree had planned to teach Tom to take their place, and when Tom showed himself to be stronger and braver than them all, they hated him even more for it. So Quimbo was more than happy to bring Tom up to face Legree.

Tom understood what the meaning of the call was. He knew Cassy's plan and where the women were now, but he was prepared to meet death before he would tell. He put his basket down where he had been working and he looked up to heaven. "God, you have my spirit. I'm yours," he said as Quimbo pulled him roughly away.

"You'll catch it now," said Quimbo. "Master's back is up high! You won't get away this time. See what you'll get for helping Master's niggers to run away."

But Tom did not hear any of this. He was listening to another voice, that was saying, "Do not be afraid of those who can only kill your body, and then can do nothing more." Tom could feel the strength of a thousand men coming from those words. Was it really true? Was his time to see God here at last?

"Well, Tom!" said Legree when Tom arrived at the room where he was first whipped. Legree talked to him through angry teeth, "Do you know that I'm going to kill you."

"I was thinking you would, Master," said Tom quietly.

"And I will too," said Legree, "if you don't tell me where those girls are."

Tom said nothing.

"Do you hear me?" shouted Legree. "Answer me!"

"I don't have nothing to say, Master," said Tom slowly and clearly.

"Are you trying to say that you don't know where they are?" asked Legree.

Tom said nothing.

"Open up! Do you know where they are?"

"I know things, Master; but I can't tell nothing. I can die, but that's all."

Legree moved his face up to where it was almost touching Tom's and said angrily, "Listen, Tom, you think because I let you go before, I don't mean it this time. But I'm telling you that I've counted up what I must pay to do this and I plan to do it this time. I always backed down before, but this time I'll break you or I'll kill you, one or the other."

Tom looked up and said, "Master, if you was sick or dying, and I could help you by dying myself, I would. It's what Jesus did for me. But don't destroy your own spirit by doing this. It's going to hurt you more than me, because my problems will be over. If you do this, yours will never end!"

These were words that Legree had not planned for, and he had no answer for a time. God was making one last call to him to change his life. But it was only a few seconds before the devil returned to him worse than ever. He hit Tom with all the strength that he could put behind his stone hard fist.

It is too much to tell what followed as they tied Tom's hands to a strong horizontal piece of timber over his head and started their dirty work. But through it all there was beside Tom One who had changed the instrument used to kill Himself into a sign of love for all the world.

The devil was there too, encouraging Tom to give up. But Tom's brave, true heart was holding close to the One who can never be moved. Like his true Master, he was going to die so that others could live. And he was going to do it without a word of hate for the ones who were sending him to heaven. They listened as he prayed to Jesus between each hit.

At last Tom opened one eye and looked up at his master. "I forgive you, with all my heart!" he said, and he fainted dead away.

"I think he's finished," said Sambo, who was touched by Tom's loving spirit.

"I think he is too," said Legree, stepping forward to look at him. "Yes, he is! He didn't give in, but I did close his mouth at last."

But Tom was not dead.

His words and prayers had touched the hearts of the two Blacks, and the minute Legree was out the door, they cut Tom down and tried to call him back to life.

"What we did was very bad!" said Sambo. "Master will have to pay for it, but I'm afraid we will too."

They washed his cuts and made a rough bed from some dirty cotton that was lying around the room. One of them went to the house and asked for some whiskey. He returned with it for Tom.

"Oh, Tom, we've been very wrong to you!" said Quimbo.

"I forgive you," said Tom weakly.

"Tom, you said Jesus was standing by you tonight. Tell us about him. Who is he?"

The question gave Tom new strength. He said in a few words that Jesus loved them and died for them and could change them.

The two men who had become the lowest of the slaves on Legree's farm cried like babies.

"Why didn't I listen before?" said Sambo. "I do believe. I can't help it! Jesus, please help us to change!"

"I'd be happy to go through it all again if it would bring you to Christ," said Tom. "Oh, God, give me these last two hearts, I pray!"

And his prayer was answered that night.

QUESTIONS ON PART 37

1. Who had stayed back from looking for Cassy and Emmeline? (page 278)
2. What did Emmeline say to make her spirit go into Cassy's heart? (page 279)
3. What was one thing that Sambo and Quimbo agreed on? (page 279)
4. Did Tom know where Cassy and Emmeline were? (page 279)
5. Tom said that Legree would be hurting himself more than he would be hurting Tom if Legree killed him. How was that true? (page 280)
6. Whose hearts had been touched by Tom's words and prayers as he was being whipped to death? (page 281)
7. What prayer was answered on the night that Tom was whipped? (page 282)

38. The Young Master

Two days later, a young man arrived at Legree's house, driving a light wagon. He jumped from the wagon and asked where the owner was. It was young George Shelby.

But first we must back up a little.

The letter from Miss Ophelia to Mrs. Shelby had been very slow in arriving at the Shelby's. By the time the Shelby's had received it, Tom was hard at work for Simon Legree.

Mrs. Shelby was sad about the news that Tom had been sold, but she could not do a thing to help at that time. Her husband was very sick, and she was trying to nurse him through the sickness. Master George, who was by then a tall young man, was her only help in running the farm. Miss Ophelia had sent the name of the lawyer who worked for the St. Clares, and Mrs. Shelby had sent a letter off to him, to learn more about where Tom was.

Mr. Shelby died a few days later. George and his mother had their hands full for months trying to clear up all the business that Mr. Shelby had started. Mrs. Shelby was serious about paying back all that they owed, and she promised never to borrow money again. When all of this was happening, they received a letter from the lawyer for Marie St. Clare, saying that he knew nothing about Tom's new master. He said that Tom had been sold at a very big sale, and that he had received the money for the sale, but that was all he knew.

Both George and Mrs. Shelby were not happy to leave it there, so when he had some business to do for his mother in New Orleans some six months later, he stayed on to ask anyone and everyone for news as to where Tom was.

After looking for a few months, by accident George talked to a man who knew of Tom being sold to Simon Legree. George then learned where Legree lived, and left that same day with money in his pocket to buy Tom back.

Legree received George on the verandah in his own rough way.

"I understand," said the young man, "that you have a slave here named Tom. He came from New Orleans last year. He used to work for my father, and I came to see if I could buy him back."

Legree's eyes turned dark, and he said, "Yes, I did buy such a man, and I have had nothing but problems with him. He never would obey me, and he encouraged two of my girls to run away. Said so himself, but said he wouldn't tell me where they were. I gave him the worst whipping I ever gave a nigger and he still wouldn't tell. I think he's trying to die on me now."

"Where is he?" asked George. "Let me see him." His cheeks were red and his eyes were like fire, but he was holding his anger in.

"He's in the old room around back," said a boy who was holding George's horse.

Legree kicked the boy and shouted at him, but George turned without saying a word, and ran to the room.

Tom had been lying there for two days, not in much pain, because most of the time he was not awake. His strong body was fighting against letting go of his spirit. Through those two days, many people had come to him secretly – one by one – with words of thanks and love. They had little to give, but their cup of cold water came from full hearts.

Many who came had not received Tom's Jesus before. But as they cried over him, they opened their hearts to Him now. In answer to the question that one old black woman had asked of Tom when he first arrived, these people could now say, "Jesus came here in the heart of one man, and he lives on in the hearts of each of us. Where the love of God is, there is Jesus. He is alive and he is here in this lowest of all places as much as he is in any church building on earth!"

Cassy had bravely left her safe place in the middle of the first night to learn secretly about what Tom went through for her, and she was one of the first to cry over him and then, for the first time in many years, to pray.

When George walked into the room, his heart was sick.

"Oh, Uncle Tom!" he cried. "What did they do to you?"

Bending over his poor friend, George's eyes filled with tears. "Please talk to me, Uncle Tom. It's Master George. Please talk to me."

"Master George?" said Tom, opening his eyes and talking in a very weak voice. "Master George?"

Tom's mind was not clear and it was some time before he fully understood what was happening.

"Oh, thank God!" he said. "So they didn't forget. I lived to see it."

"I've come to buy you and take you back to Kentucky," said George. "You can't die now!"

"Oh, Master George, you're too late," said Tom. "Jesus is coming to take me away, and heaven's a lot better than Kentucky."

"Don't die, Uncle Tom. You'll break my heart, you poor man!"

"I was a poor man, Master George. But now I'm at the door of heaven, about to become a king with Jesus. Oh, Master George, this is the best day of my life."

George could not believe how strong Tom's faith was, and how much he wanted to go.

Tom touched his hand and said, "You mustn't tell Chloe about this here. You just tell her that you saw me going off to heaven, and that I couldn't stay for no one. Tell her Jesus has been with me through it all, and he made it all light and easy. And tell the baby and the boys to follow me. And give my love to Master and Mrs. I feel like I love everyone, Master George. What a good thing it is to be a Christian!"

At this time Legree walked up to the door, looked in, and then turned to go.

"That old devil!" said George. "He'll pay one day."

"Don't be angry with him," said Tom. "He has enough problems without us hating him. God would forgive him now if he'd only ask for it. But he hasn't hurt me at all. He only opened the door to heaven for me."

Tom had used all his dying strength to say these last few words, and now his body turned loose of his spirit. His head dropped; his eyes closed; and a smile on his face said that he was with Jesus.

George looked down on him without saying a word. He was the closest he had ever been to God, and Tom's words went through his head again and again. "What a thing it is to be a Christian!"

George turned to see Legree standing in the door. Something in Tom's spirit stopped George from saying what he wanted to say to Legree. His only feeling was to get away from such a man without having to talk to him.

Looking at Legree, and pointing to the body, he said, "You will have no more use for him. What should I pay you for his body? I'll take it away and bury it."

"I don't sell dead niggers," said Legree. "You take him."

"Boys," said George to two or three slaves who had come to look in at the door, "help me lift him up and carry him to my wagon. And get me a shovel."

One ran for a shovel, and the others helped George carry the body.

George did not talk to or look at Legree, and Legree did not say a word about George taking his slaves to help him bury Tom.

George put his coat in the wagon and the body on his coat. Then he turned to Legree.

"I'm not finished with you," he said. "I'll be going to the police and telling them about this killing."

"Do it!" said Legree, who returned to life with the smell of a fight. "And who will you get to say that I did it?"

George quickly saw the truth of what Legree was saying. There was not a white person on the place; and courts in the South do not take the word of a black person.

"But why worry about it? It's only a nigger!" said Legree.

That was more than George could take. With one angry hit he knocked Legree flat on his face before getting into the wagon and driving away with two of Legree's workers.

They stopped at a little hill not far from the farm to bury Tom.

"You can go back now," said George when they were finished, giving a coin to each of the slaves. But they did not leave.

"If young master would please buy us –," said one.

"We would work ever so hard for him!" said the other.

"It's very hard here, Master," said the first. "Do, please, buy us!"

"I can't – I can't!" said George sadly, making a movement to tell them to go.

The poor slaves walked sadly back toward Legree's house.

George dropped to his knees on the dirt that Tom was buried under. "God, I promise you here and now, that I will give my life to stop the buying and selling of slaves in this country.

QUESTIONS ON PART 38

1. What had stopped Mrs. Shelby from acting on the letter from Miss Ophelia at the time that it arrived from New Orleans, telling her that Tom was to be sold? (page 283)
2. What did George and Mrs. Shelby need to do for months after Mr. Shelby died? (page 283)
3. In the end, how did George find out who Tom's new owner was? (page 283)
4. What had people been doing secretly for the two days that Tom had been lying on the floor in the back room? (page 284)
5. What did Tom not want George to tell Chloe? (page 285)
6. What good thing did Tom say that Legree did for him? (page 285)
7. What did George do when Legree said, "It's only a nigger"? (page 286)

39. Endings

Around this time, there was talk of spirits walking around Legree's house in the middle of the night. It was not easy to find the truth of it all, because most of what was said was only in whispers. Most people closed or covered their eyes when they saw something that looked like a spirit, so that what one person saw in his or her head was often very different from what others saw. But they all agreed that the spirits were dressed in white.

Legree turned to drinking heavily. The night after Tom's body was carried away, he went to town to drink, and it was very late when he returned. He locked his door, and went to bed.

How foolish to lock a door against spirits that live in the very heart of the person doing the locking!

But Legree locked the door and the windows, put a chair against the door, and a candle at the end of his bed. He put two small guns beside the candle, and then went to sleep.

But in his sleep he dreamed that the spirit of his mother was coming into his room. He could hear spirits crying out in pain. He was half awake and could hear someone in his room. The door was opening, and he could not move. A hand put out the candle. Then a freezing cold hand touched him, and a voice whispered, "Come!" And then it left. He jumped out of bed and pulled at the door. It was closed and locked. And Legree fainted.

After this Legree could not stop drinking. He did not eat, and he was soon very sick – believed to be dying.

It is interesting that the morning after the night when Legree had his bad dream, the house door was open. Some of the servants said that they saw two spirits dressed in white flying down the road away from the farm the night before.

The sun was almost up when Cassy and Emmeline stopped to rest by some trees close to the town. They had dropped the white blankets that they used when leaving the farm, and Cassy was dressed in black now, like a woman from France.

She knew the language of that country well. She had on a black hat with thin black material that comes down in front of the face. Emmeline was to be her servant. They stopped at a place close to town to buy two or three suitcases, and asked for a boy to help her carry them to the hotel. When she arrived at the hotel, she looked like she was a serious traveller.

The first person she saw at the hotel was George Shelby. She had looked at him from her hole at the top of the house, and she had watched as he knocked Legree flat. She had learned from her movements around the place on the night that he left, that he was Tom's old master. And she was happy to hear that he was waiting for the same boat that she was waiting for.

Cassy did a good job of acting her part as a woman from France. But then, people do not ask many questions when there is money to be made, and she was generous with the money that she had lifted from Legree's desk.

The boat arrived just on dark. George helped Cassy on, and helped her to get a good room. Cassy stayed in her room for the whole trip, saying that she was sick.

Because of this, and because he was going in the same direction, George agreed to help her get a room on the next boat when they came to the Mississippi River. The three of them then – George, Cassy and Emmeline – safely moved from one boat to the other without anyone asking questions.

Cassy said she was feeling much better when they were safely on their way, and she had her meals out with the other people travelling on the boat. Cassy and Emmeline travelled as far north as the boat would take them, and ended up in Canada as did George and Eliza Harris.

* * *

George Shelby had sent a very short letter to his mother when they changed boats in New Orleans. He tried a few times to write about what had happened, but in the end he could not find the words. He sent only one line, saying what day he would arrive.

At the Shelby house there was a lot of movement through the day as people prepared for George's return that night. But now everything was ready and waiting. The best dishes were on the table, and old Aunt Chloe had finished the cooking. She was wearing a new dress and a clean white scarf around her hair. She came to look again at the table, but it was only to give herself a reason to talk with her mistress.

"Master George will be happy to be back," she said. "I put his place by the fire where he likes it. Oh, look at that! Sally didn't get out the best sugar bowl, the little new one that Master George gave to Mrs. I'll get it out.

"And did Mrs. hear news from Master George?"

"Only a line, saying that he'll be here tonight," said Mrs. Shelby, who was worried because George had said nothing about Tom. But she said nothing to worry Aunt Chloe.

"He didn't say nothing about my old man?" asked Chloe, who was moving the glasses around on the table.

"No, he said he'll tell us everything when he arrives."

"Just like Master George. Always likes to say things himself. Writing's too slow."

Mrs. Shelby smiled weakly.

"My old man won't know the boys. And Polly's the biggest girl now. She's out at the cabin now watching the cakes. I cooked just the things he likes best. Same as I give him the morning he left. Oh, what a day that was!"

Mrs. Shelby could feel a heavy weight on her heart.

And then they both heard the sound of wagon wheels.

"It's Master George!" said Chloe, looking out the window.

Mrs. Shelby ran to meet her son as he ran up the verandah steps. Aunt Chloe looked out into the dark for a sign of Tom.

"Aunt Chloe," said George, taking her black hands in his. "I would give all that I have to have him here, but he's living in a better country now."

Mrs. Shelby cried out, but Aunt Chloe said nothing. They were back inside the house before Chloe let her feelings out.

"Just as I knew it would be," she said. "You sold him and you killed him!" And she walked proudly out of the room. Mrs. Shelby ran after her, and, taking one of her hands, she pulled Chloe down softly into a chair. She dropped to her knees in front of her.

"My poor, good Chloe!" she said.

Chloe leaned her head on her mistress' shoulder and cried loudly. "Oh, Mrs.! It was wrong of me to say that, I know. It's just my heart's broken, that's all!"

"I know it is," said Mrs. Shelby as she cried with Chloe. "I can't fix your broken heart, but I know that Jesus can."

When the crying died down, George sat down with the women to tell them what Tom had said to him when he was dying. He talked of Tom's happiness to be with Jesus, and of his love for them.

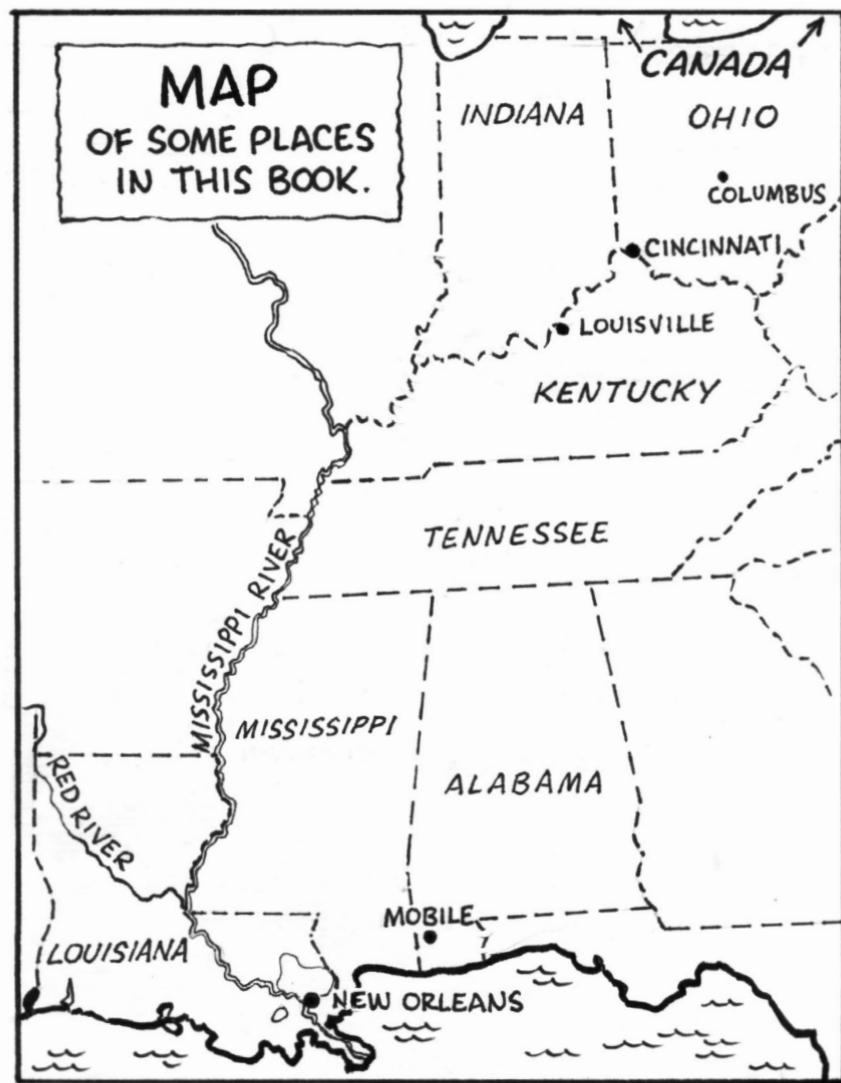
About a month after this, George Shelby called together all of the servants for a meeting. At the meeting, George gave to each servant a paper saying that they were free. There were a lot of shouts and tears that day, as George read out each paper for each servant.

Many said they didn't want to leave, and George answered that he didn't want to lose them. But they could stay on and be paid for their work from now on. It wouldn't be much, because they did not have much money left after paying off all that they owed; but he would be happy to work together with them at making a good life for them all. He and his mother promised to teach them all that they could to help them to be good Christians.

"One more thing," said George. "You all remember good old Uncle Tom? It was seeing him die that made me ask my mother to do this. We will never own another slave. So when you think of how good it is to be free, you can pay something for it in kindness to his wife and children. And each time you see Uncle Tom's cabin, pray that God will help you to be as true and honest a Christian as he was."

QUESTIONS ON PART 39

1. What are four things that Legree did to protect himself against bad spirits when he was sleeping? (page 288)
2. When the servants said they saw two spirits dressed in white flying down the road away from the farm, who do you think they really saw? (pages 288 and 289)
3. Who did Cassy and Emmeline meet at the hotel in the town? (page 289)
4. Where did Cassy and Emmeline finish up? (page 289)
5. Why was Mrs. Shelby worried about George's return? (page 290)
6. What did Chloe say in anger to Mrs. Shelby when she learned that Uncle Tom was dead? (page 291)
7. What did George and Mrs. Shelby do for all the servants about a month after he returned from burying Tom? (page 291)
8. What two things did George promise to do for the slaves that wanted to stay on with them? (page 291)



List of New Words

Below are some words that you will need to know to read this book:

abolitionist (n) person who was against people owning other people as workers.

afternoon (n) part of the day between the middle of the day and when it is dark.

alone (adj; adv) with no other.

ant (n) small insect that lives in groups.



anyone (pro) any person.

arrive (v) come to the place where you were going.

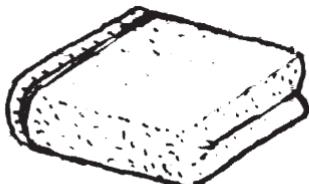
barrel (n) big round container.



became (v) had become.

Black (n) person with dark skin.

blanket (n) heavy cloth to keep a person warm in bed.



bleed (v) lose blood from a cut.

blow (v) move or push with wind.

borrow (v) use a thing for a time, that is not yours.

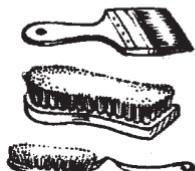
brave (adj) not afraid of pain.

breakfast (n) morning meal.

breast (n) part of a woman's body where a baby gets milk.

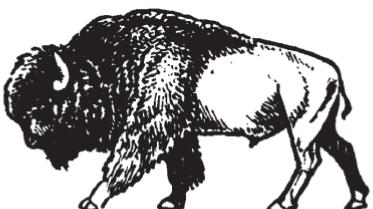
brought (v) was bringing.

brush (n; v)
small broom for painting, cleaning, or for hair; use a brush.



bucket (n) container for carrying water.

buffalo (n) big wild cow.



business (n) company; shop; job; work.

cabin (n) small timber house.

cage (n)

prison
for an
animal.



call (v)
tell a
person
to come.

came (v) was coming.

candle (n) string with
solid oil around it, that
you burn slowly to give
light.



Catholic (adj) of a very
big church from Italy.

cent (n) small coin.

chalk (n) soft white writing
stone.

cheek (n) side of the face
below the eye.



cherry (n)

small red
fruit with
one big
seed.

cigar (n) cylinder of dry leaves,
that people smoke.

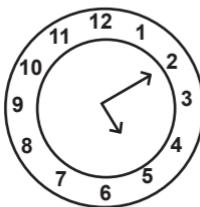


cliff (n) high, vertical side of
land.

clock (n)

instrument
that mea-
sures time.

coach (n)
closed vehi-
cle that can
carry many people.



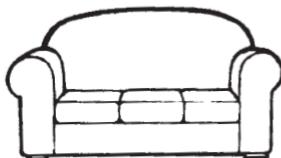
cob (n) cylinder that corn
grows on.



comfortable (adj) with no pain
or other difficult quality.

container (n) thing made to
hold other things inside it.

couch (n) soft, wide chair.



cough (v; n) push air from
the lungs with a noise in the
throat; this noise.

cripple (n; v) person who is
not able to move well; make
crippled.

crow (n) big black bird.

curtain (n) cloth that hangs
in front of a window or other
thing.

death (n) end of life.

desk (n) table for writing.

diamond (n) very hard, expensive stone like glass.



doll (n) toy shaped like a person.

dollar (n) measure of money in America, Australia, and some other countries.

drawer (n) box with a handle, that you pull out of a piece of furniture.

dream (v; n) see in the brain when sleeping; pictures in the brain when sleeping.

drown (v) die under water.

even (adv) showing a stronger thing; too.

ever (adv) at any time.

every (adj) all.

everyone (pro) all people.

everything (pro) all things.

faint (v; adj) collapse to sleep; feeling weak, like you will collapse to sleep.

faith (n) believing a thing.

February (n) second month of the year.

fell (v) was falling.

fire-iron (n) tool for moving coals in a fire.



fireplace (n) place for a fire to burn in a room.

fist (n) hand with the fingers closed.



flood (n) too much rain covering the ground.



fly (n; v) flying insect with two wings; move through air without touching the ground.

forever (adv) for all time.

forget (v) not remember.

France (n) country in Europe.

freeze (v) change to ice.

fun (n) thing you do that is interesting, but not serious.

funny (adj) making people smile or laugh.



gave (v) was giving.

glove (n) covering for the hand.

gold (n) yellow expensive metal.



goodbye (interj) friendly word you say when leaving a person.

government (n) leaders in a country; the rules that leaders in a country make.

gravy (n) thick liquid, often made from meat, that you put on other food.

had (v) was having; word to go with another action word to show that it happened before the time in the past that you were talking about.

handcuffs (n) two metal circles with a chain between them, for locking hands together.



hard (adj) difficult; with no feeling; cruel; not easily bending; solid; strong.

heard (v) was hearing.

heaven (n) beautiful happy place where God lives.

hee-hee (interj) laughing sound.

hell (n) place where the spirits of bad dead people go.

hold (v) go around and stop from moving or falling.

honest (adj) not hiding the truth.

honey (n) sweet, thick, sticky liquid that bees make.

horizontal (adj) from side to side, like the line where the sky meets water on an ocean.

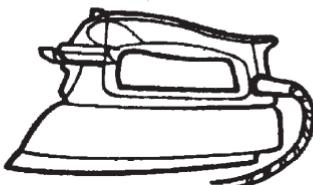
hotel (n) a building where travellers stop to sleep or drink. (see **pub**)

hunger (n) **hungry** (adj) feeling that you need food.

inch (n) short measure of distance. 

Indian (n) person from the first people to live in America; person from India.

iron (n; v) tool for making clothes smooth; use this tool.



Jerusalem, New (n) country from heaven, that will come with Jesus when he returns to earth.

juice (n) liquid from meat, vegetables, or fruit.

just (adv) very; with no more.

key (n) tool for opening and closing a lock.

kindness (n) action that is kind.



kitchen (n) room where food is cooked.

knew (v) was knowing.

knit (v) make cloth by joining bends together on a long piece of string.

knock (v; n) hit against, often on a door; this action or sound.

ladder (n) tool with steps.

lake (n) big piece of water with land around it.



lantern (n) light that you carry, with glass sides to protect a fire inside it.

law (n) rule.

lawyer (n)

person who studies rules.

lean (v) pull to the side, from being straight up and down.

left (v; adj; adv) was leaving; to or on the side of the body that the heart is on.

let (v) not try to stop an action from happening.



letter (n) words on paper that you send to another person; one of many shapes we use to make words.

lie (v; n) rest on; say a thing that you know is not true; saying that is not true.

light (adj; n; v) not heavy; not dark; quality from the sun or a fire, that helps us to see; thing that gives light; bring light to; start a thing burning.

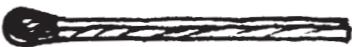
lolly (n) very sweet food.

lot (n) group; many things or much of.

madam (n) name for a good, important, or rich woman.

master (n) leader of workers.

match (n) small stick that burns quickly if you rub one end of it.



mate (n) person you are married to; friend.

material (n) cloth; chemical; any thing you use to make something.

mattress (n) soft part of a bed.

meal (n) food you eat at a special time of the day.

mean (v; adj) want people to understand by a saying or action; cruel; greedy.

middle (n) place that is an equal distance from ends or sides.

midnight (n) perfect middle of the night.

mile (n) measure of distance that is about how far a person can walk in fifteen minutes.

mind (n; v) thinking part of the body; what you think; watch.

mine (adj) that I own.

minute (n) measure of time that is one of 60 equal parts of an hour.

miracle (n) difficult thing that cannot happen without help from God.

mirror (n) glass that shows pictures of things near it.

Miss (n) name for a woman who is not married.

missionary (n) person who goes to another country to tell people about Jesus.

mistress (n) name for a woman who owns people.

mosquito
(n) small flying insect that bites



people and drinks their blood.

Mr. (n) name for a man.

Mrs. (n) name for a married woman.

mud (n) soft, wet dirt.

muscle (n) strong part of the body that moves the bones.



necklace (n) string of stones or other things that you wear around your neck.



needle

(n) thin metal stick with a sharp end.

never (adv) at no time.

news (n) stories about things that were happening a short time in the past.

next (adj) first after this.

nice (adj) easy to like.

nigger (n) bad name for a person with dark skin.

nurse (n) person who helps sick people.

observation (n) looking at; what you see when looking at.

oh (interj) word to show surprise or other strong feeling.

okay (adj; interj) right; yes.

only (adv) being not much.

onto (prep) on; moving to be on.

overnight (adj; adv) from one day to the day after it.

owe (v) need to pay for a thing you were receiving.

paid (v) was paying.



palm (n) big leaf from a tree with no branches; tree that this leaf comes from.

pan (n) metal container for cooking.



pattern (n) shapes together in a plan, often with the same shapes over and over again.



pen (n) writing tool that uses ink.



piano (n) musical instrument with small hammers that hit strings in a big box.



pie (n) meat or fruit cooked inside a wheat paste skin.

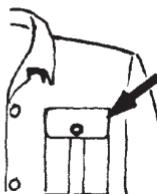


pillow (n) soft, thick shape to put your head on when sleeping.

pink (adj) of a light red colour.

pirate (n) robber who sails in a ship and robs other ships.

please (v; interj) make a person happy; humble word to ask for a thing.



pocket (n) small bag that is part of some clothes.

prayer (n) words you pray.

preach (v) teach important things about God.

prepare (v) do an action for a future need.

promise (v) say seriously that you will do a thing.

pub (n) shop where friends go to drink beer together.

purple (adj) of a red-blue colour, like the colour of some grapes.

race (n; v) competition to be first; go quickly to be first.

ran (v) was running.

rat (n) animal like a big mouse.



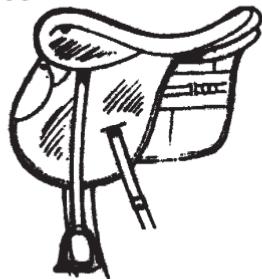
ready (adj) with all parts right or fixed for doing or using now.

Revelation (n) last book of the Bible.

ring (v; n) make a sound with a bell; circle of expensive metal that you often wear around a finger.

robe (n) long loose coat.

saddle (n) thing you sit on on a horse.



sale (n) special time for selling; action of selling.

sat (v) was sitting.

saw (v) was seeing.

scarf (n) piece of cloth you wear around your neck or head.

scratch (v) rub skin with your nails or with another sharp thing.

second (n) very short measure of time.

selfish (adj) loving yourself more than others.

senator (n) person in a special group of leaders for a country.

sent (v) was sending.

servant (n) person who works for you, often in your house.

shoulder (n) top of the arm.

shovel (n) tool for digging and lifting.

sign (n) words or pictures for many people to read or see; action to tell a thing.

silver (n) expensive white metal like gold.

slave (n) person you own, who works for you.

snake (n) long, thin animal with no legs.



so (adv; adj; conj) in the way you were saying; as; very; too; because of this; after that.

sold (v) was selling.

someone (pro) a person.

something (pro) a thing.

soon (adv) after a short time.



sour (adj) with a sharp taste or smell, like alcohol or lemons.

spend (v) (of money) use it.

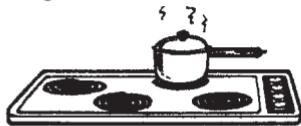
spit (n; v) liquid in the mouth; push with force out of the mouth.

still (adv) without changing or stopping.

stitch (v) join cloth, using a needle and thread.

storm (n) strong wind, heavy rain, or much lightning.

stove (n) instrument for making heat, to cook food.



such (adv) of this quality, way, or measure.

suitcase

(n) container for carrying clothes.

summer (n) hottest time of the year.

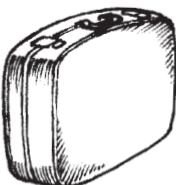
Sunday (n) first day of the week.

tear (n) water from the eyes.

test (v; n) action to find how good a thing is; do this action.

thank (v) tell God or a person that you are happy for a kind or good action.

then (adv) at that time.



third (adj; n) coming after two others; thing coming after two others.

thirsty (adj) wanting or needing water.

thread (n) very thin string.

tight (adj) close together; with no movement.

tobacco (n) big leaves that people smoke. (see **cigar**)

today (n; adv) this day; on this day.

toilet (n) place where you push liquids and solids from your body.

token (n) thing you use like money.

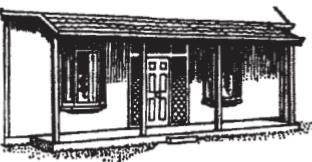
tomorrow (n; adv) day after now; on the day after now.

tonight (n; adv) this night; on this night.

uncle (n) brother of your mother or father; older man who is a very close friend.

understood (v) was understanding.

until (prep; conj) up to the time of.

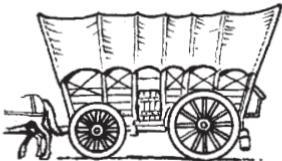


verandah (n) room without some walls, that is on the outside of a house.

vine (n) plant with branches like ropes.

visit (v; n) go to see a person or place, and stay there for a short time; time when you do this.

wagon (n) flat, open vehicle for carrying things.



wardrobe (n) big cabinet that people hang clothes in.

Washington, George (n) first leader of America.

waste (v) use too much; use for no good reason.

watch (n) small clock that you carry with you, on your wrist or in your pocket.

web (n)
pattern
of thin
strings
that a
spider
makes.

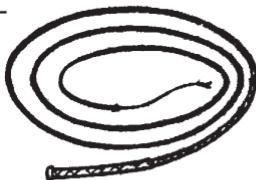


weight (n) how heavy a thing is; heavy thing.

welcome (interj; n; v; adj) word to say you are happy to have a person visit you; happy receiving; receive with happiness; that you are happy to receive.

went (v) was going.

whip (n; v) rope with a handle for hitting; hit with a rope or stick.



whiskey (n) strong drink with much alcohol in it.

whisper (v; n) talk in a very quiet or secret way; very quiet talking.

whistle (n; v) loud, high sound from pushing air through a small hole; toy made to give this sound; make this sound.



why (adv) for what reason.

willing (adj) happy to do a thing.

wives (n) more than one wife.

world (n) earth; all countries; most people and their ways of acting or thinking.

worst (adj) most bad.

worth (adj; n) equal to; good enough for; how good a thing is; measure of money that is equal to a thing.

yesterday (n; adv) the day before now; on the day before now.

