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### The Caring Runaway

I'm sitting in my room, the roars and thuds coming from the dining room startled me. Moments later I hear footsteps come up the stairs and quietly my bedroom door creaks open. I see Marita, my house slave comes in and kisses my forehead.

"I'm being hung," she says in a hoarse voice.

I can't breath. What did Marita do? I got up with anger. She looks at me and sees the broken and madness in my eyes. She grabs my arm,

"No," she says quietly so my parents wouldn't hear.

3 weeks later....

I'm still furious about the decision that my parents made about Marita. The very next day we got a new house slave. "Slave," that word hurt. All the insults that my parents and people say about *them* made my heart sting. I can't even imagine how those words affect them. I think of them more like of help or maybe a close friend. Not my property or a minion.

I'm on the edge of my bed thinking, until I hear screams and racket from the Jenkins house. The Jenkins are our neighbors and they are a little weird and insane. I raced downstairs and soon I was outside of their gate.

"Oh my gracious!" Ms.Jenkins squeals "She is perfect" she says with thick accent.

I looked at the small, caramel skin little girl. I walked towards their front door, and approached the girl.

“Hi, my name is Sammy, what’s your name?” I say to the small girl. The girl looks at Mr. Jenkins searching for permission to speak. He nods, giving her permission to speak to me.

“Raquel” she says in the softest voice I’ve ever heard.

I smile, Raquel was a beautiful name, it was cute and fitted for her. Suddenly Ms. Jenkins snapped her attention on Raquel

“Requel? What an awful name, your name is now Annabelle.” Mrs. Jenkins sternly demanded.

I was disgusted, Raquel was a way prettier name than *Annabelle*. I looked at Requel and then to Mrs. and Mr. Jenkins.

“It’s always a pleasure,” I nod my head and skipped off.

When I approach my living room, I see my mother. I didn’t want to talk to her or even, look at her. I start walking upstairs to go to my room until I hear her speak.

“Hello Sammy, lunch will be done in a few minutes.” she said in a persist voice.

I gave a disgusted look and went up to my room. I walk in my room and looked outside my bedroom window. I see Raquel folding clothes in the backyard. I smile and tap the window to get her attention. I wave and she give me a sad smile.

2 weeks later...

I was sitting under the red oak tree drawing. I was deep in my thoughts and then I heard yelling from Mrs. Jenkins. I run towards the house and enter without a knock. When I approach I stopped and couldn’t believe. I saw glass covering the entrance hallway and Raquel was in the

middle of it, blood covered her arms. I run towards her and pick her up. I see Ms. Jenkins crying with two empty bottles besides her. She was drunk. I told Raquel to come to my house.

“Are you okay?” I say to Raquel.

“No, my arms hurt terribly.”

I nod my head, I feel so bad for her. I always knew Ms. Jenkins was a total drunk. I know what happened to the Jenkins last slave and I don't want that to happen to poor Raquel. I took her to my house to wash her up.

“It's ok,” I say not knowing if she was going to ok.

Grabbing some medicine and a wet cloth I clean her up. I offer her to take a warm shower. After she showered I gave her some bread, cheese, and water. I was happy I helped her, I made her day and that made me feel good. She picked up my sketchbook and observed. When she observed my sketchbook, which had many of my deepest secrets but in image form, she smiled

“You want to-” I was interrupted by my door vigorously opening.

“GET OUT NOW!” My Mother shouts and rushes over to me and hugs me.

“Leave her alone, she didn't do anything!” I can not acknowledge my mother right now or anytime. She just doesn't understand. I look over to Raquel and she leaves.

After that situation my mom says she wants to have dinner with the Jenkins.

When my mother and I prepare for dinner she says, “I want you to behave and don't talk to that little negro girl,” she says sternly. I turn to her and smirk.

“You don't even know her. on't assume I am going to take this conversation seriously,” I say to her, I'm so sick of her. I walk away and go to my place. When I approach the tree, I hear sobs. I rush over and see Raquel.

I gasp, “Are you ok?” I say softly, so I don't worry her.

“No, does look like I'm ok?,” she turns around so I can see her face. When she turned around my heart broke. She had a fat lip that is bleeding and an eye that is purple. I was angry, NO, beyond angry. I got up and grabbed her arm. We rushed to my room and I packed my bag with clothes. Then ran to the kitchen got medicine and prepared a bag with food. When I went back to my room I say to Requel.

“Do you have everything you need?” I say quietly.

She nods her head and we head to the Jenkins. When we're outside she stops and points to their backyard. We walk in and she goes towards a broken shed without a roof. Once I realize this is her home I walk in too. We enter the broken down shed. It's cold and I see a little spot in the corner where there's a blanket and a flat pillow. My heart was broken. She walks towards her pillow and pulls out a little brown book. I look at her and nod. We walk towards the river and when we get there, there is four boats. I look at Requel and grin. She nods so, we rush towards the boat and start pedaling.

We've been pedaling for hours. We come to an island and rest for the night. We planned to start up again at dusk. It was hard to sleep because I'm used of my bed with laced pillows and thick blankets. When I turned to Requel, she's sleeping like a baby. It took me a long time to sleep, but I got some sleep.

I wake up to Requel shaking me. I chuckle as I realize she really wants to go. Once I got everything in the bag, I pull out two apples and water. I hand her an apple and water. I noticed the way Re-quel was eating and she devoured it. I start laughing.

“Are you hungry?” I ask amused.

“Yeah, these are good,” she says.

5 days later....

We've been traveling by water and sneaking onto carriages. I stole a lot of money from my mom, I needed the money for good purposes. Raquel and I are planning to go to Canada, so she can be free. We entered a little store to stock up on some more food. The man running the store seemed a little off. He did a whistle, a subtle and light whistle. I recognized it, it was a whistle to acknowledge an abolitionist. Abolitionists are people who disagree with slavery. I went up to the table the man was standing at. When I went closer I saw the man's face. He didn't have hair and he was overweight. When I approached him I didn't know what to say or do. I whistled the same tune he did and then he looked up.

"Are you an abolitionist?" his voice was raspy.

I nod, still not knowing what to say. Then he came up to me grabbed my arm,

"Are you off your way Canada?" He said excited I will say yes.

My eyes grew bigger, maybe he can help us.

"Y...yes I am, can you help us?"

He gave me a smile and went to the back of the store and gave us permission to come along. Raquel and I went with the man.

"My name is Michael." he said walking toward the back.

When we reached the back Michael opens a rusty metal door. We're outside in an alley, I see a wagon with two horses. Michael lifted up the cloth hiding the back of the wagon.

When he did, I see five other slaves. I smiled, I looked at Raquel. She is excited.

"Well are you going to hop on or what?" Michael says.

Raquel hops on and I follow. Michael holds up his hand.

"Whoa whoa, you can't come." he said blocking my entrance.

I was puzzled, how will I know if Requel can make it safely to Canada? How will I know this whole thing is a scam? All these things were going through my head.

“It's ok, shell be in Canada in two days.” Michael sternly explained.

I nod, I wanted to come and take care of all the freed slaves in Canada. I didn't want to go home to my mother and father.

Part 2 coming soon.....