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## **A Boat Called FREEDOM**

As chains rattled against my neck, I stole a glance at my little sister. Although she was seven years old, Tirana was still forced to work for our master. Every black has a master, but Tirana and I were stuck with Master Congol. Master Congol was old and blind, but he had the same and if not worse temper than all the other slave owners did. I guess it was just fate that brought Tirana and I to Master's doorstep. Of all houses I could have run to, with baby sister Tirana in my arms, I went up to Master Congol's. Our parents died when Tirana was just three months old and I was five. We were sent to the Mangonlo's house but the mistress kicked us out of there because we couldn't stir a boiling pot of water placed over the fire.

"Is everything alright Marita?" Mrs. Tombouron asked. She was as old as Master Congol but so much nicer.

"I'm fine." I said and continued to scrub the dirty cake pan I had been scrubbing.

My sister was sweeping the corner of the kitchen when her head cocked to one side. My sister has a keen sense of hearing. She could hear a pin drop at the bottom of a deep lake. But Tirana's face was full of fear like she'd seen the ghost of Mama.

"Master Congol!" she whispered.

All the slaves in the kitchen quickly put their brooms and dustpans into the storage cupboard and ran to the front. Mrs. Tombouron opened the door before the master could knock. Then she quickly curtseyed daintily and took the man's coat. Master Congol was tall and thin. He had a shiny bald head and a beard as white as the winter snow in Alaska. All of a sudden, a beautiful white woman walked through the door. Her hair was as gold as God's angels. The way she moved made Tirana stare.

"Marita!" Mrs. Tombouron whispered to me.

The beautiful woman was staring at me as if I was some kind of fool. I quickly stepped forward and took off her white fur coat. Then, she slapped me 'round the face. White finger burns streaked my cheek that felt as hot as the fire burning in the kitchen.

"What lazy slaves you have Mr. Congol." The lady said.

"I know Ms. Antoinette." Master said. "You there," he said pointing to me. "Go tend to the fire in the living room."

As I left the front entrance, I noticed that the window in the parlor was open. An idea struck me. The window frame was just wide enough for me to fit through. Then I noticed a parade in the streets. The parade was lead by slaves. If Tirana and I could just...

"Tirana," I whispered to my sister when we were alone together three minutes later.  
"Follow me!"

Tirana never disobeyed me so she set down the plate she had been cleaning and followed me out through the window and into the parade of slaves. We blended in with another group of girls about our age.

"What's going on?" I asked the girl next to me.

"It's a slave break-out," she replied, casually. "All the slaves are independent now and our mistresses and masters can't get us back into the slavery business."

"Who's leading this?" I asked.

"A man named Martin." The girl replied.

The parade led us to a big ship with the name FREEDOOM written on the side. I was one of the few blacks who could read. I was glad I could read too. FREEDOM let us board and set off once we were all on. Mrs. Tombouron boarded too and she smiled when she saw us. Ten years later, I stand here with a child of my own and old Mrs Tombouron as my mother. Now, I have no chains to hold me 'round the neck. Oh Lord, there could never be a happier girl on this planet.