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The One Way Ticket

Shoes are important. They protect your feet, and you pick the design. But Jason's shoes were nothing like that. His shoes were old, black, and there was a big hole where his toes were. Jason's father was sold to another farmer almost two years ago, and he hoped the same thing wouldn't happen to his mom. His mom was in her forties, and her clothes were ripped all around. Every time Jason brings it up she complains about how she should have learned to sew.

Jason was 19. He didn't have a lot of hair, but he really didn't mind. Jason was also African American, and in the mid-1800's, that was not good for him. Jason had three main jobs he had to do every day: harvest the crops, collect the eggs from the chickens, and pull out seeds from cotton balls. He wanted out, but every time he even thought about it, he thought, *there's no way I'm getting out of here*. But every day he grew more confident.

"Hurry up!" the farmer yelled, as he whipped the ground to get Jason to work faster.

"Yes Sir," Jason replied.

"Now before you go back to the barn, you better kill one of those chickens for my dinner," the farmer said.

"Yes sir," Jason said. "Could I borrow a knife?"

"No. Figure it out," the farmer said.

The farmer was as short as his hound dog, had hair as orange as the sunset, and overalls that were as big as an elephant.

The farmer also didn't know everything about what was going on in Jason's mind.

For one whole year, Jason has been planning an escape. He and his mom were going to break out of slavery and become free. For a solid year he had tried to come up with every possible solution. So far, the plan was to get done what they needed to in the day, and then sleep for the rest of it. That way they will be well rested when the plan was ready to commence. Then around midnight they would sneak out of the barn by crawling out the window and army crawl to the nearest road. By then they might have to wait a couple of hours until a stagecoach comes by. Once that happens, they would pull out

everyone inside and ride the stagecoach to freedom. Tonight he was going to start the plan.

“Mom, are you ready?” Jason said.

“I’m not going,” Mom replied.

“What?!” Jason yelled. “Yes, you’re going. I’ve been planning this for a long time now!”

“Yes, I know, but someone’s gotta take care of the kids,” Mom said.

“You can take care of m! I’m your kid!” Jason said.

“Yes, you are, and always will be. But these kids’ parents were sold. I can’t just leave them,” Mom said with a small frown.

“But you have to! I can’t leave you,” Jason said. “It’s happening all over again, but instead of dad, its you!”

“Don’t worry. You will see Dad and me again,” Mom said. “Just not now.”

“I love you mom,” Jason said as they began hugging.

“I love you too,” Mom said quietly. “Now go to bed. You’ll need the rest.”

“A little longer,” Jason replied.

Jason leaned back.

“Okay, now go to bed you need the rest,” Mom said. “I believe in you.”

“I know,” Jason said as he slowly got up.

The next night Jason was rested for his escape. He got up in the middle of the night and started to double-check his plan. He had to make some modifications now that mom wasn’t coming. After everything was ready, he crept out of the barn. He made sure that the area was secure before he continued on and tried to stay as hidden as possible in the crops. As he snuck along, he wondered if he was really doing the right thing. He thought how if he went through with this it would affect other people. Once, he even considered turning back. But then he thought about his mom. He thought, *Mom wants me to be free. She wants me to do this. I have to go through with it!* He continued on his way.

By the time he got to the nearest road it was around 4 AM, which meant the others would be waking up soon. He had to hurry and hope a stagecoach or a horse would come by. Jason didn’t care what came by as long as it would get him to freedom as fast as possible. Around 5 AM a stagecoach finally came by. Jason didn’t

waste any time. Right away he jumped in front of the stagecoach and told all of them to get out, but then he saw a mother and her infant in the passenger's seat crying. He knew what he had to do.

Jason said, "You all get on your way,"

Jason saw the baby stick his head out of the stagecoach. He felt bad about what he even thought about doing.

Jason had to wait for another person to come by, and it felt like forever. Jason was so bored that he even started walking down the road. Finally, he came across a horse no one was on and he thought, *Well, I could avoid trouble if I just take this horse.* So he hopped on and started to ride.

He already felt free. He had the horse dash until it couldn't run anymore and when he stopped he saw a sign that read: *Pennsylvania, NO SLAVERY!*

Jason felt amazing! He had finally done it! His only regret was that his mom wasn't there with him. At the next town Jason walked around. No one yelled at him or told him to do more work. For once people actually treated him like a person, not a slave, a person. Jason thought, *Man, I love this!* Jason walked around and saw a shoe store. With a smile on his face, he walked in and bought himself some new shoes.