

# **The Sorrows of Yamba or The Negro Woman's Lamentation**

Author Uncertain



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"In St. Lucie's distant Isle,  
"Still with Afric's love I burn;  
"Parted many a thousand mile,  
"Never, never to return.

"Come, kind death! and give me rest,  
"Yamba has no friend by thee;  
"Thou can'st ease my throbbing breast,  
"Thou can'st set the Prisoner free.

"Down my cheeks the tears are dripping,  
"Broken is my heart with grief;  
"Mangled my poor flesh with whipping,  
"Come kind death! and bring relief.

"Born on Afric's Golden Coast,  
"Once I was as blest as you;  
"Parents tender I could boast,  
"Husband dear, and children too.

"Whity Man he came from far,  
"Sailing o'er the briny flood,  
"Who, with help of British Tar,  
"Buys up human flesh and blood.

"With the Baby at my breast;  
"(Other two were sleeping by)  
"In my Hut I sat at rest  
"With no thought of danger nigh.

"From the bush at even tide  
"Rush'd the fierce man-stealing Crew;  
"Seiz'd the Children by my side,  
"Seiz'd the wretched Yamba too.

"Then for love of filthy Gold,

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"Strait they bore me to the sea;  
"Cramm'd me down a Slave-ship's hold,  
"Where were Hundreds stow'd like me.

"Naked on the platform lying,  
"Now we cross the tumbling wave;  
"Shrieking, sickening, fainting, dying,  
"Deed of shame for Britons brave.

"At the savage Captain's beck,  
"Now like Brutes they make us prance;  
"Smack the Cat about the Deck,  
"And in scorn they bid us dance.

"I in groaning pass'd the night,  
"And did roll my aching head;  
"At the break of morning light,  
"My poor Child was cold and dead.

"Happy, happy there she lies!  
"Thou shalt feel the lash no more.  
"Thus full many a Negro dies,  
"Ere we reach the destin'd shore.

"Driven like Cattle to a fair,  
"See they sell us young and old;  
"Child from Mother too they tear,  
"All for love of filthy Gold.

"I was sold to Massa hard,  
"Some have Massas kind and good;  
"And again my back was scarr'd  
"Bad and stinted was my food.

"Poor and wounded, faint and sick,  
"All exposs'd to burning sky,  
"Massa bids me grass to pick,  
"And now I am near to die.

"What and if to death he send me,  
"Savage murder tho' it be,  
"British Laws shall ne'er befriend me;  
"They protect not Slaves like me!"

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Mouthing thus my wretched state,  
    (Ne'er may I forget the day)  
Once in dusk of evening late,  
    Far from home I dared to stray;

Dared, alas! with impious haste,  
    Tow'rds the roaring sea to fly;  
Death itself I longed to taste,  
    Long'd to cast me in and Die.

There I met upon the Strand  
    English Missionary Good,  
He had Bible book in hand,  
    Which poor me no understood.

Then he led me to his Cot,  
    Sooth'd and pity'd all my woe;  
Told me 'twas the Christian's lot  
    Much to suffer here below.

Told me then of God's dear Son,  
    (Strange and wond'rous is the story;)  
What sad wrong was to him done,  
    Tho' he was the Lord of Glory.

Told me too, like one who knew him,  
    (Can such love as this be true?)  
How he dy'd for them that slew him.  
    Died for wretched Yamba too.

Freely he his mercy proffer'd,  
    And to Sinners he was sent;  
E'en to Massa pardon's offer'd;  
    O if Massa would repent!

Wicked deed full many a time  
    Sinful Yamba too hath done;  
But she wails to God her crime;  
    But she trusts his only Son.

O ye slaves whom Massa beat,

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Ye are stained with guilt within  
As ye hope for mercy sweet  
So forgive your Massas' Sin.

And with grief when sinking low,  
Mark the Road that Yamba trod;  
Think how all her pain and woe  
Brought the Captive home to God.

Now let Yamba too adore  
Gracious Heaven's mysterious Plan;  
Now I'll count thy mercies o'er,  
Flowing thro' the guilt of man.

Now I'll bless my cruel capture,  
(Hence I've known a Saviour's name)  
'Till my Grief is turn'd to Rapture,  
And I half forget the blame.

But tho' here a Convert rare  
Thanks her God for Grace divine,  
Let not man the glory share,  
Sinner, still the guilt is thine.

Duly now baptiz'd am I  
By good Missionary Man;  
Lord my nature purify  
As no outward water can!

All my former thoughts abhor'd  
Teach me now to pray and praise;  
Joy and glory in my Lord,  
Trust and serve him all my days.

But tho' death this hour may find me,  
Still with Afric's love I burn,  
(There I've left a spouse behind me)  
Still to native land I turn.

And when Yamba sinks in death,  
This my latest prayer shall be,  
While I yield my parting breath,  
O that Afric might be free.

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Cease, ye British Sons of murder!  
Cease from forging Afric's Chain;  
Mock your Saviour's name no further,  
Cease your savage lust of gain.

Ye that boast "Ye rule the waves,"  
Bid no Slave Ship soil the sea,  
Ye that "never will be slaves"  
Bid poor Afric's land be free.

Where ye gave to war it's birth,  
Where your traders fix'd their den,  
There go publish "Peace on Earth,"  
Go proclaim "good will to men."

Where ye once have carried slaughter,  
Vice, and Slavery, and Sin;  
Seiz'd on Husband, Wife, and Daughter,  
Let the Gospel enter in.

Thus where Yamba's native home,  
Humble Hut of Rushes flood,  
Oh if there should chance to roam  
Some dear Missionary good,

Thou in Afric's distant land,  
Still shalt see the man I love;  
Join him to the Christian band,  
Guide his Soul to Realms above.

There no Fiend again shall sever  
Those whom God hath join'd and blest;  
There they dwell with Him for ever,  
There "weary are at rest."