

## The Negro Woman's Appeal to her White Sisters, 1850

*{Image of a woman on her knees, clutching a Bible to her chest, with chains on the ground.}*

This Book tell man not to be cruel. Oh! that massa would read this Book.

### THE NEGRO WOMAN'S APPEAL TO HER WHITE SISTERS.

YE wives, and ye mothers, your influence extend—  
Ye sisters, ye daughters, the helpless defend—  
These strong ties are severed for one crime alone,  
Possessing a colour less fair than your own.  
Ah! why must the tints of complexion be made  
A plea for the wrongs which poor Afric invade?  
Alike are his children in his holy sight,  
Who formed and redeems both the black and the white.

In the good book you read, I have heard it is said,  
For those of all nations the Saviour has bled,—  
No "respector of persons" is he I am told,  
All who love and obey him he ranks in his fold;  
His laws, like himself, are both pure and divine—  
Ah! why bear his name and his precepts decline.

"Do justly," I hear is the sacred command—  
Then why steal poor negro from his native land?  
Can they violate this, and "love mercy?" Oh! no,  
These chains, and these wounds, and these tears  
plainly show

That, assuming a power our God never gave,  
The practice of sin will the heart more deprave.  
That man, when rejecting his Maker's control,  
His feelings and passions like billows will roll,  
And spread desolation wherever he reigns  
Behold it, alas! in this land of sweet canes.

'Tis the nature of crime so prolific its source;  
To delude,—to mislead,—and to strengthen their  
force;  
Then pity dear ladies and send me relief,  
This poor heart is breaking with sorrow and grief:  
Could you see my affliction your tears they would  
flow,  
For women are tender by nature you know.

The wounds of fresh tortures will rouse me again,  
For I must not one moment forgetful remain.  
My babies are crying beneath the tall trees,  
Their loud sobs come borne on the soft passing breeze,  
To her whose rent bosom most keenly can feel,  
Though she dare not her thoughts nor her wishes  
reveal,  
While pierced with the knowledge they're roving  
alone,—

No hand to conduct them, and keep them at home—  
To feed them—to sooth them, and hush them to peace  
On that bosom of love, where their sorrows would  
cease.

Their smooth glossy cheeks, which as lovely I view  
As are the mixed tints of the roses to you,  
Are stained with the tears I would soon kiss away,  
Could I see my sweet infants the long sunny day.  
On their soft jetty locks hang the dew-drops of morn,  
Which like pearls their bright ebony clusters adorn,  
As they wander about round the green plantain tree,  
Their little hands clasped, they keep asking for me—  
Surprised that by her whom our nature has taught  
To cherish and guard, they should now be forgot;  
Alas! could they tell how my bleeding heart aches,  
They would know that maternal love never forsakes:

The tide of affection that tinges *your* skin  
With beauty's vermillion, proclaims it within;  
But ladies believe me no warmer it glows  
Because that through lilies and roses it flows.  
The same holy hand which created *you* fair,  
Has moulded *me* too in the hue that I wear;  
No partial hand formed us, our title's the same—  
'Tis inscribed on the Christian, whatever his name;  
No sable can veil when his light from on high  
Illumines the soul he has made for the sky,

## Transcript

In health and in sickness I daily must toil  
From sunrise to sunset, to hoe the rough soil,  
My fevered head aching and throbbing with pain,  
My fragile limbs torn, but I must not complain.  
No voice of compassion its solace bestows,  
If sinking with anguish I court some repose,

To dwell in his courts, and be present with him,  
When freed and redeemed from the bondage of sin.  
Oh! fair Christian ladies, you bear a high name;  
Your works of benevolence loudly proclaim  
The mercy and kindness you show to distress;  
Ah! pity dear ladies, our Saviour will bless.

RICHARD BARRETT, Printer, Mark Lane.

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