

<<汤姆叔叔的小屋>>

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内容概要

《汤姆叔叔的小屋》以19世纪60年代南北战争为背景，描写了一位对主人忠心耿耿的黑奴，名为汤姆叔叔。

主人在破产的情况下只好将他及其他所有黑奴一起卖给奴隶贩子，最终将他们一起运回南方。

在历经周折之后，汤姆叔叔仍没有摆脱奴隶贩子的控制。

一次，汤姆叔叔为解救女奴卡茜，被车撞死。

他在生命的最后一刻，终于悟出了只有斗争才会有自由的真理。

《汤姆叔叔的小屋》由斯托夫人编著。

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章节摘录

"Why, the fact is, Haley, Tom is an uncommon fellow; he is certainly worth that sum anywhere, -steady, honest, capable, manages my whole farm like a clock." "You mean honest, as niggers go," said Haley, helping himself to a glass of brandy. "No; I mean, really, Tom is a good, steady, sensible, pious fellow. He got religion at a camp-meeting, four years ago; and I believe he really did get it. I've trusted him, since then, with everything I have, -money, house, horses, -and let him come and go round the country; and I always found him true and square in everything." "Some folks don't believe there is pious niggers Shelby," said Haley, with a candid flourish of his hand, "but I do. I had a fellow, now, in this yer last lot I took to Orleans-'t was as good as a meetin, now, really, to hear that critter pray; and he was quite gentle and quiet like. He fetched me a good sum, too, for I bought him cheap of a man that was 'bliged to sell out; so I realized six hundred on him. Yes, I consider religion a valeyable thing in a nigger, when it's the genuine" article, and no mistake." "Well, Tom's got the real article, if ever a fellow had," rejoined the other. "Why, last fall, I let him go to Cincinnati alone, to do business for me, and bring home five hundred dollars. 'Tom,' says I to him, 'I trust you, because I think you're a Christian-I know you wouldn't cheat.' Tom comes back, sure enough; I knew he would. Some low fellows, they say, said to him-Tom, why don't you make tracks for Canada?' 'Ah, master trusted me, and I couldn't'-they told me about it. I am sorry to part with Tom, I must say. You ought to let him cover the whole balance of the debt; and you would, Haley, if you had any" conscience. "Well, I've got just as much conscience as any man in business can afford to keep, -just a little, you know, to swear by, as't were, said the trader, jocularly; "and, then, I'm ready to do anything in reason to 'blige friends; but this yer, you see, is a leetle too hard on a fellow-a leetle too hard." The trader sighed contemplatively, and poured out some more brandy. "Well, then, Haley, how will you trade?" said Mr. Shelby, after an uneasy interval of silence. "Well, haven't you a boy or gal that you could throw in with Tom?" "Hum!-none that I could well spare; to tell the truth, it's only hard necessity makes me willing to sell at all. I don't like parting with any of my hands, that's a fact." Here the door opened, and a small quadroon boy, between four and five years of age, entered the room. There was something in his appearance remarkably beautiful and engaging. His black hair, fine as floss silk, hung in glossy curls about his round, dimpled face, while a pair of arge dark eyes, full of fire and softness, looked out from beneath the thick, long lashes, as he peered curiously into the apartment. A gay robe of scarlet and yellow plaid, carefully made and eatly fitted, set off to advantage the dark and rich style of his eauty; and a certain comic air of assurance, blended with bashfulness, showed that he had been not unused to being petted and noticed by his master. "Hulloa, Jim Crow!" said Mr. Shelby, whistling, and snapping a bunch of raisins towards him, "pick that up, now!" The child scampered, with all his little strength, after the prize, while his master laughed. "Come here, Jim Crow," said he. The child came up, and the master patted the curly head, and chucked him under the chin. "Now, Jim, show this gentleman how you can dance and sing." The boy commenced one of those wild, grotesque songs common among the negroes, in a rich, clear voice, accompanying his singing with many comic evolutions of the hands, feet, and whole body, all in perfect time to the music. "Bravo!" said Haley, throwing him a quarter of an orange. "Now, Jim, walk like old Uncle Cudjoe, when he has the theumatism," said his master. Instantly the flexible limbs of the child assumed the appearance of deformity and distortion, as, with his back humped up, and his master's stick in his hand, he hobbled about the room, his childish face drawn into a doleful pucker, and spitting from right to left, in imitation of an old man. Both gentlemen laughed uproariously. "Now, Jim," said his master, "show us how old Elder Robbins leads the psalm." The boy drew his chubby face down to a formidable length, and commenced toning a p.salm tune through his nose, with imperturbable gravity. "Hurrah! bravo! what a young 'un!" said Haley; "that chap's a case, I'll promise. Tell you what," said he, suddenly clapping his hand on Mr. Shelby's shoulder, "fling in that chap, and I'll settle the business-I will. Come, now, if that ain't doing the thing up about the rightest!" At this moment, the door was pushed gently open, and a young quadroon woman, apparently about twenty-five, entered the room. There needed only a glance from the child to her, to identify her as its mother. There was the same rich, full, dark eye, with its long lashes; the same ripples of silky black hair. The brown of her complexion

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gave way on the cheek to a perceptible flush, which deepened as she saw the gaze of the strange man fixed upon her in bold and undisguised admiration. Her dress was of the neatest possible fit, and set off to advantage her finely moulded shape;-a delicately formed hand and a trim foot and ankle were items of appearance that did not escape the quick eye of the trader, well used to run up at a glance the points of a fine female article. "Well, Eliza?" said her master, as she stopped and looked hesitatingly at him. "I was looking for Harry, please, sir;" and the boy bounded toward her, showing his spoils, which he had gathered in the skirt of his robe. "Well, take him away then," said Mr. Shelby; and hastily she withdrew, carrying the child on her arm. "By Jupiter," said the trader, turning to him in admiration, "there's an article, now! You might make your fortune on that article in Orleans, any day. I've seen over a thousand, in my day, paid down for gals not a bit handsomer. "I don't want to make my fortune on her," said Mr. Shelby, dryly; and, seeking to turn the conversation, he uncorked a bottle of fresh wine, and asked his companion's opinion of it. "Capital, sir, first chop!" said the trader; then turning, and slapping his hand familiarly on Shelby's shoulder, he added- "Come, how will you trade about the gal-what shall I say for her-what'll you take?" "Mr. Haley, she is not to be sold," said Shelby. "My wife would not part with her for her weight in gold."

"Ay, ay! Women always say such things, cause they ha'nt no sort of calculation. Just show 'em how many watches, feathers, and trinkets, one's weight in gold would buy, and that alters the case, I reckon." "I tell you, Haley, this must no't be spoken of; I say no, and I mean no," said Shelby, decidedly. "Well, you'll let me have the boy, though," said the trader; "you must own I've come down pretty handsomely for him." "What on earth can you want with the child?" said Shelby. "Why, I've got a friend that's going into this yer branch of the business-wants to buy up handsome boys to raise for the market. Fancy articles entirely-sell for waiters, and so on, to rich 'uns, that can pay for handsome 'uns. it sets off one of yer great places-a real handsome boy to open door, wait, and tend. They fetch a good sum; and this little devil is such a comical, musical concern, he's just the article!" "I would rather not sell him," said Mr. Shelby, thoughtfully; "the fact is, sir, I'm a humane man, and I hate to take the boy from his mother, sir." "O, you do?-La! yes-something of that nature. I understand, perfectly. It is mighty onpleasant getting on with women, sometimes, I al'ays hates these yer screechin,' screamin' times. They are mighty onpleasant; but, as I manages business, I generally avoids 'ern, sir. Now, what if you get the girl off for a day, or a week, or so; then the thing's done quietly,-all over before she comes home. Your wife might get her some ear-rings, or a new gown, or some such truck, to make up with her." "I'm afraid not." "Lor blessye, yes! These critters ain't like white folks,you know; they gets over things, only manage right. Now,they say," said Haley, assuming a candid and confidential air, "that this kind o' trade is hardening to the feelings; but I never found it so, Fact is, I never could do things up the way some fellers manage the business. I've seen 'em as would pull a woman's child out of her arms, and set him up to sell, and she screechin' like mad all the time;-very bad policy-damages the article-makes 'em quite unfit for service sometimes. I knew a real handsome gal once, in Orleans, as was entirely ruined by this sort o' handling. The fellow that was trading for her didn't want her baby; and she was one of your real high sort, when her blood was up. I tell you, she squeezed up her child in her arms, and talked, and went on real awful. It kinder makes my blood run cold to think of 't; and when they carried off the child, and locked her up, she jest went ravin' mad, and died in a week. Clear waste, sir, of a thousand dollars, just for want of anagement,-there's where 't is. It's always best to do the humane thing, sir; that's been my experience." And the trader leaned back in his chair, and folded his arm, with an air of virtuous decision, apparently considering himself a second Wilberforce. The subject appeared to interest the gentleman deeply; for while Mr. Shelby was thoughtfully peeling an orange, Haley broke out afresh, with becoming diffidence, but as if actually driven by the force of truth to say a few words more. "It don't look well, now, for a feller to be praisin' himself; but I say it jest because it's the truth. I believe I'm reckoned to bring in about the finest droves of nigers that is brought in,-at least, I've been told so; if I have once, I reckon I have a hundred times,-all in good case,-fat and likely, and I lose as few as any man in the business. And I lays it all to my management, sir; and humanity, sir, I may say, is the great pillar of my management." Mr. Shelby did not know what to say, and so he said, "Indeed!" "Now, I've been laughed at for my notions, sir, and I've been talked to. They an't pop'lar, and they an't common; but I stuck to 'em, sir; I've stuck to 'em, and realized well on'em; yes, sir, they have paid their passage, I may say," and the trader

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laughed at his joke. There was something so piquant and original in these elucidations of humanity, that Mr. Shelby could not help laughing in company. Perhaps you laugh too, dear reader; but you know humanity comes out in a variety of strange forms now-a-days, and there is no end to the odd things that hang on't; and he spilled so many for me, that I had to break off with him, though he was a good-hearted fellow, and as fair a usiness hand as is goin'" "And do you find your ways of managing do the business better than Tom's?" said Mr. Shelby.

"Why, yes, sir, I may say so. You see, when I any ways can, I takes a leetle care about the onpleasant parts, like selling young uns and that, -get the gals out of the way-out of sight, out of mind, you know, -and when it's clean done, and can't be helped, they naturally gets used to it. 'Tan't, you know, as if it was white folks, that's brought, up in the way of 'spectin' to keep their children and wives, and all that. Niggers, you know, that's fetched up properly, ha'n't no kind of 'spectations of no kind; so all these things comes easier. "I'm afraid mine are not properly brought up, then," said Mr. Shelby. "S'pose not; you Kentucky folks spile your niggers. You mean well by 'em, but 'tan't no real kindness, arter all. Now, a nigger, you see, what's got to be hacked and tumbled round the world, and sold to Tom, and Dick, and the Lord knows who, 'tan't no kindness to be givin' on him notions and expectations, and bringin' on him up too well, for the rough and tumble comes all the harder on him arter.

Now, I venture to say, your niggers would be quite chop-fallen in a place where some of your plantation niggers humane people will say and do. Mr. Shelby's laugh encouraged the trader to proceed. "It's strange, now, but I never could beat this into people's heads. Now, there was Tom Loker, my old partner, down in Natchez; he was a clever fellow, Tom was, only the very devil with niggers, -on principle 't was, you see, for a better hearted feller never broke bread; 't was his system, sir. I used to talk to Tom. 'Why, Tom,' I used to say, 'when your gals takes on and cry, what's the use o' crackin on 'em over the head, and knockin' on 'em round? It's ridiculous,' says I, 'and don't do no sort o' good. Why, I don't see no harm in their cryin',' says I; 'it's natur,' says I, 'and if natur can't blow off one way, it will another. Besides, Tom,' says I, 'tit jest spiles your gals; they get sickly, and down in the mouth; and sometimes they gets ugly, -particular yallow gals do, - and it's the devil and all gettin' on 'em broke in. Now,' says I, 'why can't you kinder coax 'em up, and speak 'em fair? Depend on it, Tom, a little humanity, thrown in along, goes a heap further than all your jawin' and crackin'; and it pays better,' says I, 'depend on 't.' But Tom couldn't get the would be singing and whooping like all possessed. Every man, you know, Mr. Shelby, naturally thinks well of his own ways; and I think I treat niggers just about as well as it's ever worth while to treat 'em." "It's a happy thing to be satisfied," said Mr. Shelby, with a slight shrug, and some perceptible feelings of a disagreeable nature. "Well," said Haley, after they had both silently picked their nuts for a season, "what do you say?" "I'll think the matter over, and talk with my wife," said Mr. Shelby. "Meantime, Haley, if you want the matter carried on in the quiet way you speak of, you'd best not let your business in this neighborhood be known. It will get out among my boys, and it will not be a particularly quiet business getting away any of my fellows, if they know it, I'll promise you." "O! certainly, by all means, mum! of course. But I'll tell you. I'm in a devil of a hurry, and shall want to know, as soon as possible what I may depend on," said he, rising and putting on his overcoat. "Well, call up this evening, between six and seven, and you shall have my answer," said Mr. Shelby, and the trader bowed himself out of the apartment. "I'd like to have been able to kick the fellow down the steps," said he to himself, as he saw the door fairly closed, "with his impudent assurance; but he knows how much he has me at advantage. If anybody had ever said to me that I should sell Tom down south to one of those rascally traders, I should have said, 'Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?' And now it must come, for aught I see. And Eliza's child, too! I know that I shall have some fuss with wife about that; and, for that matter, about Tom, too. So much for being in debt, heigho! The fellow sees his advantage, and means to push it."

Perhaps the mildest form of the system of slavery is to be seen in the State of Kentucky. The general prevalence of agricultural pursuits of a quiet and gradual nature, not requiring those periodic seasons of hurry and pressure that are called for in the business of more southern districts, makes the task of the negro a more healthful and reasonable one; while the master, content with a more gradual style of acquisition, has not those temptations to hardheartedness which always overcome frail human nature when the prospect of sudden and rapid gain is weighed in the balance, with no heavier counterpoise than the interests of the helpless and unprotected.

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编辑推荐

《汤姆叔叔的小屋（英文）》通过对汤姆和乔治·哈里斯夫妇这两种不同性格黑奴的描述，告诉读者：逆来顺受、听从奴隶主摆布的汤姆难逃死亡的命运；而敢于反抗敢于斗争的乔治夫妇得到了新生。

这部小说在启发民众反对农奴制的情绪上起了非常重要的作用，被视为美国内战的起因之一。

林肯总统后来接见斯托夫人时戏谑地称她是“写了一本书，酿成了一场大战的小妇人”。

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