

EMALA SIDES - UNDERGROUND

Writer's Note - One of my goals when creating this story in 2010 was to portray our ancestors with as much dignity as possible in these tragic circumstances. Presenting them as smart, even though they may not have had formal education.

Though written in verse. The rhymes in the dialogue are not meant to be accented or emphasized. Rather spoken like prose.

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*(EMALA [7] Black, Bali's smart and inquisitive daughter. DEMBI [28], a female house slave who was reluctantly brought on their journey. BALI [30], Black, a skilled enslaved blacksmith with piercing eyes and a sturdy physique. They have been walking for days trying to find the path for freedom. He is keeping her spirits high during their journey. Then she asks...)*

EMALA

Daddy, how much longer do we have to walk? My feet hurt and belly is grumbling!

BALI

It ummm... It should be soon!

Hopefully...

DEMBI

Do you know what to look for Emala?

EMALA

Nuh uh.

DEMBI

Well, sometimes we talk in special ways in order to keep it a secret. Do you know how to learn something and not repeat it?

EMALA

I do! This one time daddy went and took three plates of master's food with that good smell. He ate so much his stomach started to swell and i hadn't even gone to tell!

BALI

Emala, you keep a secret about as well, as a lion can hug a gazelle.

*(He grabs her and roars like a lion. They share a laugh.)*

DEMBI

Ok then, I'll tell you...  
we give signals to each other.  
Communicate in ways that master won't think we can.  
We create. Sometimes we do it through song and other times  
through clothing. Things we make by hand.

EMALA

Well, when we get there I wanna play. I want to be with  
other kids and get on a swing and everything!

BALI

You wanna get on a swing?

EMALA

Yes daddy and I wanna ride a chariot all around the town!

BALI

A chariot and a swing, huh? How high do you want to go?

EMALA

Real high daddy!

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*(This is the singing portion of the audition, you can  
sing this song, an upbeat spiritual - Swing Down  
Chariot - or a spiritual of your own choosing.)*

EMALA

GET ON A SWING, STOP AND LET ME RIDE,  
GET ON A SWING, STOP AND LET ME RIDE,

OH, ROCK ME LORD, ROCK ME LORD CALM AND EASY, I'VE GOT A  
HOME ON THE OTHER SIDE.

SIX WHITE HORSES PASSING SIDE BY SIDE,  
SIX WHITE HORSES PASS ME SIDE BY SIDE,  
OH, ROCK ME LORD, ROCK ME LORD CALM AND EASY, I'VE GOT A  
HOME ON THE OTHER SIDE.

SWING LOW, SWING LOW, SWING LOW, SWING LOW AND LET ME RIDE.

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