

The Slave's Dream

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.
Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.
He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!--
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.
And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.
Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.
At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.
The forests, with their myriad tongues,

Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
 With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
 At their tempestuous glee.
He did not feel the driver's whip,
 Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
 And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
 Had broken and thrown away!

Refs:

1. The **Niger River** is the principal river of West Africa, extending about 4,180 km (2,600 mi). Its drainage basin is 2,117,700 km (817,600 sq mi) in area. Its source is in the Guinea Highlands in south-eastern Guinea. It runs in a crescent through Mali, Niger, on the border with Benin and then through Nigeria, discharging through a massive delta, known as the Niger Delta or the Oil Rivers, into the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. The Niger is the third-longest river in Africa, exceeded only by the Nile and the Congo River (also known as the Zaïre River). Its main tributary is the Benue River.
2. **Flamingos** or **flamingoes** a type of wading bird in the family Phoenicopteridae, the only bird family in the order Phoenicopteriformes. Four flamingo species are distributed throughout the Americas, including the Caribbean, and two species are native to Africa, Asia, and Europe.



3. **Black Slavery in USA**---Slavery in the United States was the legal institution of human chattel enslavement, primarily of Africans and African Americans, that existed in the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries. Slavery had been practiced in British America from early colonial days, and was legal in all Thirteen Colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It lasted in about half the states until 1865, when it was prohibited nationally by the Thirteenth Amendment. As an economic system, slavery was largely replaced by sharecropping.

4. **Caffree**---an offensive and insulting term for any Black African. Synonyms: caffer, kaffir, kafir

5. **Red Flag**---In politics, a **red flag** is predominantly a symbol of socialism, communism, Marxism, trade unions, left-wing politics, and historically of anarchism; it has been associated with left-wing politics since the French Revolution (1789–99). Socialists adopted the symbol during the Revolutions of 1848 and it became a symbol of communism as a result of its use by the Paris Commune of 1871. The flags of several communist states, including China, Vietnam and the Soviet Union, are explicitly based on the original red flag. The red flag is also used as a symbol by some democratic socialists and social democrats, for example the League of Social Democrats of Hong Kong, French Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party of Germany. The Labour Party in Britain used it until the late 1980s. It was the inspiration for the socialist anthem, *The Red Flag*.