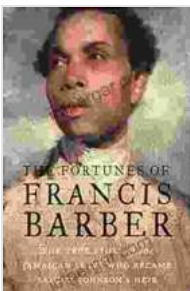


The True Story Of The Jamaican Slave Who Became Samuel Johnson Heir

In the annals of history, the life of Francis Barber stands as a testament to the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit. Born into slavery in Jamaica, he overcame insurmountable odds to become the trusted servant and confidant of the legendary English writer, Samuel Johnson. His remarkable journey, from humble beginnings to a position of prominence and respect, is a story that captivates and inspires.

Early Life and Journey to England

Francis Barber was born in Jamaica in 1743, the son of an enslaved African woman and a white overseer. At a young age, he was sold to Colonel Bathurst, a wealthy Jamaican planter who had just Free Download Samuel Johnson's late father's estate. When Bathurst returned to England in 1750, he took Francis with him as his personal servant.



The Fortunes of Francis Barber: The True Story of the Jamaican Slave Who Became Samuel Johnson's Heir

by Yei Theodora Ozaki

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 8141 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 388 pages

Screen Reader : Supported

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Servitude in Johnson's Household

In England, Francis Barber became a fixture in Samuel Johnson's household, first as his servant and later as his trusted companion. Johnson, renowned for his brilliant mind and eccentric personality, found in Francis a loyal and dedicated aide. Francis attended to Johnson's needs, reading to him, managing his finances, and providing emotional support during tumultuous times.

Beyond his duties as a servant, Francis Barber also became an integral part of Johnson's literary circle. He was present at many of the famous gatherings at The Turk's Head Inn, where Johnson and his friends, including James Boswell and Edmund Burke, engaged in lively debates on literature, politics, and the human condition.

Overcoming Prejudice and Discrimination

Despite his close association with Johnson, Francis Barber faced prejudice and discrimination throughout his life. As a black man in 18th-century England, he was often treated with contempt and condescension. However, Johnson stubbornly defied societal norms, refusing to allow Francis to be treated as anything less than an equal.

Johnson's unwavering support and Francis Barber's own dignity and resolve helped him to overcome the barriers of race and class. He became known as a respected member of Johnson's household, and his presence was a testament to the power of friendship and mutual respect.

Inheritance and Legacy

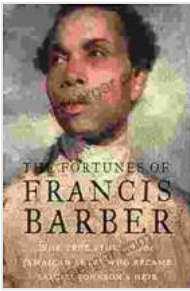
In 1784, Samuel Johnson, recognizing the invaluable contributions of Francis Barber to his life, bequeathed him a substantial inheritance upon his death. This inheritance was a testament to the deep bond between the two men and a bold statement against the prevailing societal norms.

Francis Barber used his inheritance wisely, investing in property and establishing himself as a successful businessman. He continued to live a life of dignity and respect, breaking down barriers and inspiring others. His story serves as a reminder that even in the face of adversity, the human spirit can triumph.

The life of Francis Barber is a powerful testament to the strength of the human spirit and the transformative power of friendship. From his humble beginnings as a slave in Jamaica, he rose to become the trusted companion and heir of one of the greatest literary figures of all time. His story is a reminder that even in the most challenging of circumstances, hope and dignity can prevail.

Further Reading

- *The Life of Francis Barber, the Jamaican Slave who Became Samuel Johnson's Heir* by Stephen Brumwell
- *Francis Barber: The Untold Story of the Man Who Was Samuel Johnson's Heir* by Mary and Richard Wortley
- *The Journal of a Lady of Quality* by Hester Thrale Piozzi



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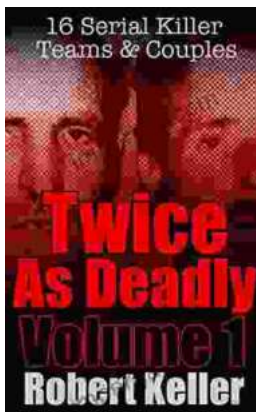
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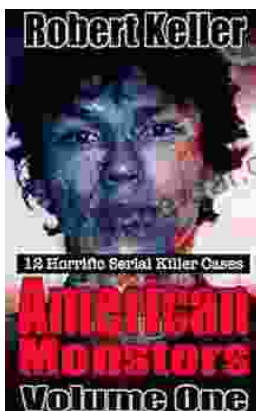
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