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Who Was Sojourner Truth?

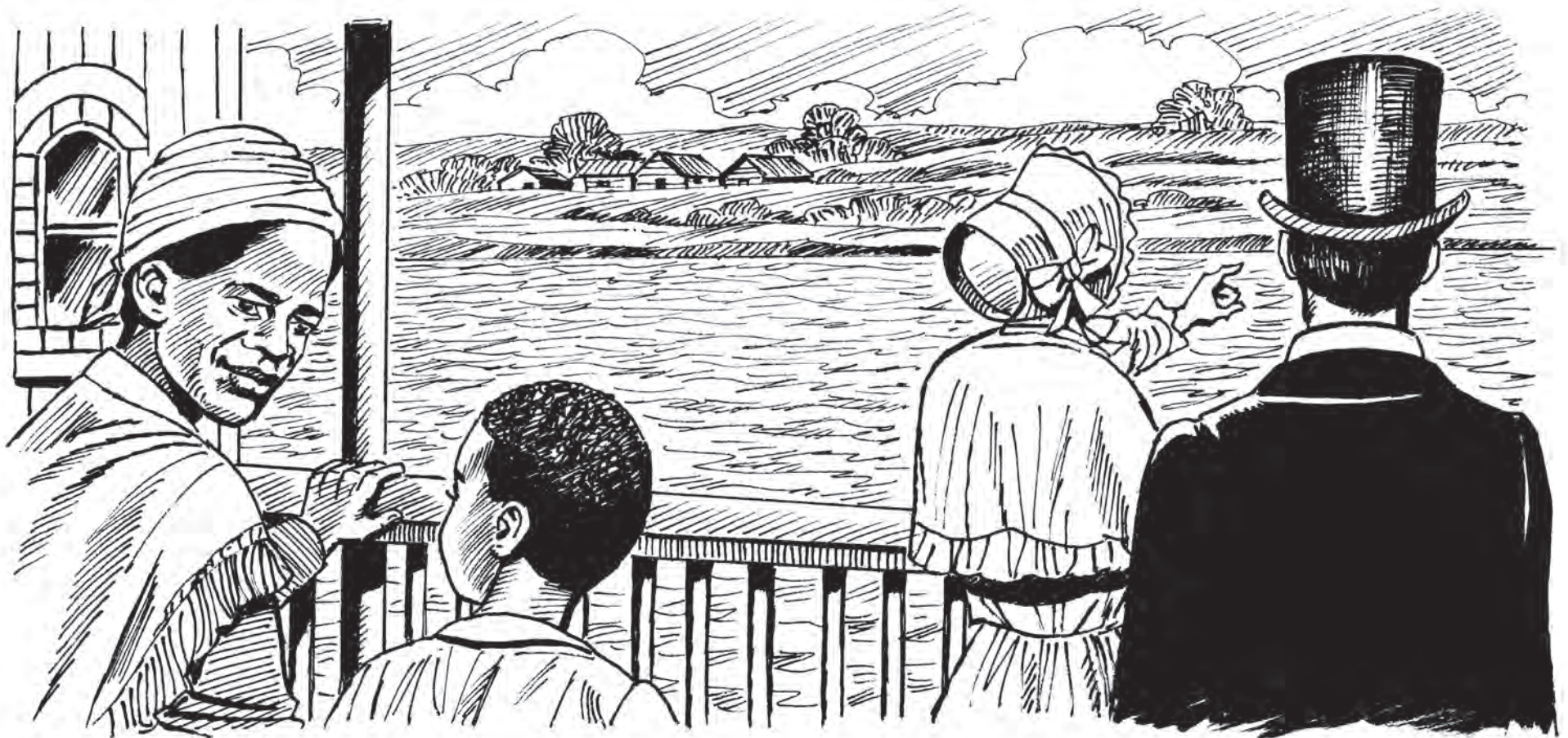


by Yona Zeldis McDonough

There she met a schoolteacher from New York City named Miss Geer. Miss Geer liked Belle and thought Peter was very bright. She encouraged Belle to move to New York City. There were plenty of jobs there. Best of all, there were schools for black children.

Belle talked it over with her daughters and

they thought it was a good idea. They promised to take care of Sophia. So Belle decided to leave. She made this decision by herself. She did not have to ask a master's permission. At the end of the summer of 1829, Belle and Peter took a boat down the Hudson River. They were on their way to New York City. A new life was waiting for them.





Sojourner also heard speakers talk about women's rights. In the 1840s, women could not vote or own property. They could not pass laws or act as leaders. Many people thought being a wife and mother was the only role for a woman. Very few paying jobs were open to them. Women's

rights supporters had different ideas. They believed women and men should be equal under the law.

In 1846, the Northampton Association ran out of money and closed. Sojourner was sad. She went back to working for white people. But she

Many well-meaning white people could teach skills—like sewing or knitting or cooking—to former slaves. But Sojourner had been a slave. She knew how these people felt. She understood their problems and their pain. She encouraged them to get an education. She also told them they needed to “learn to love white people” who had been working for their cause.

While she worked at the hospital, Sojourner lived in a house at the Freedman’s Village. Her grandson Sammy lived there, too. On most days, Sojourner walked to work. At the end of the day, she walked home. But one day she decided to take a streetcar.

She waited at the side of the road.

