

## II.

*THE WONDERFUL TAR-BABY STORY.*

“DIDN’T the fox *never* catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?” asked the little boy the next evening.

“He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho’s you bawn—Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fool ’im wid dat calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk en got ’im some



tar, en mix it wid some turkentime, en fix up a contrapshun wat he call a Tar-Baby, en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot ’er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer ter see wat de news wuz gwineter be. En he didn’t hatter wait long, nudder, kaze bimeby here come Brer Rabbit

pacin' down de road—lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity—dez ez sassy ez a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin' 'long twel he spy de Tar-Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he wuz 'stonished. De Tar-Baby, she sot dar, she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘Mawnin’!’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee—‘nice wedder dis mawnin’,’ sezee.

“ ‘Tar-Baby ain’t sayin’ nuthin’, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘How duz yo’ sym’tums seem ter segashuate?’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

“ ‘Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de Tar-Baby, she ain’t sayin’ nuthin’.

“ ‘How you come on, den? Is you deaf?’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. ‘Kaze if you is, I kin holler louder,’ sezee.

“ ‘Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘Youer stuck up, dat’s w’at you is,’ says Brer Rabbit, sezee, ‘en I’m gwineter kyore you, dat’s w’at I’m a gwine-ter do,’ sezee.

“ ‘Brer Fox, he sorter chuckle in his stummuck, he did, but Tar-Baby ain’t sayin’ nuthin’.

“ ‘I’m gwineter larn you howter talk ter ’specttubble fokes ef hit’s de las’ ack,’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. ‘Ef you don’t take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I’m gwineter bus’ you wide open,’ sezee.

“ ‘Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘Brer Rabbit keep on axin’ ’im, en de Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin’ nuthin’, twel present’y Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis’, he did, en blip he tuck ’er side er de

head. Right dar's whar he broke his merlasses jug. His fis' stuck, en he can't pull loose. De tar hilt 'im. But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘Ef you don't lemme loose, I'll knock you agin,’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch 'er a wipe wid de udder han', en dat stuck. Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin', en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“ ‘Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you,’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, but de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin'. She des hilt on, en den Brer Rabbit lose de use er his feet in de same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squall out dat ef de Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im loose he butt 'er cranksided. En den he butted, en his head got stuck. Den Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort', lookin' des ez innercent ez wunner yo' mammy's mockin'-birds.

“ ‘Howdy, Brer Rabbit,’ sez Brer Fox, sezee. ‘You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin’,’ sezee, en den he rolled on de groun', en laft en laft twel he couldn't laff no mo'. ‘I speck you'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse,’ sez Brer Fox, sezee.”

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

“Did the fox eat the rabbit?” asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

“Dat's all de fur de tale goes,” replied the old man. “He mout, en den agin he moutent. Some say Jedge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im—some say he didn't. I hear Miss Sally callin'. You better run 'long.”

IV.

*HOW MR. RABBIT WAS TOO SHARP FOR MR. FOX.*

“UNCLE REMUS,” said the little boy one evening, when he had found the old man with little or nothing to do, “did the fox kill and eat the rabbit when he caught him with the Tar-Baby?”

“Law, honey, ain’t I tell you ’bout dat?” replied the old darkey, chuckling slyly. “I ’clar ter grashus I ought er tole you dat, but ole man Nod wuz ridin’ on my eyeleds ’twel a leetle mo’n I’d a dis’member’d my own name, en den on to dat here come yo’ mammy hollerin’ atter you.

“W’at I tell you w’en I fus’ begin? I tole you Brer Rabbit wuz a monstus soon beas’; leas’ways dat’s w’at I laid out fer ter tell you. Well, den, honey, don’t you go en make no udder kalkalashuns, kaze in dem days Brer Rabbit en his fambly wuz at de head er de gang w’en enny racket wuz on han’, en dar dey stayed. ’Fo’ you begins fer ter wipe yo’ eyes ’bout Brer Rabbit, you wait en see whar’bouts Brer Rabbit gwineter fetch up at. But dat’s needer yer ner dar.

“W’en Brer Fox fine Brer Rabbit mixt up wid de Tar-Baby, he feel mighty good, en he roll on de groun’ en laff. Bimeby he up’n say, sezee :

“ ‘ Well, I speck I got you dis time, Brer Rabbit,’ sezee ; ‘ maybe I ain’t, but I speck I is. You been runnin’ roun’ here sassin’ atter me a mighty long time, but I speck you done come ter de een’ er de row. You bin cuttin’ up yo’

capers en bouncin' 'roun' in dis naberhood ontwel you come ter b'leeve yo'se'f de boss er de whole gang. En den youer allers some'rs whar you got no bizness,' sez Brer Fox, sezee. 'Who ax you fer ter come en strike up a 'quaintence wid dish yer Tar-Baby? En who stuck you up dar whar you iz? Nobody in de roun' worril. You des tuck en jam yo'se'f on dat Tar-Baby widout waitin' fer enny invite,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en dar you is, en dar you'll stay twel I fixes up a bresh-pile and fires her up, kaze I'm gwine-ter bobbycue you dis day, sho,' sez Brer Fox, sezee.

“Den Brer Rabbit talk mighty 'umble.

“‘I don't keer w'at you do wid me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'so you don't fling me in dat brier-patch. Roas' me, Brer Fox,' sezee, 'but don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

“‘Hit's so much trouble fer ter kindle a fier,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'dat I speck I'll hatter hang you,' sezee.

“‘Hang me des ez high as you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do fer de Lord's sake don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

“‘I ain't got no string,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I'll hatter drown you,' sezee.

“‘Drown me des ez deep ez you please, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'but do don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

“‘Dey ain't no water nigh,' sez Brer Fox, sezee, 'en now I speck I'll hatter skin you,' sezee.

“‘Skin me, Brer Fox,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, 'snatch out my eyeballs, t'ar out my years by de roots, en cut off

my legs,' sezee, 'but do please, Brer Fox, don't fling me in dat brier-patch,' sezee.

“Co'se Brer Fox wanter hurt Brer Rabbit bad ez he kin, so he cotch 'im by de behime legs en slung 'im right in de middle er de brier-patch. Dar wuz a considerbul flutter whar Brer Rabbit struck de bushes, en Brer Fox sorter hang 'roun' fer ter see w'at wuz gwineter happen. Bimeby he hear somebody call 'im, en way up de hill he see Brer Rabbit settin' cross-legged on a chinkapin log koamin' de pitch outen his har wid a chip. Den Brer Fox know dat he bin swop off mighty bad. Brer Rabbit wuz bleedzed fer ter fling back some er his sass, en he holler out:

“‘Bred en bawn in a brier-patch, Brer Fox—bred en bawn in a brier-patch!’ en wid dat he skip out des ez lively ez a cricket in de embers.”