

My Friends: I am very glad to have it to say, to have it to *feel*, that I am once more in the land of liberty; that I am with those who are my friends. Until my tenth year I did not care much what came of me, but soon after I began to learn that there is a Christ who came to make us free; I began to hear about a North, and to feel the necessity for freedom of soul and body. [Applause.] I heard of a North, where men of my color could live without any man daring to say to them, 'You are my property;' and I determined, by the blessing of God, one day to find my way there. My inclination grew on me, and I found my way to Boston. You see, I didn't want to make myself known, so I didn't tell who I was; but as I came to work, I got employment, and I worked hard; but I kept my own counsel, and didn't tell anybody that I was a slave, but I strove for *myself* as I never had an opportunity to do before. When I was going home one night I heard some one running behind me; presently a hand was put upon my shoulder, and somebody said: 'Stop, stop; you are the fellow who broke into a silversmith's shop the other night.' I assured the man that it was a mistake, but almost before I could speak I was lifted off from my feet by six or seven others, and it was no use to resist. In the Court-House I waited some time, and as the silversmith did not come, I told them I wanted to go to supper.

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A man then came to the door; he didn't

open like an honest man, would [laughter,]  
kind a slowly opened it, and looked in. He  
said, 'How do you do, Mr. Burns?' and I  
called him, as we do in Virginia, 'master!'  
He asked me if there would be any trouble  
in taking me back to Virginia, I was brought  
right to a stand, and didn't know what to  
say. He wanted to know if I remembered  
the money he used to give me, and I said,  
'Yes, I do recollect that you used to give  
me 12½ cents at the end of every year I  
worked for you.' He went out and came  
back next morning. I got no supper nor  
sleep that night. The next morning they  
told me that my master said he had the right  
to me; and as I called him 'master,' hav-  
ing the fear of God before my eyes, I could  
not go from it. Next morning I was taken  
down with bracelets on my wrists—not such  
as you wear, ladies, of gold and silver—but  
iron and steel that wore into the bone. [He  
showed the marks which his irons had made.]  
The lawyers insisted that I should have  
counted, but I told them I didn't think it  
would do any good, for what I had first said  
had crushed me, and I could not deny the  
truth and my only hope was in the assistance  
of Heaven. He proceeded to relate how  
the officers were armed in the Court-Room,  
and how the United States officials told him  
that Dana, Ellis, Phillips, were d—d sons of  
b—s of Abolitionists; that he would be freed  
when he got back to Virginia, and advised

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him to have nothing to do with those who pretended to befriend him while they made his case worse. He replied that they worked for him manfully, and if they did not succeed it was not their fault. He said he saw in a newspaper that he had said he wished to go back to Virginia. Had the Devil himself said it, he could have told no greater lie. He then described the scene of his rendition; how he, a poor fugitive was made a great lion, and escorted out of the City of Boston and on board of the revenue cutter, amid troops of men armed to the teeth. How they (the law and order men) promised to purchase him when he got to Virginia, and when they got him to Norfolk they clapped him in jail, and put irons on his wrist, and kept him in a room without bed or seat, and with but scanty food, for two days. He was taken to Richmond, where he was kept in a little pen in the Trader's Jail for four months, with irons on his wrists and ankles, so tight that they wore the flesh through the bone, and during the month of August they gave him a half-pailful of water every two days. From this cell he was not allowed to come out once during four months: at the end of that time he was sold to one David McDaniel, who took him to North Carolina.

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