

'Gold'locks

Goldilocks. When you hear that name you probably think of a whole range of words. Thief. Criminal. Brat. You most certainly don't think of the word 'innocent' do you? But what if I told you that is exactly what I am. Innocent. In fact, let me just tell you my story.

First of all, picture me in your head: a young girl with fair skin and a mane of golden curls, right? Actually, that's not what I look like at all. I have a deep mahogany complexion with a halo of black curls around my face (just like an angel). In fact, I was born and raised in Benin, West Africa. I adored my home, my friends, my friends.

But everything changed the day they came. They had pale skin I had never seen before. Ate food I had never tasted before. Spoke in a language I had never heard before. They were mysterious, kind beings. But they weren't kind. They brought ropes and nets to capture us; we were merely animals to them.

A few thousand of us were crammed into a boat and transported to the Americas. But it was less of a boat and more like some pieces of wood hastily nailed together. Many died due to the diseases that ran rampant.

Once we arrived and were sold, we were put to work immediately. I was taken away and forced to harvest sugar cane on a plantation. I had three owners: Father, Mother and Master. Sound familiar? If we didn't do what was expected of us, we were whipped brutally - my back is a collage of various scars because of this.

One fateful day I told myself that I was fed up with being treated like a piece of rubbish. I decided to go and venture into the Father's house when the family were having a walk. I finished all the porridge in the blink of an eye - after all, I hadn't had a full meal in months. I also couldn't help but fall asleep on the owner's bed (it was much more comfortable than the pieces of wood we called 'bed'). Unfortunately, my owners came back early and caught me. Thankfully, I managed to escape.

My owners decided to tell my story to the rest of the world to warn others about coming to their house uninvited. Of course, they twisted the story to their liking, making me blonde, pale and evil whilst making themselves seem like harmless, cuddly teddy bears. People then told this story to their children for generations, unaware of the dark truth shrouding it. Well, now you know.