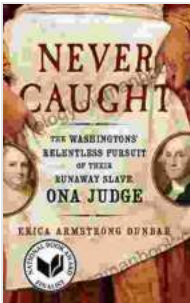


The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave Ona Judge



Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge by Erica Armstrong Dunbar

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 29878 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 273 pages



Ona Judge was a young slave woman who escaped from the household of George and Martha Washington in 1796. Her story is a testament to the resilience and determination of those who fought for their freedom. Despite the Washingtons' relentless pursuit, Ona Judge managed to evade capture and live a free life.

Ona Judge's Early Life

Ona Judge was born into slavery in Virginia in 1773. She was the daughter of an enslaved woman named Betty and a white man named Andrew Judge. Ona's father was a skilled carpenter and blacksmith, and he taught Ona these trades. Ona was also a talented seamstress and hairdresser.

In 1789, Ona was sold to George and Martha Washington. She was assigned to work as a personal servant to Martha Washington. Ona was responsible for dressing Martha, styling her hair, and attending to her other needs.

Ona Judge's Escape

Ona Judge had been working for the Washingtons for seven years when she decided to escape. She had witnessed the brutality of slavery firsthand, and she knew that she could not endure it any longer. Ona planned her escape carefully. She saved up money and supplies, and she made contact with a free Black man who agreed to help her.

On the night of May 21, 1796, Ona Judge escaped from the Washingtons' household. She dressed in her finest clothes and slipped out of the house. She met her contact at a predetermined location, and they fled Philadelphia together.

The Washingtons' Pursuit

When the Washingtons realized that Ona Judge had escaped, they were furious. They sent out a posse of men to search for her, and they offered a reward for her capture. The Washingtons also wrote to their friends and contacts in other states, asking for their help in finding Ona.

Ona Judge was determined to avoid capture. She traveled through several states, and she disguised herself as a free Black woman. She worked as a seamstress and a hairdresser, and she saved her money.

The Washingtons' pursuit of Ona Judge lasted for several years. They sent agents to search for her in New Hampshire, New York, and Pennsylvania.

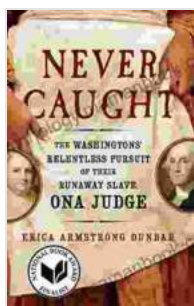
They even offered a reward of \$1,000 for her capture.

Ona Judge's Freedom

Despite the Washingtons' relentless pursuit, Ona Judge managed to evade capture. She lived a free life for over 30 years. She married a free Black man named John Staines, and they had two children.

Ona Judge died in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1848. She was 75 years old. She was buried in a local cemetery, and her grave remained unmarked for many years.

The story of Ona Judge is a testament to the resilience and determination of those who fought for their freedom. Despite the Washingtons' relentless pursuit, Ona Judge managed to evade capture and live a free life. Her story is a reminder of the horrors of slavery and the indomitable spirit of those who resisted it.



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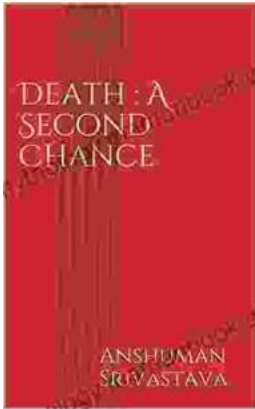
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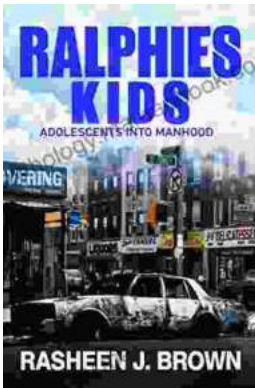
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