

About the first of February, 1881, the Talbott brothers, under sentence of death for the murder of their father, Dr. Talbott, a wealthy and prominent gentleman of Nodaway County, were brought to the St. Joseph jail for safe keeping until the day set for their execution. Mrs. Talbott came to see her boys, and I proposed to rescue them and see them safely out of the country, provided she would put up one thousand dollars (which would secure my release), furnish money to buy arms and horses and defray traveling expenses. Next morning she returned and handed me a belt containing ten hundred and twenty dollars, with orders to call at her house as soon as liberated. My attorney, Colonel Sam B. Green, took the money and deposited it in the First National Bank, whose president, Honorable A. M. Saxton, came to the court house, signed my bond, and I walked out a free man once more. Next day I arrived at the Talbot mansion and was greeted with tears and cheers of the sorrowing mother of the doomed boys. I was furnished ample means for carrying out my design, and a fine mule team, wagon and harness and an excellent saddle horse were given into my charge. The team was intended for conveying the boys away after being released, and the horse was a present to myself. A livery stable man of St. Joseph was interested in and hoped for my success and furnished me one of the best carriage teams in the city with which to carry the boys to the mule team in the woods near Al and Nora's house. "Big Mike" was also in jail waiting trial for robbing the train at Paw Paw Junction. After passing the postoffice I stopped the team and got out of the carriage, for that mysterious messenger, which has accompanied me through so many adventures, now warned me that "discretion is the better part of valor," and that I had better investigate matters before venturing further, and it is well for me that I heeded the warning of the "still, small voice," for when I reached the jail, "Big Mike" informed me through the "chuck hole" that it was heavily guarded, and certain death awaited me in case I made an effort to rescue him and the Talbot boys. The Sheriff overheard them wish for my return, and, suspecting their mother's money had effected my release, notified the court, from which he received

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A large majority of those driven from their humble homes by the river were very poor, and lived, as it were, from hand to mouth, even in good times; but now, in their deplorable condition, they became worthy objects of pity and assistance. The bluffs were alive with bare-footed, pale-faced, hungry little children, care-worn mothers and tired fathers. This was a most affecting scene, and, strange to say, many of the people from whom I could take nothing and had not, and never desired to wrong in any way, had earnestly sought my life or liberty; yet their sad situation aroused my sympathy to its utmost capacity. I drove Mrs. Talbot's mules and horse to St. Joseph, sold them and distributed the money among the most needy of these unfortunate people. It may be thought that I could well afford to be charitable with other people's money, yet it was virtually mine, as Mrs. Talbott had not asked the return of her property, and the probabilities were it would not have been restored if she had, consequently my generosity was the effusion of true sympathy and self-sacrifice. But my kindness was not appreciated, as these same people to whom I gave the money were, when again in their own homes, as bitter toward me as before.