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## Slaves' Experience On The Middle Passage

The slaves on the Middle Passage experienced a dreadful journey that lasted one to three months. It was a voyage they did not desire as they were tightly packed into a ship with other slaves. The slaves were treated as worthless animals, to then onboard the ship to do hard labor for no pay. The Middle Passage was a very horrific experience for slaves.

Slaves experienced many horrors on the Middle Passage. The moment the slaves were brought onto the ship to end up in another continent to do hard labor, it introduced them to an atmosphere no one would want to be in. The slaves had no knowledge where they were being taken to, what was going to happen to them, or if they would even be alive at the end of it. Upon boarding, the slaves were thrown beneath the deck and immediately introduced to the horrific scene under the deck of the ship, and the stench awaiting them inside was sickening. The slaves were branded like they were animals and they were completely dehumanized.

The slaves were all packed together like cargo, with the number of slaves reaching amounts of about 800 people. There was no way to become comfortable at the slightest. There was almost no air to breathe. Fresh air became scarce. Sharing it with many other people in a small tightly packed area, who are also trying to breathe comfortably, led to near suffocation. The air would eventually become unsuitable for breathing, because soon it became humid from all the sweat and tears the slaves were producing from being in the hot and bleak climate. Many of the slaves began to wish for death, as it seemed as their only escape from what they were experiencing. Many slaves jumped out to sea when they got the chance to and drowned themselves to death. Those who were not as lucky to have killed themselves were then flogged for their actions to rather die; instead of serving as a slave to a master. Sickness was inevitable, and the slaves would begin to become sick, and many died due to sickness. During some instances, sick slaves were thrown overboard to prevent other slaves from getting sick. Sickness would make people refuse to eat and made them lose their appetite. The slaves were forcefully fed, and if the slaves refused to eat, they were punished by the sailors for not eating. Some slaves attempted to starve themselves to death.

The slaves were punished in the manner of being cut, whipped, and being flogged. It would seem as it would be simpler to let the slaves just die and not care for them, but the goal was to transport the slaves and sell them and having dead slaves would only lower their profits. The slaves were stricken by fear and feared the sailors heavily. It seemed like there would never be an end to their suffering, but soon enough the suffering on the ship would end for them. The ship finally arrived at its destination, at the island of Barbados. The slaves finally felt something other than fear, sadness, or death. They felt joy to finally get off the ship and breathe fresh air

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without being tightly packed and exposed to sickness. Their suffering was over for the moment. Merchants and planters boarded ships to examine the slaves to see if they were well enough to work, then after they were directed to eventually go onto the land. Slaves feared again, because thoughts emerged if they were going to be eaten by the white men. Right after, the slaves were thrown back under the deck again, and all the horror from being under the deck began again. The slaves were then packed together again to be sent to the land. What the slaves saw was something they had never seen before in their lives, as the architecture was vastly different from the architecture in Africa, the houses at Barbados were made of brick instead of what they used to construct houses in Africa. Seeing people riding on horses made the slaves believe that the white people performed magic to be able to ride a horse. Soon the magic for the slaves was over, and the slave auctions began, and soon did their horrors again. No longer would they have to suffer from being in an overly crowded and disgusting ship with other slaves, but they would have to suffer from being separated from the friends they made on the ship and their families.

The slaves would never see them again; such a sad event to go through. The slaves saw the merchants as monsters and almost any person would, especially if they were ripped apart from their family and friends, only to do hard labor and live a sad life for no pay. It was a better situation than being on a ship and suffering, but they were no longer with friends or family, and had no knowledge where they were or if they were still alive. A long dreadful journey ended for the slaves, but a new dreadful life began for them. Money was more important than people, especially if they were just counted as property, and not a person at all.

In conclusion, the Middle Passage was a horrific experience for slaves, and they were completely dehumanized and exposed to sickness. Packed together and terrified, slaves had no idea what was going to happen to them. Slaves thought they were in paradise for a slight moment upon arriving on land, but soon their horrors returned to them when they were separated from their loved ones. A sad life the slaves would live for the rest of their lives. The Middle Passage was a horrific thing to experience.

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