

Dr Mikaël Jones
1509 Santa Monica Sc. Boulevard
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Dear Grandson,
Dear Mikaël,

How are you ? Is your mother feeling better ? Well, I hope so. In your last letter, you were a little lost about the history of your country. So I will explain it to you in this letter.

To begin with, Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492. And in 1619 the first slaves arrived in America. That is when slavery began. 80% of all slaves shipped to the Americas were put to work on plantations. They worked long hours in the fields and were punished if they did not work hard enough. Other slaves worked in houses as servants. But in 1865, slavery was abolished by Abraham Lincoln.

From the 1880s. into the 1960s., Americans enforced segregation through « Jim Crow laws ». Those laws restricted the rights of African Americans. For example : On buses white people and black people were separated by a partition and blacks were not allowed to sit at the front of buses. But the whites had that privilege. The school for white children and for black children was conducted separately. Black people couldn't vote unlike white people. White and Black people did not enjoy the same treatment. However, in 1955 Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white passenger in a bus. As a result, she was arrested in Montgomery for disobeying an Alabama law. Thanks to her, buses were desegregated in 1956.

In 1960, Ruby Bridges became the first black child who integrated a white school. She declared her parents had argued about her integration in an all-white school. It marked the end of school segregation there.

On August 28 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial, in Washington D.C. Martin Luther King defended black people's rights and he said he wanted them to be free in his famous « I have a dream » speech. It was very symbolic for black people. It was a symbol of freedom and equality. Civil Rights activists kept on struggling for their rights in spite of the risks. But Martin Luther King was assassinated in 1968.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act. Black activists had obtained the right to vote and they had won a big battle.

But nowadays, the unemployed rate is high among African Americans, and 3 African Americans are killed by the police every day in the USA.

Mikaël, I hope that thanks to this letter you will better understand the history of your country.

Send me a letter.

Lots of love!

Miss Sophia Morauso