



# The REVOLUTION

That GAVE BIRTH  
To

# HAITI

Text by Laurent Dubois

Illustrations by Rocky Cotard



*I have avenged America.*

—Jean-Jacques Dessalines, 1804



### Illustrated by Rocky Cotard

Rocky Cotard defies the narrow representation of Haiti through media, encouraging pride in the Haitian experience. Cotard has been an adjunct professor at Lesley University, has exhibited his work in galleries, and has been featured in *Migrating Colors: Haitian Art in New England*, created by the Haitian Artists Assembly of Massachusetts (HAAM). Find him on Instagram @rockycotard or at rockycotard.com.



### Written by Laurent Dubois

Laurent Dubois is a Professor of Romance Studies and History at Duke University and the Director of Duke's Forum for Scholars and Publics. He is the author of *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* and *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. He tweets @soccerpolitics.

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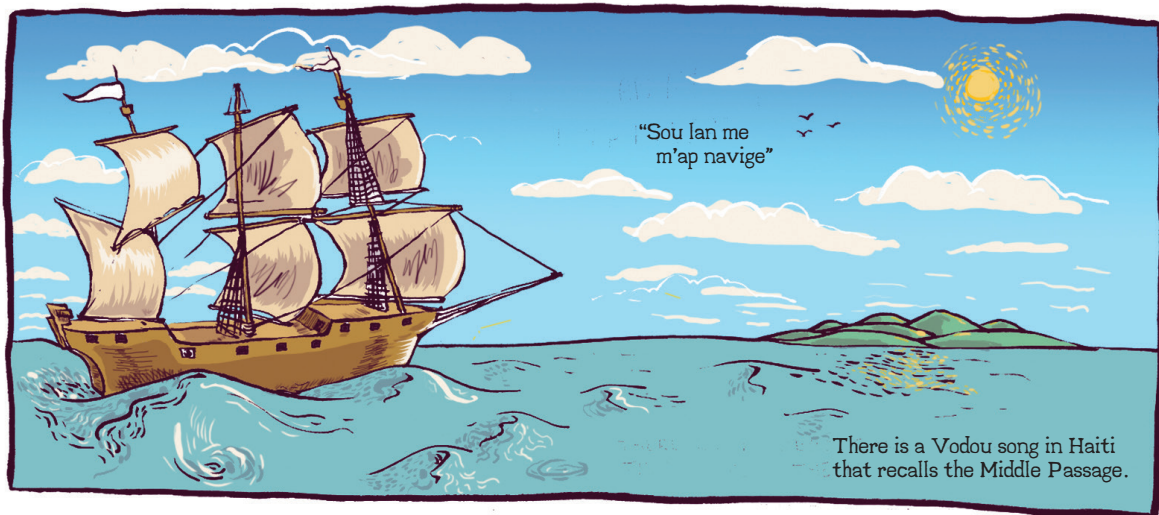
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"The Slave Revolution That Gave Birth to Haiti" on TheNib.com.

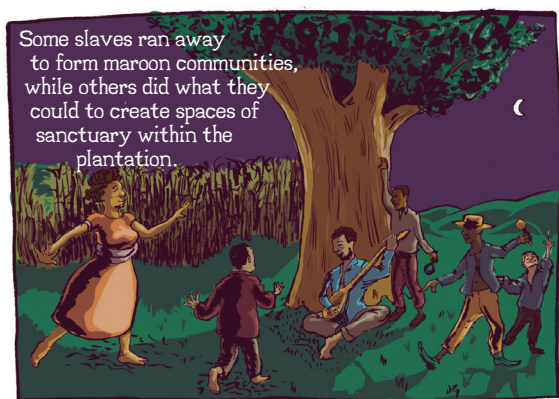
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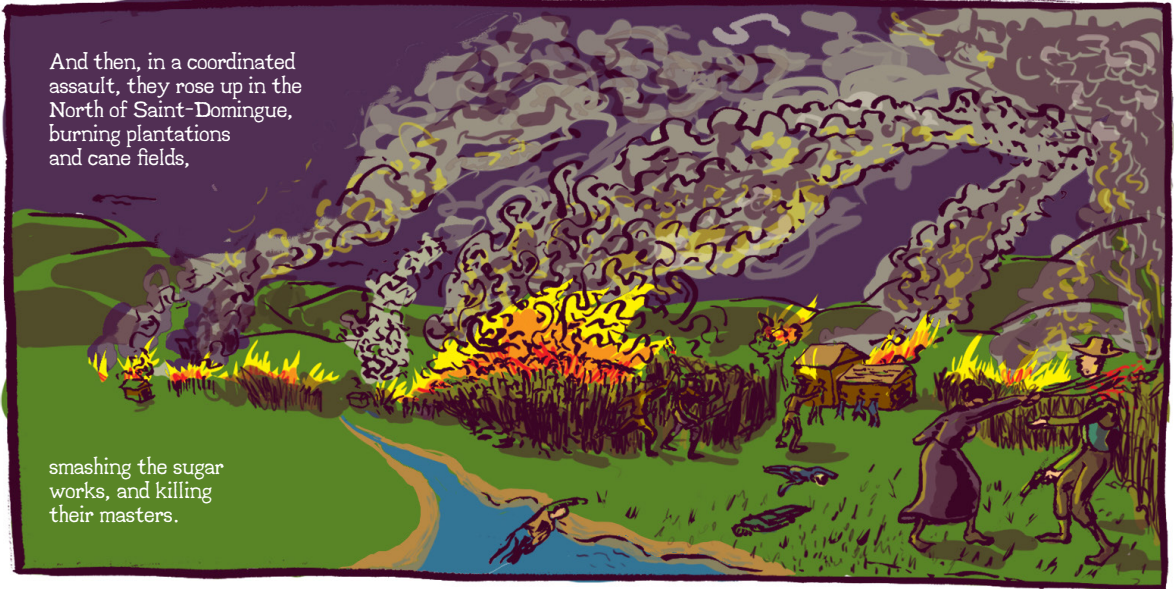
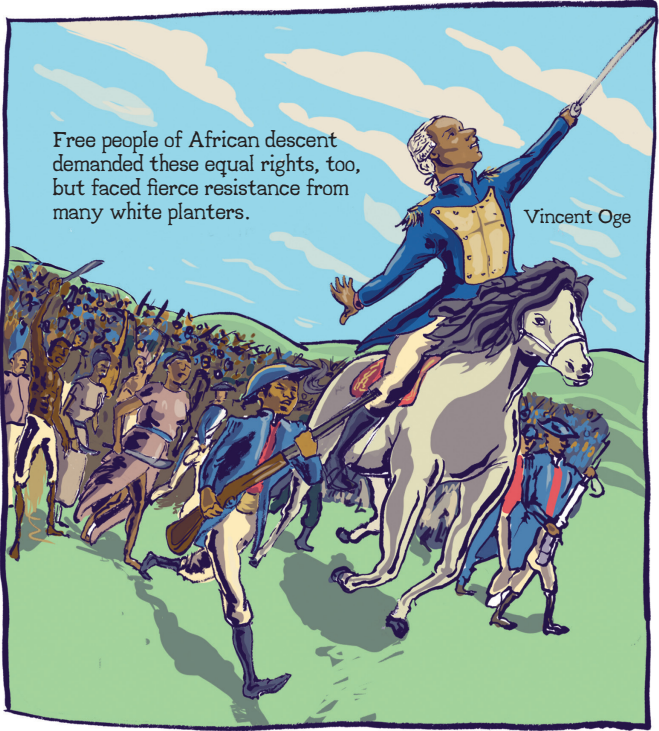


Some free people of African descent were able to acquire plantations or properties in the towns, though they faced social and legal discrimination.

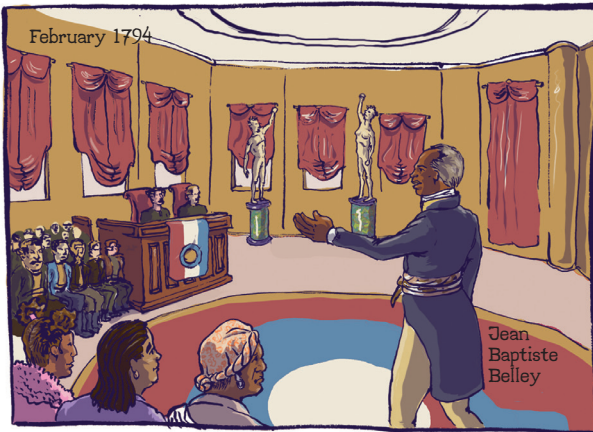
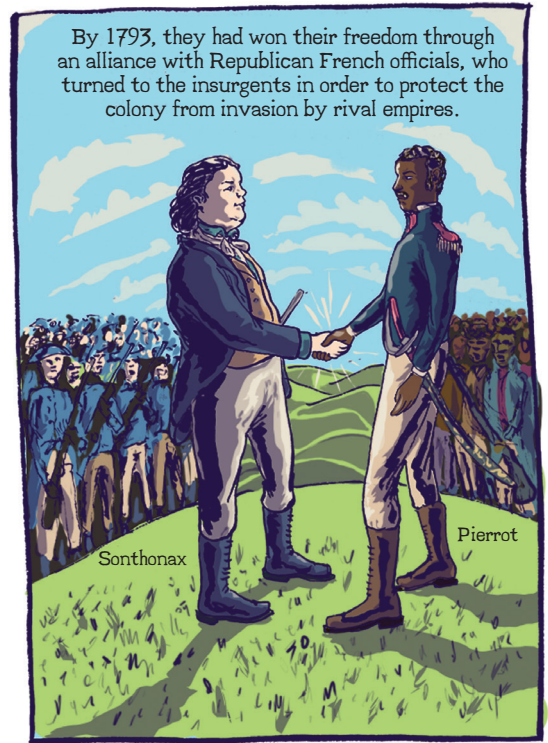




The French Revolution of 1789 changed things. Political conflict weakened colonial power, and news reached the island of declarations in Paris about universal human rights.







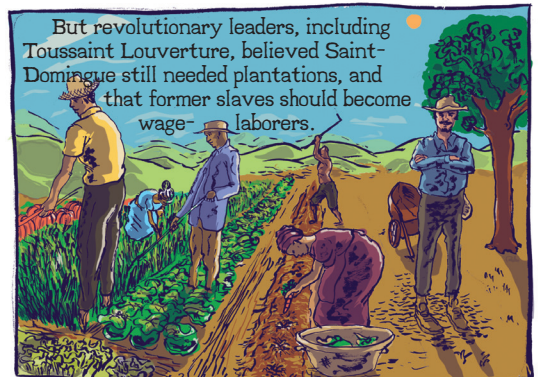
A delegation travelled to Paris and explained how the insurgents were protecting the colony for France, while white planters were turning to England in a bid to preserve slavery. The National Convention declared slavery abolished throughout the French empire. This was the first time in recorded history that a nation abolished slavery.



On many plantations, women took a lead role, insisting they had more time for themselves away from the fields.



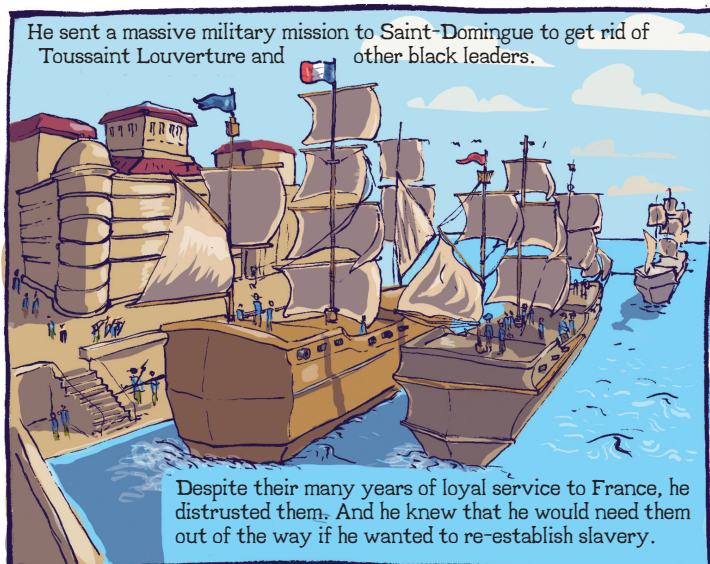
But what is freedom? For the formerly enslaved, it meant having their own land to cultivate for families and communities.







The Haitian Revolution was often represented at the time — and since — as an unleashing of barbarism, with white victims as martyrs.







But he severely underestimated the determination of the people of the colony to remain free.

A new society had been born in Saint-Domingue, and the population was not going to go back.

The arrival of the French troops set off a brutal year-long war,



but the defenders of liberty ultimately triumphed in late 1803.



It was the only successful slave revolution in history.



With the defeat of the French, Haiti was born.

## Read more about the Haitian Revolution!

To learn more, read *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 2004) by Laurent Dubois and *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1787-1804: A History in Documents* (Bedford Press, 2006) by Laurent Dubois and John Garrigus, or watch the PBS documentary, *Egalité for All: Human Rights and the Haitian Revolution* (available on YouTube).