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Born to enslaved Africans in 1797 in upstate New York, Isabella Baumfree spent her youth in chains, viciously abused. At nine years of age, she was taken away from her parents and sold to a stranger, who paid \$100 for the child and a flock of sheep.

Baumfree bore five children, the second a result of rape by slaveholder John Dumont. When, in 1826, Dumont reneged on his promise to emancipate her, she ran away and found refuge at the home of abolitionists Isaac and Maria Van Wagenen, who paid her \$20 for her labor until New York's Emancipation Day in 1827. The couple also helped her find her son Peter, sold illegally to an Alabama slaveholder, and to bring his case to court. Following a tortuous legal process, the court ruled in her favor and Peter was returned to her. Baumfree became the first Black woman to win such a case against a white man.

Later, Baumfree experienced a religious awakening. She took the name Sojourner Truth and began touring the country speaking against slavery. In 1851, she delivered one of the most famous speeches on African American and women's rights in U.S. history, "Ain't I A Woman?" For most of her remaining life, Truth continued to travel the United States and advocate ferociously for the rights of African Americans and women, including their right to vote.

This figure depicts the fierce strength and dignity of Sojourner Truth. In her hand, she holds the scales of justice, then, as now, woefully broken for so many.