

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

By Carole L. Cooney

George Washington Carver was a famous American scientist and educator. He is especially famous for his research on the peanut. He was born of slave parents and lived in Missouri. One night a band of robbers attacked his family and stole little George and his mother. Days later, George was found unharmed by some neighbors and was traded back to his owners in exchange for a race horse. Because he was a sickly boy, he could not work in the fields. Instead, he worked planting his own garden and gradually produced his own medicines. He soon earned the nickname, The Plant Doctor.

Setting: The Carver Shack; the Adams Farm; the Whitson Farm

Characters:

Narrator

Sly, a robber

Jake, a robber

George

Farmer Whitson

Barney, a slave

Farmer Adams

Narrator: George Washington Carver was a famous American scientist and educator. He was born to slave parents who worked on a farm in Missouri. One night a band of robbers attacked his family and stole little George and his mother.

Sly: (whispering) Hey, Jake! The light just went out. It's time to rustle us up some slaves.

Jake: (whispering) All right. I'll take the woman and you get the kid.

Narrator: The robbers kicked in the door of the shack and ran into the dark room.

George: Mama, what's goin' on? There's a big man in here. Stop it, you're hurting me!

Narrator: Sly grabbed George and threw him over his shoulder. Then he made his way out the door onto his horse. Jake struggled with George's mother but finally led her out of the shack and onto his horse. They all disappeared into the shadowy forest. Days later, George was found by a slave at the next farm.

Barney: (calling) Master, Master! Come quick! There's a little boy lying in the field. I can't tell if he's dead or alive.

Farmer Whitson: What are you saying to me? A boy in my field?

Barney: Yes, sir! Out there in the corn field. Do you want me to fetch him?

Farmer Whitson: I suppose it wouldn't do any harm.

Narrator: Barney dashes into the corn field to examine George. He walks slowly toward little George and timidly calls to him.

Barney: Hey! Hey you! What's your name?

George: (softly) Mama, Mama, my head hurts. Mama, help me.

Barney: Are you okay?

George: Mama, that big man hit me. Mama, why don't you answer me?

Narrator: Barney kneels down beside George and places his hand gently on his shoulder.

Barney: Your mama isn't here right now, so you better get up and come with me. I'll help you up and take you to my Master.

Narrator: Mr. Whitson waits as he see Barney leading little George through the corn field.

Farmer Whitson: Why, I know that little boy. His family works on the next farm. Well, well... let's see what kind of deal I can make of this.

Narrator: Farmer Whitson has Barney take George to the slaves' shack to be cleaned up. Then he takes George to the next farm. He dismounts and walks up to Farmer Adams.

Farmer Whitson: Well, Adams, it looks like I found one of yours lying in our corn field. Do you want him back? He looks like he could be a good worker.

Farmer Adams: That's little George. A good boy. I can use him. What do you want in exchange?

Farmer Whitson: I've been eyeing *Sunday Sam*. He's a pretty nice horse.

Farmer Adams: Yes, he's one of my best racers although he came up a bit lame the last race. I'll offer him to you for little George.

Farmer Whitson: It's a chance, but I'll take it.

Narrator: And so, George was traded back to his owner, Farmer Adams. Because he knew George was a sickly child, Farmer Adams had him work in the garden. Pretty soon, George had his own little garden near the woods where he would talk to the plants as he watched them grow. Soon he earned the nickname, *The Plant Doctor* because he was making medicines from the plants he grew.