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“Please . . .” She stood up, trying to reach toward him for mercy.

The man yanked her arm to pull her back into the wagon. “Shut up, girl. Stop fussin’ or I’ll whup you till you can’t do nothin’.”

“Master Brodas,” she yelled toward his back, “can I make my farewells to Mama?”

No answer.

“Please, Master, please . . .”

Mr. Cook made clucking sounds to the horses and flicked the reins. The wagon pulled out onto the dirt road leading away from the plantation. The muffled clip-clop of the horses’ hooves sent puffs of dust into the air. Minty looked back, hoping for a glimpse of her family, but all she saw was the Big House—getting smaller and smaller as she moved away from everything she knew and everyone she loved.