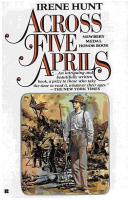


Passages

Reading Level 8



Title: Across Five Aprils

Author: Irene Hunt

Sample From The Book

Ellen Creighton and her nine-year-old son, Jethro, were planting potatoes in the half-acre just south of their cabin that morning in mid-April, 1861; they were out in the field as soon as breakfast was over; and southern Illinois at that hour was pink with sunrise and swelling redbud and clusters of bloom over the apple orchard across the road. Jethro walked on the warm clods of plowed earth and felt them crumble beneath his feet as he helped his mother carry the tub of potato cuttings they had prepared the night before.

“It’s damp fur down and warm on top,” he remarked, poking a brown hand deep into the soil. “Once we git these planted and a soft rain comes, we’ll hev a crop to make people up north call us ‘Egypt’ fer sure.”

He filled a burlap pouch with the potato cuttings and hoisted it expertly to his thin shoulder where a batch of new freckles was just beginning to appear. The world seemed a good place to him that morning, and he felt ready to stride down the length of the field with a firm step and a joke on his lips.



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