

# Article summary

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The story in question tells the tale of Charles Waddel Chesnutt, a freeborn black who came to the South after the war as a means of starting a small agricultural business. Dreaming of cultivating grapes, something he had done before in Ohio, he located a promising former plantation in North Carolina and set out to visit it. Upon visiting, he ran into a former slave, “Uncle Julius”, who regaled he and his wife, Annie, regarding mysterious events surrounding the life and times of this former plantation. Julius went on and on about how the land was “goophered”; another term for cursed or bewitched. Ultimately, Julius told Chesnutt the tale of how the former plantation owner had had so much of his revenue lost to many blacks coming and eating the scuppernong grapes prior to harvest and unlawfully that the owner set out to hire an enchanter to curse the vines and thereby save his profits from being eaten.

Story by story and tale by tale, Julius relates what horrible fates met the individuals that dared to eat of these grapes after the curse had been completed. Once Julius story is complete, he advises Chesnutt not to buy the former plantation again referencing the fact that it is cursed. At this point in time, Chesnutt begins to narrate the story once again and notes that he has since bought the plantation and has turned a sizable profit. Moreover, he has employed Julius who he believes told him this tall tale as a means of discouraging him from taking the property away from him; due to the fact that he was making quite a bit of money harvesting the grapes and selling them secretly.