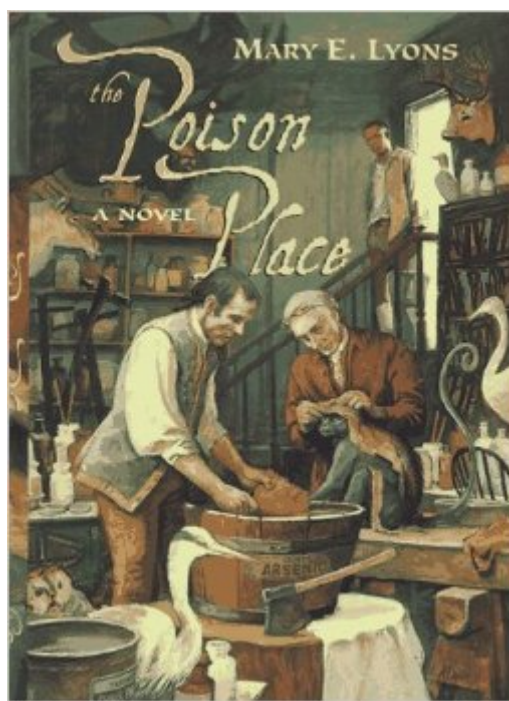


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# The Poison Place



## Synopsis

It's a dark night in 1827 when Moses Williams, Charles Willson Peale's former slave, reveals to his daughter this startling account of jealousy, betrayal, and suspicion to be found with the walls of the famous Peale Museum. In a fascinating psychological profile and study of urban slave life in post-Revolutionary Philadelphia, Moses tells a remarkable story indeed.

## Book Information

Age Range: 12 and up

Lexile Measure: 830L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Atheneum; 1st edition (October 1, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689811462

ISBN-13: 978-0689811463

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.8 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,857,074 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Historical Fiction > Biographical > United States](#) #537 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > United States](#) #1516 in [Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States](#)

## Customer Reviews

This is one of those books that completely has a hold on you while you read it. The best thing about it? You're excitedly reading historical fiction and gleaning many facts about the artist Charles Peale, the Civil War, slave life, etc. The story is being told right to you, as recalled by the main character, Moses Williams. The chapters are set up in a tour-like layout of Peale's Museum. Moses leads you from one room to the next, continuing to tell you about his life as you step in and look at your new surroundings. He verbally guides you personally, making this a very imaginative book. For example: "These stairs are tricky, like everything else round this place. The wood's been scalloped by thousands of boots and slippers." Permeating every part of the story, there is the foreboding Poison (arsenic), and the creeping presence of Charles Peale---a great artist and taxidermist in his day, although out of his mind, as the story progresses. I rather enjoyed learning about arsenic, about preserving dead animals, about life as an artist, about using a physiognotrace, and so much more. The author has done a wonderful job of piecing everything together into a riveting novel. There is an

eerie and mysterious appeal to the book, which keeps you wondering what will take place next. Notes: I do not remember any profanities used whatsoever---but every once in a while, just for a brief moment, a certain word or phrase seemed to be insinuating something offensive. Because of this, I felt it right to take my rating down to 4 stars.

I would highly recommend *The Poison Place* by Mary E. Lyons. It is truly a gem of a book. A fascinating story, told in the words of a former slave, makes it come alive, and keeps you wondering, 'What happens next?' If you don't like historical fiction books, you should still try this novel. It's definitely one in a class of its own!

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Greek Fire, Poison Arrows, & Scorpion Bombs  
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