



The first novel in the Seeds of America trilogy.

Thirteen year old Isabel and her younger sister Ruth are slaves. They are promised freedom upon the death of their owner, but her nephew fails to honour this promise and sells the girls to a cruel couple called the Locktons from New York. Isabel meets and befriends a slave boy called Curzon who encourages her to spy on her owners and pass the information to the revolutionaries.



### The Slave Trade in America

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, people were kidnapped from the continent of Africa, forced into slavery in America and forced to work on plantations, mainly in the production of cotton and tobacco. Slavery continued until the mid nineteenth century and was responsible for the civil war which tore the country apart. Eventually the unionists won and slavery was abolished, although the legacy of slavery still lives on.

### Which states had slavery

**Slave states** were the states in the United States that slavery and the sale of slaves were legal between the years of 1820 and 1860. **Free states** were the states in the United States where slavery and the sale of slaves were illegal. There were thirteen states where slavery was legal.

### The American Civil War

The American Civil War was a civil war in the United States. It was fought between the United States and the Confederacy. The central cause of the war was the dispute over whether slavery would be permitted to expand into the western territories, leading to more slave states, or be prevented from doing so, which was widely believed would place slavery on a course of ultimate extinction.

Characters	Description
<b>Isabel</b>	The protagonist and narrator of the novel who always strives her best to get out of slavery and back to Rhode Island with her sister Ruth. She is very caring towards Ruth and stands up to Mrs Lockton when her sister is taken away from her, which resulted in a harsh punishment.
<b>Ruth</b>	She is five years old and suffers from epilepsy. She doesn't talk much and does what she is told without question. She is preferred by Mrs Lockton and becomes her personal maid. She stubbornly asks for her doll every night despite knowing that all her possessions were taken away.
<b>Curzon</b>	He is a slave of Mr Bellingham and a very good friend to Isabel. He eventually helps her achieve her freedom by encouraging her to spy on her owners and share the information with the Patriots. He joins the Army to help his country fight for their independence.
<b>The Locktons</b>	They are the owners of Isabel and Ruth and try to make the girls lives as miserable as possible. They are Loyalists and Mr Lockton tries to get rebels to join the British side through bribery. His plans are thwarted by Isabel's spying. Anne Lockton is the main antagonist of the novel who torments Isabel mercilessly.
<b>Lady Seymour</b>	She is Mr Lockton's aunt and is very kind to slaves. She cares for Isabel after her harsh punishment and even serves her milk and cookies on one of her visits. This is something that was virtually unheard of at the time.
<b>Mrs Finch</b>	Isabel's previous owner who promised her and Ruth freedom on her death. The instruction was ignored by the nephew and he sold them to the Locktons.