



Forbidden Fruit: Love Stories from the Underground Railroad

Betty DeRamus

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Forbidden Fruit is a collection of fascinating, largely untold stories of ordinary men and women who took extraordinary measures, risking life and limb to be together. It's the story of couples who faced mobs, bloodhounds, bounty hunters, and bullets to defy the system that allowed slave masters to breed and sell people like cattle. Some broke the taboo against interracial marriage, putting their lives in the most severe peril.

In one remarkable story, a Georgia couple who fled slavery wearing multiple disguises sailed for England with bounty hunters and federal troops on their trail. A fugitive slave from Virginia spent seventeen arduous years searching for his wife. A Missouri slave fell in love with his white Mormon neighbor and escaped to Canada to be with her, putting pepper in his shoes to throw dogs off the scent at night and hiding in trees by day.

Betty DeRamus gleaned these amazing stories from descendants of runaway slave couples, unpublished memoirs, Civil War records, books, magazines, and dozens of previously untapped sources. Beautifully and compassionately written, this important book reveals a chapter of American history that is shameful but is about triumph as well as torture, achievement as well as degradation, and indomitable love as well as hate.

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