



Exum, a free black man with a town of his own in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, longed for the beauty of the women he'd known in the South - young and spry with skin the color of syrup.

But it's 1849, and while gold runs free in California, slavery's manacle still chokes the South. There was only one man Exum could trust with his money and the task of going South for a woman.

"...I'll go", Cassie Lee volunteered, stepping forward from the band of slaves to snatch the promise of freedom from the stranger's hand.

Cassie Lee didn't know where she was going or what she would find but she knew California had to be better than the enslaved South. And it was!