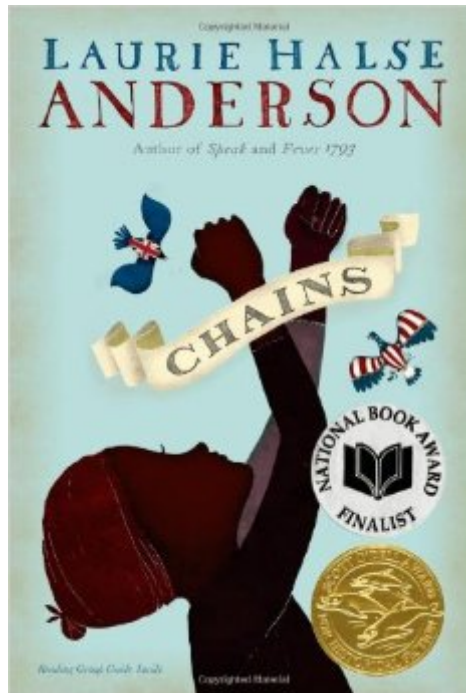


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# Chains (The Seeds Of America Trilogy)



## Synopsis

If an entire nation could seek its freedom, why not a girl? As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom. From acclaimed author Laurie Halse Anderson comes this compelling, impeccably researched novel that shows the lengths we can go to cast off our chains, both physical and spiritual.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 780L (What's this?)

Series: The Seeds of America Trilogy

Paperback: 316 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (January 5, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1416905863

ISBN-13: 978-1416905868

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (336 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,766 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > Colonial](#) #4 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Military & Wars](#) #6 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American](#)

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

The heroine in Laurie Halse Anderson's gripping new middle level children's book, "Chains" is a thirteen year old slave named Isabel, headstrong, fierce in her determination to keep her epileptic sister Ruth with her, intuitive, and strong. What might fell the mightiest of people only serves to

strengthen Isabel, time and time again, proving that determination was much needed during this turbulent time in our nation's history. "Chains" is the children's book of the year. It's that good. Anderson's blending of a slave story with the the Revolutionary War and the battle of New York creates a story ripe with possibilities and is fresh and new. At the beginning of the story, Isabel and Ruth attend the funeral of their former owner, thinking that a will would give them freedom. Alas, it was not to be. An unscrupulous relative sells off the girls to the first customers, a pair of England loyalists named Lockton, who transport the pair to their New York home to serve them. Immediately off the boat, Isabel befriends a spritely lad Curzon, who begs to employ her in the cause of the American Revolution, playing brilliantly on the fact that white society deemed black slaves to be invisible. Only wanting her freedom, Isabel promises nothing but soon delivers, after learning of a plot to kill General Washington. When that doesn't give her freedom, she begins to mistrust the patriots' cause, and learns of the British claim to ensure freedom to any slaves that would join up against the revolution. What makes this book novel is a slavery story set, not in the south, but New York City, which naturally leads to the discussion of how slavery was in our early history throughout the country and not just in one area. It also plays with the themes of which "side" in a war is the good side?

Chains, a brilliant historical fiction book written by Laurie Halse Anderson tells the story of two enslaved girls, Isabel and her epileptic sister, Ruth. The book starts off with the two girls attending the funeral of their former owner who had just recently passed away, thinking that their master's will would give them the freedom that they deserve. However, a turn of events occur, and unfortunately an unscrupulous relative sells the girls off to the first customer who offers a decent price, a Loyalist couple from New York. When getting off the boat, Isabel meets Curzon, a slave to the well-known Patriot, Master Bellingham. Unlike most slavery-themed books, Chains takes place during the American Revolution, in 1776. During the revolutionary period, there were two sides: the Loyalists and the Patriots. Seeing that Isabel and her sister were auctioned off to serve the Loyalist couple, Curzon befriends Isabel and begs that she acts as a spy for the Patriots, in order to report any information that would be useful to them. In return, he ensured that she and her sister would eventually be free. At first she is weary of this plan, and disagrees. However, when later overhearing her master and his friends discuss about a plan to kill General Washington, she reports back to Curzon, who informs his master of everything. Over the span of many months, she overhears talks about the British ensuring freedom to the slaves who help in the war against the rebels. When not retrieving her freedom after giving the information to Curzon and his master, she quickly questions

herself and her secret alliance to the Patriots, and immediately starts to change her mind. Throughout the book, the author portrays the characters in an absolutely outstanding manner.

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