



In 1923, fifteen-year-old Hattie Shepherd, swept up by the tides of the Great Migration, flees Georgia and heads north. Full of hope, she settles in Philadelphia to build a better life. Instead she marries a man who will bring her nothing but disappointment, and watches helplessly as her firstborn twins are lost to an illness that a few pennies could have prevented. Hattie gives birth to nine more children, whom she raises with grit, mettle, and not an ounce of the tenderness they crave. She vows to prepare them to meet a world that will not be kind. Their lives,

captured here in twelve luminous threads, tell the story of a mother's monumental courage—and a nation's tumultuous journey.