



Eleven Pounds: It Came to Pass

Jewel Thomas

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Just eleven years after slavery ended, George Pounds traded the tobacco fields of Danville, Virginia, for the coal mines of Smithfield and Herminie, Pennsylvania. George, a white-skinned mulatto born in 1876 to a sharecropper on a tobacco farm, vowed to have a better life than his parents. Cora Hatchet, a dark-skinned Negro born in 1880 to slaves, vowed to support her siblings, even if it meant a life of drudgery as a domestic servant. The two fell in love and married, and their life's journey as an interracial couple, which began in the 19th century, forms the basis for this historic novel based on family history.

Eleven Pounds shares the couple's courage in moving forward even as they were touched by tragedy. George and Cora taught their children and generations following that they could compete with anybody anywhere if they maintained a strong work ethic, commitment to faith and family, and a belief that the color of a man's skin cannot destroy his potential.

Their story also stresses the importance of choosing marriage partners based on character, being brave in the face of adversity, helping others, and trusting in God when darkness descends.

Jewel Thomas drew on oral history from family members, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs, census records, and birth, marriage and death certificates in crafting this unforgettable story of one family's determination to not only survive but thrive.

Jewel Thomas began research for this book in 2003, meeting weekly with her source, Lillian Robinson (Aunt Jack), to learn more about the family's history. Jewel, born and raised in Herminie, Pennsylvania, has a master's degree in public policy and management from Carnegie-Mellon University. She believes that every family has a story that is worth telling.

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