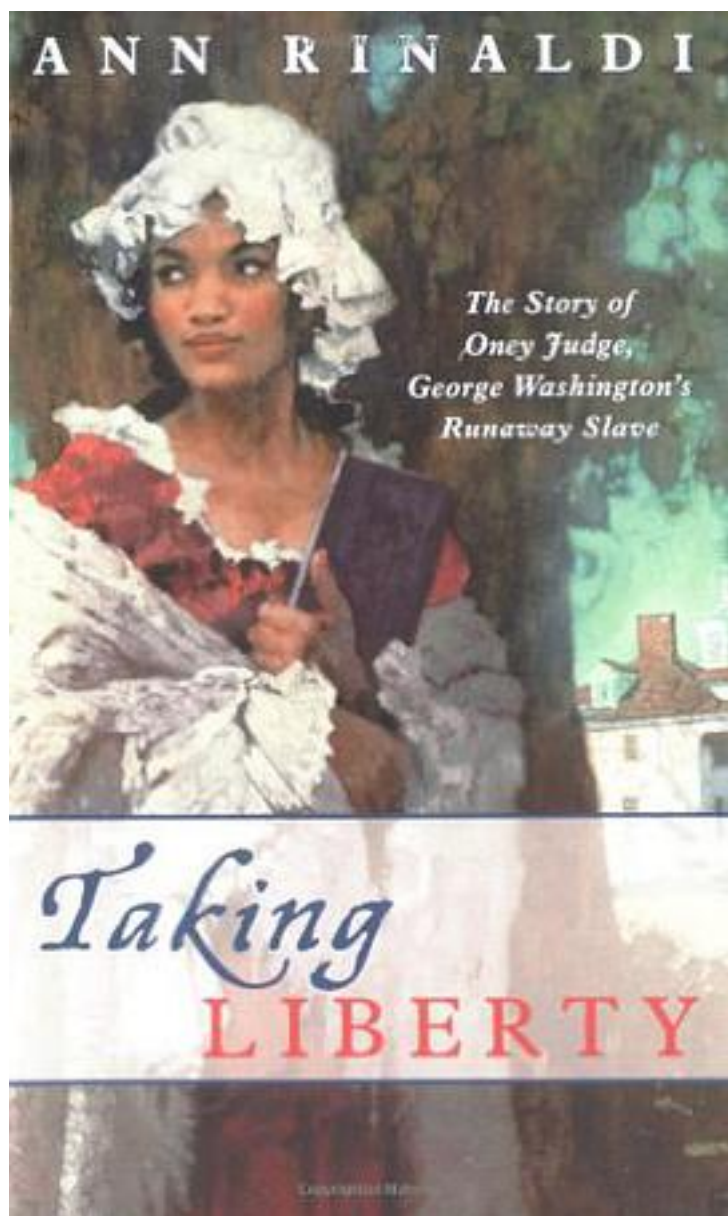


Taking Liberty



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When I was four and my daddy left, I cried, but I understood. He became part of the Gone. The only life Oney Judge has ever known is servitude. As part of the staff of George and Martha Washington, she isn't referred to as a slave. She is a servant -- and a house servant at that, a position of influence and respect on the plantation of Mount Vernon. When she rises to the position of personal servant to Martha Washington, her status among the household staff -- black and white -- is second to none. She is Lady Washington's closest confidante and, for all intents and purposes, a member of the family -- or so she thinks. Slowly, Oney's perception of her life with the Washingtons begins to crack as she realizes the truth: No matter how close she becomes with Lady Washington, no matter what secrets they share, she will never be a member of the family. And regardless of what they call it, it's still slavery and she's still a slave. Oney must make a choice: Does she stay where she is, comfortable, with this family that has loved her and nourished her and owned her since the day she was born? Or does she take liberty -- her life -- into her own hands and, like her father, become one of the Gone? Told with immense power and compassion, Taking Liberty is the extraordinary true story of one young woman's struggle to take what is rightfully hers.

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