



## **Truly Free**

*Carol Preston*

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## **Truly Free** Carol Preston

How can she help them all find freedom from the past? When Betsy's beloved grandfather dies in suspicious circumstances she is determined to find out the truth about his final hours. Even when she uncovers long held secrets in his past, she holds onto her belief in his goodness. But the journey to truth reveals issues in her own family and that of her father, from whom she has been estranged for many years. Can she face her own past? Set in the early colonial days of New South Wales and based on real characters in the mid 1800s. Truly Free continues the story from Tangled Secrets, Books 3 and 4 in the Turning the Tide Series.

## **Truly Free Details**

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Author : Carol Preston

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## **From Reader Review Truly Free for online ebook**

### **Michelle says**

This one didn't grab my attention like the others in the Turning the Tide series. I read with expectation that I would soon be gripped ... but it just didn't happen. I found the storyline to be quite predictable and in general the novel was slow.

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### **Paula Vince says**

This is another absorbing colonial read, but unlike the 3 which came before it, this one won't stand alone. I'd recommend that you read at least Tangled Secrets to get the most out of this one.

This story focuses on Betsy, the niece of Beth from the previous book. (Yep, there are two Elizabeths, often in the same scene, but I didn't find it at all confusing). Betsy is the daughter of Nipper and Maria. She's a 29-year-old wife and mother who leaves her family for a short time to look into the death of her beloved grandfather. Although it's said to be suicide, she can't wrap her mind around that. Why would an old man who loves his family cut his own throat? And why has he signed papers allowing extensive mining on his farm, something he was known to be firmly against? It seems some sinister person must have held something over him, and it can only be the secret he tried so hard to conceal in Tangled Secrets.

At the same time, Betsy grapples with flashbacks from her own past which explain her estrangement from her own father. She wants to keep her deep grudge intact but memories keep chipping away at her resolve.

She is a strong-minded heroine, particularly for that time period, which had its pros and cons. I was flinching when she revealed a long-held family secret to two snobbish aunts, yet that same independent and impulsive streak enabled her to pursue the man of her dreams and finally help vindicate the crime against her grandfather. I found I had to end up admiring her.

I would have liked to find out more about Nipper's total change of heart towards the end. His fearful and rigid attitude had been set up since he was a young boy. It seemed set like concrete and the inner workings of his heart, enabling him to open up to softness and grace would have been fascinating. As it is, we have to be content with his own explanation that he felt as if he were fighting for his life.

I loved his revelation on the last few pages that he'd figured out his father's big secret long ago, by putting two and two together. That seemed very fitting, after all the angst. Things so often happen like that in life.

Perhaps what I love most about this book is Betsy's dawning realisation that she ought to take her father's life as a whole, and not to base her feelings for him on a couple of isolated incidents of intense emotion. Now, having read the complete series, I'm left with deep admiration for the hard-working and resilient Aussies from our colonial era.

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### **Omega Writers says**

From our CALEB reviewers:

(1)

Set in New South Wales in the turbulent days of the mid-1800s, Betsy is determined to discover the truth about her grandfather's unusual and untimely death. Her journey of discovery reveals much more than she ever expected. Read about how families were tormented and split by the religious bigotry of the time and how others were ruined by the greed for gold and the corruption of many of those in positions of power.

Carol Preston's early Australian historical novel *Truly Free* is her latest in the series *Turning the Tide*. If you enjoyed *Tangled Secrets* you will be sure to relish *Truly Free*. DS

(2)

The harsh early days of Australia's settlement are captured in *Truly Free* by Carol Preston. It continues the family saga detailed in *Tangled Secrets* and is another title in the *Turning the Tide* series by the same author.

Although a work of fiction, it is based on real colonists of New South Wales and actual historical events in the mid 19th century.

Similar to other titles in the series, a fulsome family tree is central to the drama. *Truly Free* will appeal to readers fascinated by ancestral histories and the intricacies of family ties. KL

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## Wendy says

Carol Preston's "Truly Free" which I won from Goodreads Giveaways is a poignant historically-based novel with a strong message about faith and begins with the mysterious death of William (Bill) Nipperess, a farmer living on the outskirts of Walbundrie, New South Wales. Woven into a story about impaired family relationships, the destructiveness of lies, pretentiousness, greed and a probable murder are elements of hope, faith, redemption and love.

The story opens when Betsy Franks travels with her uncle and aunt to Walbundrie to uncover the facts about her grandfather's mysterious death, and his motivation for signing over mining rights to land he loved and wanted protected. Uncovering the truth about her grandfather leads Betsy on a path of self-discovery as she not only explores the suspicious death but also the destructive issues in her own family, ones that need healing.

The plot is well-structured with a natural flow as the mystery deepens and family relationships are strained under the weight of lies and misconceptions. The characters are as natural as they are memorable, their personalities growing in ways many of them never expected. Betsy Franks an amiable and obedient daughter until she fell in love is haunted by events that alienated her from a stern but loving father. Her search for the truth about her grandfather's death will bring new insight into her father's behaviour and a chance to mend past wrongs. Thomas (Nipper) Nipperess a man who fears rejection, of being abandoned, of being unloved struggles with a faith that's harsh and intolerant. Beth Thorne is Betsy's loving, tolerant aunt who with the help of her good-natured, perceptive husband Philip is determined not only to expose the truth behind an underhanded mining proposal but to help heal the breach between her brother and his daughter. There are many notable characters in this novel including schemers and snobs, like David Shannon, Patrick Quirk and Charles Chandler who discover that a lie from the past, and their planned deception in the present will undermine both their preconceptions and work ethics.

This story set in the 1800's in New South Wales is fascinating, not only in an emotional context, but an historical one as it brings a stark reality to the hardship of life and to the abundant faith in families in this early colonial period. It is an enjoyable novel, well worth reading.

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### **Ruth Bonetti says**

It helps to have read the previous book(s) and though I had done so, after a period of time I confess I got lost in the conversational back story. So it took me time to relate to this. But Carol Preston has again captured the colonial era with her family insights.

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