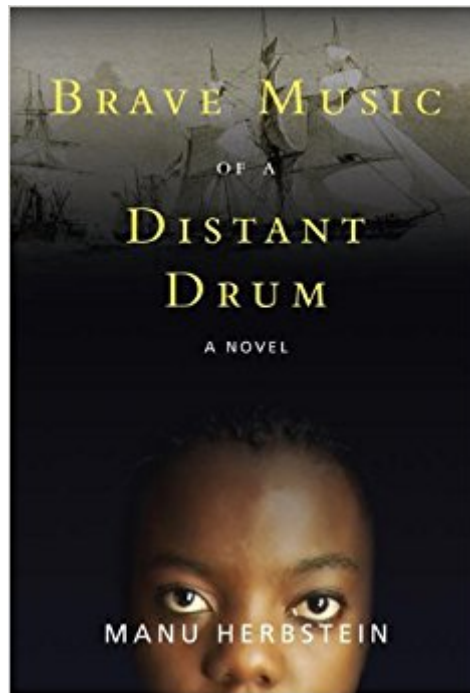




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Brave Music Of A Distant Drum



Synopsis

In *Brave Music of a Distant Drum*, a blind old slave woman, Ama, summons her son to come and write down her story so that her granddaughter and her granddaughter's children can one day read it and know their history. Ama's son, Kwame Zumbi - named Zacharias Williams by the white Christians who raised him - considers her an ugly old pagan and has little interest in doing more than is necessary to fulfill his obligation to her. How he is changed by the acts of hearing and writing down the details of his mother's story is as powerful and important a story as Ama's. The story of an African enslaved in Brazil, Ama's story is violent - it includes murder, rape, and betrayal - and yet it is also a story of courage, hope, determination, and love.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Manu Herbstein is the Ghanaian author of *Ama: A Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade* which won the 2002 Commonwealth Writer's prize for best first book. *Brave Music of a Distant Drum* makes fresh use of his original research material for a younger, North American audience.

I am blind. Knaggs' whip took out my right eye many years ago; and now my left eye too is only good for shedding tears. My hand can still hold a quill, but without guidance the marks it makes are mere scribbles. I have a story to tell. It lies within me, kicking like a child in the womb, a child whose time has come. If I had died last night, my story would by now be lying with me in my shallow grave; but I did not die last night and I will still tell my story... I pray that Kwame will bring ink and paper with him as I asked. Then I will tell him the story of my life, from the beginning; and Tomba's, such of it

as I know; and he will write it all down. And one day Nandzi Ama will read it; and her children too. Then they will know who their ancestors were and where they came from; and they will understand that the shame of their enslavement lies with the slave traders not with the enslaved.

I never believed a book could ever break me down. But this book did. It was an insightful introduction into some of the harsh realities of human history. However, it is a well-researched novel that shows the resilience of enslaved Africans and how they managed to overcome the obstacles placed on them. It was difficult, but it gave me a strong understanding of my origins and identity. It challenges me to work hard because I belong to a generation representing my ancestors and persons unborn. This book encourages me to leave good footprints in the sands of time.

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