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My Name Is Not Angelica

By Scott O'Dell



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In this historical novel set in the Virgin Islands of 1733, Raisha escapes from her Dutch "owners" in time to witness the mass suicide of her fellow slaves, who prefer death to recapture.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

O'Dell, like a conjurer, weaves worlds out of words, over the years dazzling readers with a string of remarkable novels richly steeped in a sense of time and place--and, most of all, character. His latest story is set in 1733, and centers on a slave revolt in the West Indies. As in so many of his books, O'Dell unfolds the tale through the eyes of a strong central heroine, in this case, Raisha, daughter of a Senegalese sub-chief, who is captured and sold to Danish slavers. O'Dell doesn't spare readers any of the grim realities of slavery; the details of Raisha's harrowing six-month crossing on the slave ship *God's Adventure* (which may bring to mind Paula Fox's *The Slave Dancer*), and subsequent life as a house servant on the island of St. John, are at times almost unbearably painful. But, as always, O'Dell's story is ultimately life-affirming, a moving tribute to the dignity of the human spirit. Raisha's betrothed, the Barato chief Konje, whom she eventually weds, escapes and joins a band of runaway slaves, quickly becoming their leader. Soon, "drums are talking," and the night wind carries their messages of hope from the rebel camp across the island. The voice of the drums underscores Raisha's own miseries at the Van Prok plantation (where she's given the name Angelica), and urges the story to its dramatic climax. The ending, in which all of the rebel slaves except Raisha, who is carrying Konje's child, leap to their deaths from a cliff rather than return to slavery, is so powerful, so searing, it will leave readers stunned. *My Name Is Not Angelica* is a magnificent tale, superbly told by a grand master of historical fiction. Ages 10-14.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 6-8-- Raisha, a 16-year-old Senegalese girl, is betrothed to Konje, the young king of her tribe. They are betrayed by a rival ruler, sold to slavers, and taken to the Danish Virgin Islands. The island is plagued by drought, and the owners of the plantation to which both she and her lover have been sold are listless, indifferent managers. The slaves are controlled with acts of cruelty and torture which are mandated by the local governor, but many have escaped to isolated encampments from which they communicate through African talking drums. Konje escapes and quickly becomes the leader in a nearby camp, and Raisha later joins him as both the cruel punishments and revolution grow. The rebel slaves are able to ward off a first, half-hearted attack but are then trapped by a troop of French soldiers from nearby Martinique. Facing almost certain torture and death, the slaves throw themselves from the cliffs into the sea--all except Raisha who chooses to save the life of her unborn child. The events portrayed are dramatic, and the story is a compelling indictment of slavery, but unfortunately, none of the characters achieve full dimension. The detached narrative style which O'Dell has used effectively in past novels serves here to hold readers at a distance and limits any sense of the emotions Raisha would experience under such painful circumstances. Many events (such as the long journey from Africa) are passed over so quickly that there's little sense of time or the suffering involved. Still, the novel gives a clear picture of historic events which are unfamiliar to many readers and shows once again the dehumanizing effect slavery had on both slaves and their owners. --Eleanor K. MacDonald, Beverly Hills Public Library

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Review

"O'Dell, like a conjurer, weaves worlds out of words . . . [He] doesn't spare readers any of the grim realities of slavery; the details . . . are at times almost unbearably painful . . . The ending . . . is so powerful, so searing, it will leave readers stunned." Publishers Weekly

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kirk Mathews:

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Leticia Bennet:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that's look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day every day to reading a book. The book My Name Is Not Angelica it is very good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

Bryan Lewis:

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Miguel Sherman:

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