

Over 'Vieira's Supermarket' by Eric de Brabander

Vieira's Supermarket by Eric de Brabander is a 93-page, 10 chapter historical fiction novel that uses themes of dictatorship, family, and the quest for freedom to give an overview of Portugal in the 90s. It told the story of Francisco Vieira, who received the news of having a brother and of his father being in an almost dead state. This made him travel to Brazil and brought us into another storyline.

In the early 90s, a group of people led by Henrique Galvão made history by seizing a ship, the Santa Maria. This was a form of agitation and protest against the anarchical rule of Franco and Salazar's administration. A twist comes when it is discovered that the daughter of Arthur Oliveira, who is a brother to Salazar, was on the ship and therefore needed to be protected. The hijacking ended with the ship sailing to Brazil with the remaining team members not being able to return to their country. João Vieira, the father of Francisco, was forced to live a new life there, meeting different people and facing different life experiences, until he got very ill. Curious to know how these all connect and how things end? Grab a copy of this book to find out.

I must commend the skillful and artistic nature of the author's writing, which was showcased through this book. One of them was through the employment of suspense. The effect of suspense was heightened through the different sub-topics and the process by which they were connected, as well as the use of highly descriptive words. This made for a more interesting read. The plot was purely inorganic, but they all joined together to make an epic storyline. The book gave the dates and locations of events, which helped in creating pictorial images, and the language used made the book easy to read and understand. It contained a little bit of Spanish, which made me love it more as I got to learn a few words.

Another unique and lovable thing about this book was its characters and characterization. They were so unique and fun to read about. Through each character, the author was able to successfully explain his points and tell his story through them. I admire the friendship between Francisco and Boeïs and

the mentorship and leadership of Henrique Galvão. He was like a hope-giver, and it amazes me how much they looked up to him. The part where Francisco and Toni met was emotional for me. I was really glad that they got to it.

The book was also educational. It stated facts and mentioned historical events such as the political happenings in countries and the limits of the United Nation's power over sovereign states. It showcased colonial rule and the struggle by some citizens for an independent and free Portugal. The book mirrored Portugal in its colonial time. The author was also considerate enough to include a glossary, explaining the Spanish terms used in the book, an explanatory note, and other endnotes. They provided readers with more information. I also got to find out the source of the book's title, which was formerly puzzling.

However, I was not comfortable with a part of this book, and it was the insufficient accolades accorded to João and his teammates in their quest for freedom. I felt they deserved a better life experience. Apart from this, I enjoyed the book and there was nothing I disliked about it. It had an unpredictable storyline filled with twists and turns and addressed critical and mind-provoking issues. It was also professionally edited, as I noticed just a few minor errors that were not impeding. For these reasons, I rate this book four out of four stars.

I recommend this book to historical fiction lovers. I must, however, note that young children are not advised to read this book as it deals with heavy subjects that they might not easily comprehend, and the plot may also be too complicated for them. Lovers of stories about revolutions, government, and politics are also welcome to read the book.

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