

# Reader's Roadmap

Helping you navigate the world of books

# Abraham Verghese Cutting for Stone

A novel by the author of MY OWN COUNTRY

## F V496c



Book of the Month  
March 2010



Reader's Roadmaps enable readers to pursue threads of interest inspired by a book they've just read.

## **Cutting for Stone F V496c / CD F V496c**

A tale of epic proportions, this sweeping saga begins with Sister Mary Joseph Praise, a beautiful South Asian nun who gives birth to conjoined twins in a mission hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The mother dies and the father, a British surgeon named Thomas Stone, disappears. Thus sets the stage for this monumental work, chronicling the lives of twin brothers, Marion and Shiva Stone.

Separated at birth, the twins grow up in Ethiopia, during the tumultuous reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, and it is here that Verghese introduces the reader to the ancient and exotic world of Ethiopia with all its flavors, colors, scents and sounds. These vivid descriptions of Ethiopian history and culture are wonderfully balanced with the rich and intriguing descriptions of the main characters in the novel: Indian expatriate doctors raising their two foster children, born to an Indian nun and an American surgeon, with the help of an Eritrean caretaker and her own daughter -- they feel as familiar to us as if they were members of our own family.

Major themes like the nature of love and loss; separation and displacement; Christianity and the ministry of healing are masterfully handled, and never overshadow the fact that this is, at its core, the story of two brothers, Shiva and Marion.

## **Abraham Verghese**

Abraham Verghese, MD, MACP, is Professor for the Theory and Practice of Medicine at the Stanford University School of Medicine and Senior Associate Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine. Of Indian heritage, Abraham's parents were teachers in Ethiopia, and Abraham grew up near Addis Ababa where he began his medical training. When Emperor Haile Selassie was deposed, he completed his training at Madras Medical College in India, and went to the United States for his residency as one of many foreign medical graduates.

"My ambition as a writer," Abraham Verghese says of Cutting for Stone, "was to tell a great story ... but beyond that ... I wanted the reader to see how entering medicine was a passionate quest, a romantic pursuit, a spiritual calling, a privileged yet hazardous undertaking."

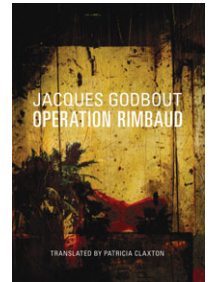
Examining the patient at the bedside, Verghese says, is an important ritual in which patients bare not just their bodies, but their souls. He tries to impart those kinds of lessons to his students at Stanford University School of Medicine, where he is currently a professor, a position that also gives him the freedom to continue writing.

This debut novel is a beautiful story that is elegantly told, and superbly structured. Highly recommended with no reservations whatsoever.



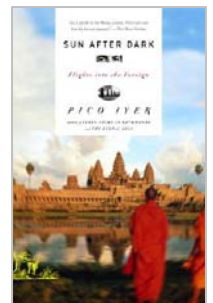
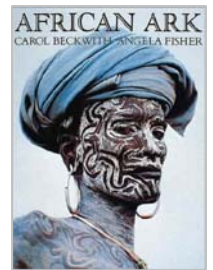
## **More Fiction Set in Ethiopia**

- Flashman on the March: From the Flashman Papers 1867-8 by George MacDonald Fraser  
**F F841fm**
- The Living Blood by Tananarive Due  
**F D8522L**
- The Unfortunate Marriage of Azeb Yitades by Nega Mezlekia  
**F M617u**
- The Eighth Wonder of the World by Leslie Epstein  
**F E642e**
- Operation Rimbaud by Jacques Godbout  
**F G577o**
- To Asmara by Thomas Keneally  
**F K33to**



## **Non-Fiction Books on Ethiopia**

- Ethiopia, the Unknown Land: A Cultural and Historical Guide by Stuart Munro-Hay  
**963 M968**
- A History of Ethiopia by Harold G. Marcus  
**963 M313**
- The Scramble for Africa, 1876-1912 by Thomas Pakenham  
**960 P237**
- African Ark People and Ancient Cultures of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher  
**305.80096 B397**
- Held at a Distance: My Rediscovery of Ethiopia by Rebecca G. Haile  
**916.3 H151**
- Sun After Dark: Flights into the Foreign by Pico Iyer  
**910.4 I97s**
- The Blue Nile by Alan Moorehead  
**960 M825**



## **More Fiction About Twins**

- Blood Lies by Daniel Kalla  
**F K14b**
- Blue River by Ethan Canin  
**F C223b**
- Brothers by Michael Bar-Zohar  
**F B2962**
- The Brothers Ashkenazi by I. J. Singer  
**F S6171b**
- Visible Worlds by Marilyn Bowering  
**F B7866v**
- Measuring Time by Helon Habila  
**F H116m**



## **More Fiction About Surgeons**

- Ambassador of the Dead by Askold Melnyczuk  
**F M527a**
- Ice Trap by Kitty Sewell  
**F S5162i**
- QB VII by Leon Uris  
**F U76q**

