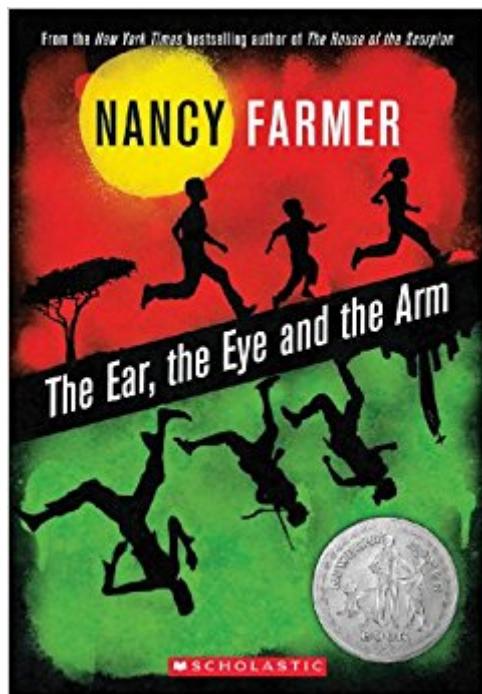


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# The Ear, The Eye, And The Arm



## **Synopsis**

This Newbery Honor book by award-winning, bestselling author Nancy Farmer is being reissued in paperback and as an e-book! The year is 2174. The place is Zimbabwe, Africa. Three adventurous children escape their parents' heavily guarded mansion to explore the dangerous world outside. They soon learn how dangerous it really is. Tendai, the oldest boy, is their leader, although he worries about being brave enough. Rita, his sister, is an expert at starting fights. Kuda, his little brother, is willing to try anything. They are quickly enslaved in a plastic mine ruled by the terrifying She Elephant and her army of vlei people. Vlei people have been living in the dump so long they look like piles of trash. The children flee them to find new perils. They are pursued by the Ear, the Eye and the Arm, detectives hired by the children's parents, who always seem to arrive too late. The worst danger of all lies at the top of the Mile High Macllwaine, a hotel so tall that it sways like a tree in the wind. For up there are not merely humans, but spirits whose aim is to devour the souls of Zimbabwe.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 336 pages

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Best Sellers Rank: #20,625 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #177 in Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives #191 in Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 7 Up?It is the year 2194 in Harare, Zimbabwe. When the three over-protected children of General Amadeus Matsika are kidnapped, they learn that their country is a land of contrasts.

Wealthy people live in homes staffed by robots and protected by automatic dobermans, while the

poor live in a neighborhood known as The Cow's Guts, mining for plastic within the tunnels of Dead Man's Vlei (a toxic waste dump). Resthaven is an enclave for people who cling to the ancient traditions, beliefs, and customs of the Shona tribe, but the nearby Maclwaine Hotel is a mile-high vertical city of apartments, schools, clinics, and supermarkets. As the children journey from one predicament to another, three unlikely detectives from an agency known as The Ear, the Eye and the Arm attempt to rescue them. Narrator George Guidall does a brilliant job of conveying the complex natures of a wide range of characters. Without resorting to vocal stereotypes, he portrays military generals, adolescent girls, gang thugs, fey tutors, ancient spirit mediums and small boys with equal skill. Coached by the author herself, he has mastered the pronunciation of vocabulary from the Shona, Xhosa, Zulu and Afrikaans languages. With its blend of high-tech futurism and authentic African tribal folklore, Nancy Farmer's Newbery Honor Book (Orchard, 1994) is an exciting selection for recorded fiction. This story will challenge young adult readers?and listeners?to think about their own lives and futures. Margaret Rigg Myhre, Cataldo Catholic School, Spokane, WA  
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Gr. 7-10. Even readers who don't like sf will be drawn to a hero who has a sense of humor about his serious mission. In Zimbabwe in the year 2194, the military ruler's 13-year-old son and his younger brother and sister leave their technologically overcontrolled home and find themselves on a series of perilous adventures. Tendai and his siblings encounter mile-high buildings and other miracles of scientific advance; they also find fetid slums and toxic waste dumps. As they're kidnapped by gangsters, forced to slave in a plastic mine, and accused of witchcraft, they're pursued by mutant detectives, who are both bumbling and sensitive and who always seem to be just one step behind rescuing the children. In the best section, the siblings find themselves in a traditional Shona village that at first seems idyllic but turns out to also encompass fierce sexism, ignorance, and disease. Throughout the story, it's the thrilling adventure that will grab readers, who will also like the comic, tender characterizations, not only of the brave, defiant trio and the absurd detectives, but also of nearly every one the kids meet, from street gangsters and spiritual healers to the English tribespeople with their weird customs. Tendai's spiritual coming-of-age is the least interesting part of the novel, but teens will like this teenager with "a hot line to the spirit world." Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I had to get a digital copy because my daughter had loved the physical copy to death. She got it

when she was 9.

I've read a lot of science fiction and fantasy and a lot of children's literature over the years. This book is going onto my list of all-time favorites. I've often longed for a SFF book that featured black protagonists who were not just background, or sidekicks, or stereotypes, or symbolic of an ideal, etc. The protagonists in this book are children with both faults and admirable qualities--just what I've been looking for---and adults who have the same blend of good and bad, childishness and maturity, which makes them real enough to engage with. The characters, though reasonably realistic, still have a larger than life appeal that makes for great fantasy fiction. The fantasy elements were integral, not just patched into the story to give it the flavor of otherness. I especially loved the curious blend of high tech science fiction elements and what I believe to be fantastical elements rooted in real African traditional beliefs. Best of all, the writing is of great quality. The author understands how to plot, how to choose words carefully, and how to create characters with whom the readers will want to go on this journey. In short, the novel is fantastic.

I read this with my 11 year old daughter who normally doesn't read sci-fi or action. This book was a fun read that adequately introduced us to necessary Zimbabwe cultures we needed to read this book along the way (without sounding like a social study's lesson). At first, I thought the main character was the 13 year old boy, but as we keep reading, we discovered that there are really two main characters. There were enough interesting ups and downs in the story to keep us engaged the whole time we read it. Certain comic reliefs were a bit too silly, but overall, we enjoyed the book very much.

There is no way to explain this book, beyond that it occurs in Africa in the future. It is a sort of science fiction, mystery story. Regardless, it has been and remains my favorite kid's book. The first time I read it, I finished it with a laugh and then promptly re-read it. Even though the book is geared toward older elementary to mid-school kids, adults will not feel shirked by the plot or character development. I believe this is one that belongs on every kid's and adult's bookshelf or tablet.

Good for school.

I love what Nancy Farmer can do....she creates worlds so close to our own and characters that are similar to ourselves it's scary. This book is science fiction but you'd love it even if you hate sci-fi. It

has a social conscience but it's not preachy. It's exciting and moving. Really there isn't enough praise I can give to book. ÅfÅ Å Å, Å ÆoeÅ Å“

The story is beautiful and captivating. The main character is the oldest of three children growing spiritually and emotionally as he reaches his thirteen's birthday. Sibling rivalries disappear as the three children face an adventure without parents which forces them to depend on one another. The main character starts to understand the position of parents with its limitations, fears, and obligations. He starts to value different personality types (including his own) going beyond first impressions or parental expectations.

I gave this book to my 13 years old grandson as a gift last year and by now he has read it twice because he enjoyed reading it so much. So I bought another copy to give to my 10 years old granddaughter as a gift.

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