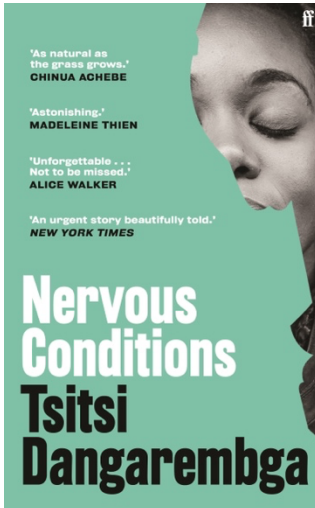




Nervous Conditions

By Tsitsi Dangarembga



Set during the colonial era in 1960's Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). It was a preference for boys rather than girls to be educated, especially in poorer families. But for young Tambu, from the Shona tribe, this is unacceptable; she wants to be educated; and she will be educated! She grows and sells corn to raise money for her school fees. Meanwhile, her brother is chosen to be educated by their wealthy uncle, but tragedy strikes and he loses his life. An offer for Tambu to take his place; which she grabs with all her heart. And in replacing her brother it is now on her that rests the economic hopes of her parents, siblings, and extended family. And within her burns the desire for learning and independence. This is Tambu telling us of her own challenges, her family's struggles through various trials, and their tribal customs as impacted by colonial teachings.

Throughout her endeavours we see Tambu's courage landing her to where she wants and how her perceptions change through the period of this story. And we live through it all with her!

The Author:

Tsitsi Dangarembga is a Zimbabwean novelist, playwright and filmmaker. Her debut novel, *Nervous Conditions*, which was the first to be published in English by a Black woman from Zimbabwe, was named by the BBC in 2018 as one of the top 100 books that have shaped the world.

Discussion Questions

1. Tambu's uncle Babamukuru dominates all the major decisions for all the families? But he also bears most of their major costs. What's your view?
2. Is Tambu showing independence or insolence by resisting her uncle when she refused to attend her parents wedding.

