

Brendan Slocumb	
(AUTHOR)	
The Violin Conspiracy	
(BOOK TITLE)	
DATE	TIME
10 MAY 2022	8:00PM ET

Book Club

EST. 2019

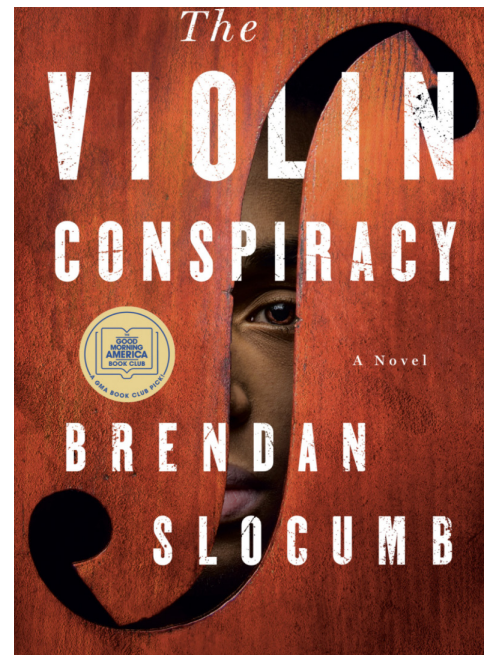
Club

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

- Brendan was raised in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and holds a degree in music education (with concentrations in violin and viola) from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. For more than twenty years he has been a public and private school music educator and has performed with orchestras throughout Northern Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.
- He is currently working on his second novel.

ABOUT THE BOOK

- The Violin Conspiracy, is about the loss of a family heirloom both valuable and priceless. And its owner, Ray McMillian, who goes from playing violin at weddings to the world's great stages, and from a rented school instrument to a storied treasure.
- The Violin Conspiracy is listed as a mystery and while the theft of a ten-million-dollar violin is at the heart of the book, the story is so much more than the theft and who stole it. It is about music and how someone who is a true musician can forget the terrible things around him and just live for the music. It is a story about the violin itself and what it meant to an enslaved boy who was subjected to horrors we can't imagine. And most of all it is the story of Ray and how his grandmother, his violin, his mentor, and those few who believed a young Black boy could become a famous classical violinist helped him to become the man and the musician he came to be.

SETTING/LOCATION

- Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition
- Markham University
- Ray's High School
- Charlotte, NC & New York City

THEMES

- Family
- Love
- Grace
- Enduring Hardships
- Racial Discrimination

MAIN CHARACTERS

- Rayquan “Ray” McMillian
- Grandma Nora
- Leon Marks/PopPop- the owner of the violin/Ray’s great-great-great-grandfather
- Janice Stevens- Mentor, violin teacher
- Nicole- Girlfriend
- Alicia Childress- Insurance company investigator
- Mother
- Thomas Marks - Leon Marks’ master and probably his father
- Aunt Joyce
- Aunt Rochelle
- Uncle Thurston

MEMORABLE SCENES

- When the violin is stolen (pg 6)
- Ray’s first gig - the wedding with Uncle Roger (pg 49)
- When Grandma Nora gave Ray the violin for Christmas (pg 71)
- Ray taking his violin to be repaired and cleaned the first time (pg 81)
- Wanting to fix up the family violin instead of buying a new one (pg 113)
- Finding out the violin was worth 10 M (pg 130)
- Playing his violin in the appraisal shop (pg 130)
- When he is pulled over and arrested in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (pg 191)
- When Ray stood up to the racist German instructor Kristoff (pg 198)
- When the Marks approach him at a diner in Boston and involve the cops (pg 225)
- Ray settling with his family (pg 236)
- Moscow’s Tchaikovsky Competition (pg 257)
- When Ray goes to Serbia for the sting to recover a violin and it is not his (pg 285, discovered not his pg 289)
- When they find PopPop’s papers in the alligator skin case (pg 299)
- When he read Leon’s letter and the common theme about respecting others always (pg 301-305)
- When Ray goes through Nicole’s house (pg 310)
- When he breaks into Markus’ house (pg 317)
- When he finds his violin in the storage locker (pg 321-322)

- When Ray wrote the letter to court against Nicole (pg 327)

THINGS I LOVED ABOUT THIS BOOK

- I loved that the violin was a character
- I read that 300 year old stratavarious played in the wizard of oz is about to hit to auction for 20M
- I loved that Ray held to his dreams no matter what. And he refused to sell the stray.
- I loved the scene where no other violin compared.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- Do you think Ray should've sold the violin to begin with!
- Did Grandma hide the violin from Ray at first?
- Did grandma know the violin's value?
- Were you able to figure out who stole the violin?
- How early did you suspect Nicole was the thief?
- Did anyone feel sorry for Nicole?
- Who else did you suspect?
- Did you skip to the end?