



## Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend

By Christo Brand, Barbara Jones

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**Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend** By Christo Brand, Barbara Jones

Raised in a multi-ethnic farming community, Afrikaner Christo Brand was confused and saddened when he first confronted the realities of South African apartheid. Conscripted into the military at 18, Brand chose to serve as a prison guard rather than embrace the brutality and danger inherent in the work of soldiers and policemen. Assigned to the maximum security facility on remote Robben Island, Brand was given charge of the country's most infamous inmate: Nelson Mandela.

For 12 years Brand watched Mandela scrub floors, empty his toilet bucket, grieve over the deaths of family and friends yet remain as strong as any freedom fighter in history. Won over by Madiba's charm and authentic concern for the well-being of others, Brand became Mandela's confidant and at times accomplice. Celebrating triumphs and suffering through many setbacks, the two men formed an unlikely bond, one that would endure until Mandela's death.

Told with candor and reverence, *Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend* is both a meditation on friendship and a moving testament to the dedication, determination and most of all?humanity exuded by one of the world's great leaders.

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## Mandela: My Prisoner, My Friend By Christo Brand, Barbara Jones Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“A story of the most astonishing, unlikely friendship. A must-read.” *?Mail on Sunday (UK)*

“Brand paints a vivid picture of prison life in South Africa at the time.... [An] extraordinary book.”  
*?Publishers Weekly (starred review, pick of the week)*

“A tale of two men and their shared humanity in an inhumane place. A worthy addition to the canon of Mandela literature that details a relationship that many knew about but few truly understood.” *?Kirkus Reviews*

“[A]n honest and straightforward account of a significant relationship between two very different men in an impossibly difficult situation.... Brand...is owed more than a mite of national respect.” *?Noseweek Magazine (South Africa)*

“Warrant Officer Brand reinforced my belief in the essential humanity even of those who had kept me behind bars for the previous twenty-seven and a half years.” *?Nelson Mandela, A Long Walk to Freedom*

“[A] valuable addition to the writings about imprisonment during the apartheid era...written by a fine man.”  
*?Ahmed Kathrada, former political advisor to Nelson Mandela*

“A perfect example of how it is possible for love to triumph over everything, for respect to triumph over everything.” *?Zindzi Mandela, daughter of Nelson Mandela.*

### About the Author

CHRISTO BRAND is the son of a farm foreman from rural South Africa. He served as Nelson Mandela's prison guard for 12 years, primarily on Robben Island. Today, he still works on Robben Island, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. As manager of the site's retail outlets, Christo has been known to reminisce to visitors about his time guarding Mandela and even to give the occasional tour. He lives in Cape Town with his wife, Estelle, and son, Heindrick. His eldest son, Riaan, passed away in 2005.

BARBARA JONES is the Africa Correspondent for the *Mail on Sunday* newspaper. She has covered Nelson Mandela since she first met him in 2000. Originally from England, she learned journalism the old fashioned way working her way from weekly to evening newspapers before joining the *Mail on Sunday*. She has two sons and lives in Cape Town, South Africa.

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