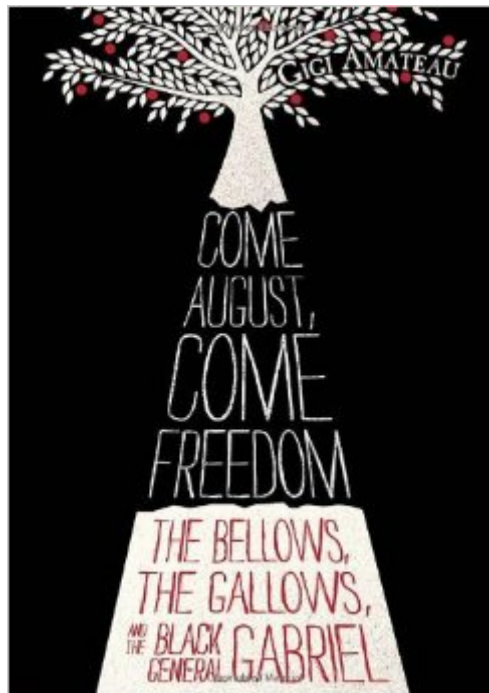


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# Come August, Come Freedom: The Bellows, The Gallows, And The Black General Gabriel



## Synopsis

An 1800 insurrection planned by a literate slave known as "Prosser's Gabriel" inspires a historical novel following one extraordinary man's life. In a time of post-Revolutionary fervor in Richmond, Virginia, an imposing twenty-four-year-old slave named Gabriel, known for his courage and intellect, plotted a rebellion involving thousands of African-American freedom seekers armed with refashioned pitchforks and other implements of Gabriel's blacksmith trade. The revolt would be thwarted by a confluence of fierce weather and human betrayal, but Gabriel retained his dignity to the end. History knows little of Gabriel's early life. But here, author Gigi Amateau imagines a childhood shaped by a mother's devotion, a father's passion for liberation, and a friendship with a white master's son who later proved cowardly and cruel. She gives vibrant life to Gabriel's love for his wife-to-be, Nanny, a slave woman whose freedom he worked tirelessly, and futilely, to buy. Interwoven with original documents, this poignant, illuminating novel gives a personal face to a remarkable moment in history.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (51 customer reviews)

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[United States > 19th Century](#) #455 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > United States](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

I read a lot of historical fiction and I have to admit, I was really let down by this book. I learned more about Gabriel from reading the wiki page than I did this volume. The book seems to rest somewhere between speculative history and biography and places rather too much emphasis on the character

of Nanny whom we are led to believe was the driving force in Gabriel's life. Granted there is a lot we do not know about Gabriel's life and the author can create whatever she wants to a certain degree, but the ARC at least is missing one key element: a bibliography/author's note/historical note. Reading the back tells me that the book includes real historical documents but not a single one is noted in the ARC; if outside sources are used they really need to be noted. I have no doubt the author did research of some kind but it needs to be included in the text in this case because it's rather an important part of verifying the historical part from the fiction. But there are more problems with the book for me. For one, the characterization is very black and white. Even if Gabriel is in the wrong he's hailed as a hero and all of the white characters are painted in some negative way even if they're supposed to be part of the "good" contingent. Furthermore, even without prior knowledge of Gabriel's life, I had a pretty good idea of where the book would end up. The writing is accessible but the plotting is not overly shocking. What you think will happen probably will in some way. There's nothing of a revelation. And as for being a book about what freedom really means, well, it presents the idea but about all I got was that freedom for Gabriel (from the author's point of view) amounts to being able to live his own life with Nanny free of his master.

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