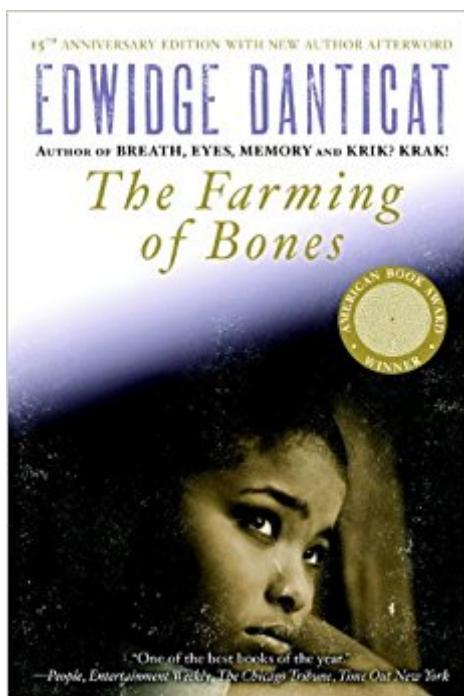


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# The Farming Of Bones



## Synopsis

It is 1937 and Amabelle D'Asir, a young Haitian woman living in the Dominican Republic, has built herself a life as the servant and companion of the wife of a wealthy colonel. She and Sébastien, a cane worker, are deeply in love and plan to marry. But Amabelle's world collapses when a wave of genocidal violence, driven by Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, leads to the slaughter of Haitian workers. Amabelle and Sébastien are separated, and she desperately flees the tide of violence for a Haiti she barely remembers. Already acknowledged as a classic, this harrowing story of love and survival "from one of the most important voices of her generation" is an unforgettable memorial to the victims of the Parsley Massacre and a testimony to the power of human memory.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This short novel was a real eye opener for me, before I picked it up I'd never heard about the government ordered massacre of approx. 30,000 Haitians in the Dominican Republic in 1937. Danticat is truly a gifted writer. The story, told by an orphaned Haitian servant is as lyrical as it is tragic and is definitely worth picking up.

Danticat's debut with *BREATHE, EYES, MEMORY* was more than impressive; it was magical and eloquently resonant. It was the voice we'd all been waiting for. But with *THE FARMING OF BONES*, what we have is Danticat's finely-tuned clarity of vision reaching the heights of authentic folk art. This novel is unforgettably vibrant in every regard. Entire seminars and workshops have rightfully been organized and presented around this literary icon. Edwidge Danticat is the single topic of

scholarly discourse everywhere you turn, whether nationally or internationally. In THE FARMING OF BONES the author has masterfully returned us to a particularly shameful and hideous moment in the history of the neighboring countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic (sharing the Caribbean island called Hispaniola). Dominican Dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in 1937 ordered the slaughter of an estimated (historically documented) 40,000 Haitians and Dominican-Haitians living and working in the Dominican Republic. This historical incident is virtually unknown to outsiders and to most people not of that era. Danticat has thankfully unearthed enough skeletons from the unknown graves to awaken the interest of today's generation, wherever they reside. But this is also a profound love story like no other you've read. The young protagonists Amabelle Desir and Sebastian Onius allow themselves to experience an all-powerful love in a land where love itself had been vanquished by brutal terror and unbridled hatred. This is truly a novel that rewards the reader over and over with the message of a people's suffering and unbelievable courage. If you haven't read this novel, you are denying yourself a genuine literary treasure.

Edwidge Danticat is a powerful writer who economizes her words but not her emotions. Her descriptions of life, love and death are short, and poignant. Amabelle, the main character in this short novel, lives in you. She takes you into a complex uncomfortable world where good does not follow good and where your destiny is out of your control. The interaction between the characters is very well presented. It creates tension and anticipation. You know that what is coming is not going to be pretty and you are not disappointed. . This novel is not for the faint of heart. It is a harsh story told in excellent style. Danticat gets an "A" for the Story and an "A+" for her writing. Danticat is already a mature writer who tells the true story of the massacre of thousands of Haitians at the "Bloody River". First, you cannot put the book down till it's over and then, you are so sorry that it has ended. It will be hard for Danticat to best "The Farming of the Bones". This book should be required reading for Haitians and Dominicans. This is History told in a Powerful Novel. P.S. I also loved Esmeralda Santiago's "America's Dream" Andre from Chappaqua, NY

This book pulled on so many of your emotions. It made you feel the same terror and passion that many of the characters felt. I found myself feeling emotions at a higher intensity than under normal circumstances. Danticat personified everything. From the waterfall to the sugar cane with raw emotion. This book was so marvelous. My only regret was that the story did not last longer. The story was woven with the threads of reality which made it so much more horrid. As you realized this terrible act really did in fact occur. All because of hatred for things you can't or don't want to

understand. The strength these poor isolated, cold and abandoned people felt. Danticat opens your eyes to this little known horror very similar in fact to the Holocaust and the modern day Kosovo crisis. Danticat constructed this story beautifully. And it is a must read for everyone who feels anything in their hearts!

The rhythm of the author's words ring with the cadence of the Caribbean and her voice is clear, wise and poetic. Written in the first person, the young woman, Amabelle, uses simple and deep cutting words to tell her story. Her words are sensual when describing her man, wise as she helps deliver the baby of the wealthy Dominican woman for whom she works as a servant; and deeply cutting as she flees from the slaughter and bears witness to the events going on around her. I was moved and horrified, and was right there in her emotions as she simply told this story which takes place during the dictator, Trujillo's regime. Dominicans who tried to fight this madness met the same fate as the Haitians as their world, too, crumbled about them. Reading this book, I felt as deeply for the Haitians as I do for the sufferings of the Jews in the Holocaust, or the Cambodians who died on the killing fields. I must say though, that in spite of the horror, the book is a pleasure to read because it is a little gem of good writing. It also opened my mind to a period in history that I had no knowledge of and raised the kinds of issues that need exploring.

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