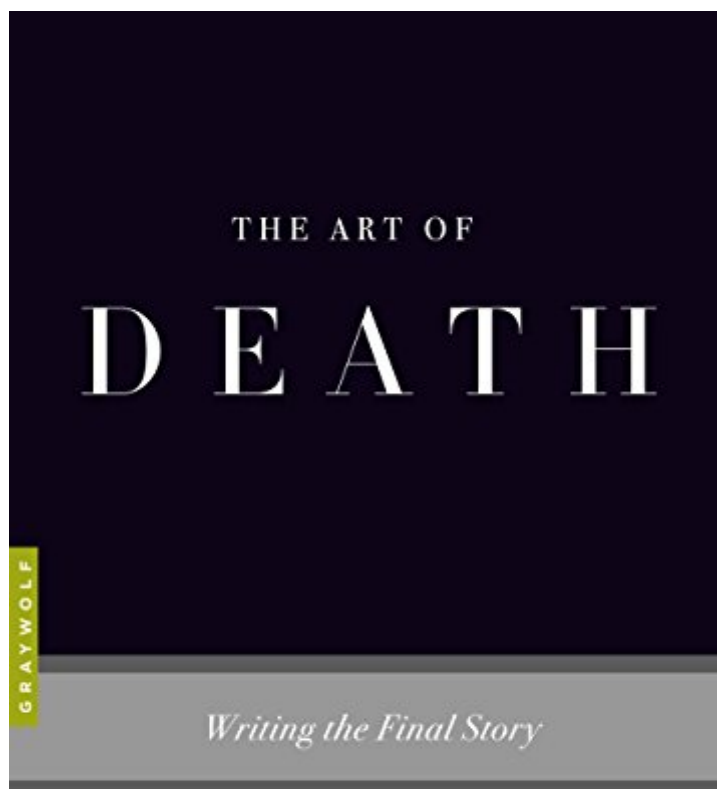


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# The Art Of Death: Writing The Final Story (Art Of...)



EDWIDGE  
DANTICAT



## Synopsis

A moving reflection on a subject that touches us all, by the bestselling author of *Claire of the Sea*, Edwidge Danticat's *The Art of Death: Writing the Final Story* is at once a personal account of her mother dying from cancer and a deeply considered reckoning with the ways that other writers have approached death in their own work. "Writing has been the primary way I have tried to make sense of my losses," Danticat notes in her introduction. "I have been writing about death for as long as I have been writing." The book moves outward from the shock of her mother's diagnosis and sifts through Danticat's writing life and personal history, all the while shifting fluidly from examples that range from Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* to Toni Morrison's *Sula*. The narrative, which continually circles the many incarnations of death from individual to large-scale catastrophes, culminates in a beautiful, heartrending prayer in the voice of Danticat's mother. A moving tribute and a work of astute criticism, *The Art of Death* is a book that will profoundly alter all who encounter it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The book got a great review in the Boston Globe... i am enjoying it somewhat, but do feel a little disappointed -- it's not exactly what i expected.

A very moving book. I highly recommend it to anyone who has recently lost a parent. This book makes you think more about life and how we must all prepare for death.

Loved it.

Excellent book

This is a difficult book to describe. It is simultaneously an exploration of death in literature, a meditation on the recent death of her mother and a consideration of her own mortality--and also is a bit about Haitian Americans. Danticat is one of the best American writers. She's a US citizen of Haitian origins, living in New York City. Her mother's life was a kind of connection between Danticat and her Haitian roots. If you have read her other books, you will know that her books pack a powerful emotional content, and I think this is the most powerful yet. Keep an eye on this writer, the Nobel Prize could be lurking in her future--that's a guess. It's almost impossible to convey the wonderful relationship between mother and daughter. The mother had a very strong Christian faith, and was full of family memory and Haitian folklore--and proud of having a daughter who writes books. It's also difficult to describe how Danticat mixes her own professional life as a writer with her Haitian roots. Some of her mother's folk wisdom is written in Kreyol (that's the Haitian spelling) and you can almost hear the old woman talk to her daughter. There is also a strong literary element, as you might expect from a novelist. She pulls in Tolstoy and other writers and how they wrote death and sometimes, how they regarded it. This mix of the personal and the literary, of literary death and real human mortality may sound dry and academic. I did not find it that way, but rather as a very powerful exploration of mortality generally and within the family. It's a book about death, but not sad or sorrowful. It's an intensely human book, warm and passionate. And I recommend it highly.

A truly beautiful, elegiac meditation on death. Edwidge Danticat deftly weaves her own personal experience (her mother's death, the earthquake in Haiti) into a thoughtful work on the nature of

death and dying. She approaches the subject with both a reflection and literature (referencing works by such masters as Toni Morrison, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, C.S. Lewis, Joan Didion and Anne Sexton). It is both moving, thought-provoking, and heart-rending. This shows how she can both narrate and illuminate a subject that is filled with such mourning and yet this book is both insightful and hopeful.

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