



Dancing in the Baron's Shadow: A Novel

Fabienne Josaphat

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Haiti, 1965. Francois Duvalier, known as Papa Doc, is the impoverished island nation's brutal dictator. Relentless curfews, and Papa Doc's terrifying Tonton Macoutes militia, have made life in Port-au-Prince increasingly difficult for struggling taxi driver Raymond L'Eveillé. But it is Raymond's brother, Nicolas, a wealthy professor at the local university, who is stirring up trouble. A secret manifesto penned by Nicolas is rallying opposition to Papa Doc. After a tip-off from a disgruntled student, Nicolas' home is raided and the manifesto discovered, landing him in Fort Dimanche, a notorious, disease-ridden prison many enter but few ever leave. Meanwhile, Raymond's wife leaves him, taking their children and escaping the island. With his family gone, Raymond gets himself arrested as part of a death-defying plan to break his brother out of jail.

Fabienne Josaphat's electric prose brings to life a horrifying and not so distant time in Haiti's past while exploring the best and worst of humanity. The novel examines power's tendency to corrupt, the impulse of nationalistic pride, and, above all, the human desire to survive, while describing in rigorous detail the shocking realities of life in the Baron's shadow.



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