



Bitter Fruit: A Novel

By Achmat Dangor



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With the publication of *Kafka's Curse*, Achmat Dangor established himself as an utterly singular voice in South African fiction. His new novel, a finalist for the Man Booker Prize and the IMPAC-Dublin Literary Award, is a clear-eyed, witty, yet deeply serious look at South Africa's political history and its damaging legacy in the lives of those who live there.

The last time Silas Ali encountered Lieutenant Du Boise, Silas was locked in the back of a police van and the lieutenant was conducting a vicious assault on Silas's wife, Lydia, in revenge for her husband's participation in Nelson Mandela's African National Congress. When Silas sees Du Boise by chance twenty years later, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is about to deliver its report, crimes from the past erupt into the present, splintering the Alis' fragile peace. Meanwhile Silas and Lydia's son, Mikey, a thoroughly contemporary young hip-hop lothario, contends in unforeseen ways with his parents' pasts.

A harrowing story of a brittle family on the crossroads of history and a fearless skewering of the pieties of revolutionary movements, *Bitter Fruit* is a cautionary tale of how we do, or do not, address the past's deepest wounds.

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Bitter Fruit: A Novel By Achmat Dangor Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Early in Dangor's embittered second novel about his native South Africa, aloof, independent 19-year-old Mikey comes to the realization that "history has a remembering process of its own, one that gives life to its imaginary monsters." This understanding of the past informs the thoughts and actions of the characters, which the author of *Kafka's Curse* explores in meticulous detail. Mikey's parents, Silas and Lydia Ali, are members of the black middle class in postapartheid South Africa. But when Silas, a lawyer for the Justice Department, encounters the white police lieutenant who raped his wife two decades before, old wounds open in his and Lydia's already strained marriage. Mikey discovers that he may be the product of his mother's violation and sets out to explore his familial roots, taking a type of "apartheid heritage route" that leads him to Silas's father's mosque. Here, he learns of his grandfather's own struggle with colonialism in India a generation earlier. Dangor's novel, a Man Booker Prize finalist, interrogates the forgiving attitude of people like Archbishop Tutu, and, as Silas puts it, "the namby-pambying of God's ferocious legions." In this environment, where even incestuous transgressions can be rationalized away, Mikey finds vengeance as a way to order the decayed social structures around him. Dangor's work is a bleak look at modern South Africa in the vein of J.M. Coetzee's novels, but from the perspective of black South Africans. (*Apr.*)
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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Will the truth set you free? Not so, according to this deeply unsettling novel about the new South Africa. Longtime anti-apartheid activist Dangor blends the intimate secrets of one mixed-race family with the politics of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), where perpetrators confess their crimes in public in return for amnesty. "We want to forgive, but we don't want to forget. You can't have it both ways," discovers Silas Ali, once an anti-apartheid activist, now a bureaucrat with the TRC. When he glimpses the Afrikaans policeman Du Boise in a Johannesburg shopping mall and remembers how Du Boise arrested Ali 20 years ago and raped Ali's wife, Lydia, in front of him, the memory sets off reverberations with Ali, Lydia, and their son. Now Du Boise wants to confess to the TRC. Whom will that help? What truth? But keeping quiet offers no healing either, just seething guilt and fury. Dangor writes from the inside and yet with distance, challenging some sacred platitudes of the heroic struggle and the new elite but never settling for the easy ambiguity that dismisses all values as being the same. Told from many characters' viewpoints--anguished, angry, tender, ironic--the searing narratives reveal the wounds of betrayal and no reconciliation. The people and their stories are unforgettable. *Hazel Rochman*
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Review

"A haunting story of a family disintegrating, wonderfully authentic . . . its progress like slow dancing." --
Barbara Trapido, The Independent

"A writer who gives texture and grace to the present lives and historical legacy of South Africa's five-hundred-year-old multi-ethnic society." -- *Rachel Holmes, Literary Review*

"Dangor's challenge has been to present a complex 'new South Africa'. . . His achievement in this is extraordinary." -- *Kathryn Kuitenbrouwer, Globe and Mail (The Globe 100)*

"Meticulous detail. . . In the vein of J.M. Coetzee's novels, but from the perspective of black South Africans." -- *Publishers Weekly*

"Textured writing. . . . The hint that the violence and fanaticism are not likely to end provides a chilling coda." -- *Daily Mail*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Karen Bell:

The knowledge that you get from Bitter Fruit: A Novel is the more deep you rooting the information that hide within the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to understand but Bitter Fruit: A Novel giving you joy feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by anyone who read the item because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. That book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. Making it easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this kind of Bitter Fruit: A Novel instantly.

Laurel Ramer:

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Tracy Cluck:

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Debra Capone:

A number of people said that they feel uninterested when they reading a book. They are directly felt that when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose typically the book Bitter Fruit: A Novel to make your current reading is interesting. Your skill of reading ability is developing when you just like reading. Try to choose very simple book to make you enjoy to read it and mingle the impression about book and studying

especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to available a book and study it. Beside that the book Bitter Fruit: A Novel can to be your friend when you're truly feel alone and confuse using what must you're doing of the time.

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