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Dew Breaker – Summary and Analysis

Mr. Edwidge Danticat, Haitian American author of the novel, “The Dew Breaker” explores the violent career and its consequential reverberations for a torturer during the brutal reign of Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier; nicknamed “Papa Doc” (Kakutani 1). Silence is the theme that presides from the start until the end of this novel. This “silence” is attributed to that of his victims and of his surroundings as the *persecutor* struggles to start anew in the United States of America (Bellamy 207). Silence also proliferates the text describing other characters that Mr. Danticat introduces later into the text, some trying to escape the wrath of the dictator and some in pursuit of greater opportunities than what is available back in their homeland (Bellamy 207).



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The resulting stasis achieved due to the constant cycling of this respective theme (i.e. silence) causes an inability for the protagonist to heal, further augmented by the suffering of others witnessed during the immigration procedures at America and the surmounting barbarity back in Haiti (Bellamy 207). The rare moments when speech is introduced in the text largely correlates to the cementing of previous notions of silence as if justifying its existence. This is evident in the scenes when the protagonist confesses his violent past to his daughter, revealing the nature of his crimes encompassed in the form of short stories that not only portray the suffering of his brethren but also his search of redemption (Kakutani 1).

For the novel - *The Dew Breaker*, Silence is the theme that effectively reflects, disastrous acculturation, unrequited trauma and troubling remorse whereas speech facilitates the process of resolving of the aforementioned trauma and catalyzing of the process of mental and physical restoration (Kakutani 1). *Dew Breaker* is meant to be a depiction of the bloody events and aftermath of the corruption, vengeance, and violence that ensued in Haiti almost 50 years ago.

Works Cited

Bellamy, M. R. "Silence and Speech: Figures of Dislocation and Acculturation in Edwidge Danticat's THE DEW BREAKER". *The Explicator*. vol. 71, No. 3, Mar. 2013, pp. 207 – 210. *Routledge*, DOI: 10.1080/00144940.2013.811394

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