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Amazon.com Review

One of Graham Greene's most chilling and prophetic novels, The Comedians is set in a Haiti ruled by Papa Doc and the Tontons Macoute, his sinister secret police. Just as The Quiet American offered a preview of the coming horrors of American involvement in Vietnam, this novel presages the chaos in Haiti. Classic Graham Greene.

Review

"Graham Greene arouses responses of curiosity and attention comparable to those set up by Malraux... Faulkner and Hemingway."

-New Statesman

About the Author

GRAHAM GREENE was born in 1904. He worked as a journalist and critic, and in 1940 became literary editor of the Spectator. He was later employed by the Foreign Office. As well as his many novels, Graham Greene wrote several collections of short stories, four travel books, six plays, three books of autobiography, two of biography and four books for children. He also wrote hundreds of essays, and film and book reviews. Graham Greene was a member of the Order of Merit and a Companion of Honour. He died in April 1991.

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Three men bound for Haiti during the dictatorship of Papa Doc and his henchmen, the Tontons Macoute, hide behind their masks, hesitating on the edge of life. Reissued in the VINTAGE CLASSICS series, from the author of DOCTOR FISCHER OF GENEVA OR THE BOMB PARTY and THE HUMAN FACTOR.

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Most helpful customer reviews

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Classic Greene in a sultry setting

By Chris Bell

I didn't enjoy this novel quite as much as commentators such as Anthony Bourdain indicated I would; not as much, for example, as 'Our Man In Havana' or 'The Ministry of Fear'. Perhaps the denouement wasn't as satisfying as I'd hoped but it's still classic Greene and, as always the characterisation is brilliant. The author's writerly craft is masterful and yet largely invisible to the reader. The Hotel Trianon setting itself almost becomes a character - that's quite something considering Greene, as always, is economical with his descriptions, virtually giving the reader's imagination free rein. 'The Comedians' irked Haiti's François "Papa Doc" Duvalier to such an extent that he felt compelled to publicly insult Greene. For that reason alone 'The

Comedians' is of historical importance. But arguably more vital than that, it's a literary entertainment of a kind that's rare if not extinct nowadays.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

By Terry D. Robertson

This is a late review and I won't go over what has already been said about this novel. Papa Doc's reign of terror is now historical fact. But if one reads this tight political thriller and one of Greene's best, you can see history repeating itself in the not too recent Hussein reign of terror or go back on a grander scale to Hitler. It goes on and on and THE COMEDIANS deliberately gives the main characters a "no name" status--common with no first names. They are people who hide themselves behind comedic masks and at times tell funny stories while the terror of the Touton Mocteuc consumes everything around them.

We are fortunate there is a paperback edition of this classic still available in print. It is a must read to learn the valuable lessons of the past. When the book was written, it was immediate and hard hitting. The author has visited Haiti twice and before finishing it, Papa Doc heard of the book and refused him entrance into the country, so the book ends on a boat leaving the country which was probably not the author's original ending due to his inability to enter Haiti again.

A very important book for all. A must read. As I stated, I am not giving plot summary or details that have been written about previously in 20 some reviews, just an overview of the book and the impact it still maintains after 40 years.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Compelling In Every Respect

By zorba

From the characters with their bland names and complex personalities to the horrors of Papa Doc's Haiti, and a lot of intrigue in between, this is a compelling and wonderful novel. Greene reveals through his parade of characters the currents that ebb and flow through the personalities of lonely, rootless people who strive for more than just survival in a hell on earth: Greene's "comedians." Despite its title, this is not a lighthearted book filled with laughter. It's deadly serious, comedic only in what it reveals about human nature. Not having read most of Greene's body of work, I can't evaluate how this novel rates in comparison to other works by him. What I CAN say is that this is an outstanding novel that kept me riveted from start to finish.

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