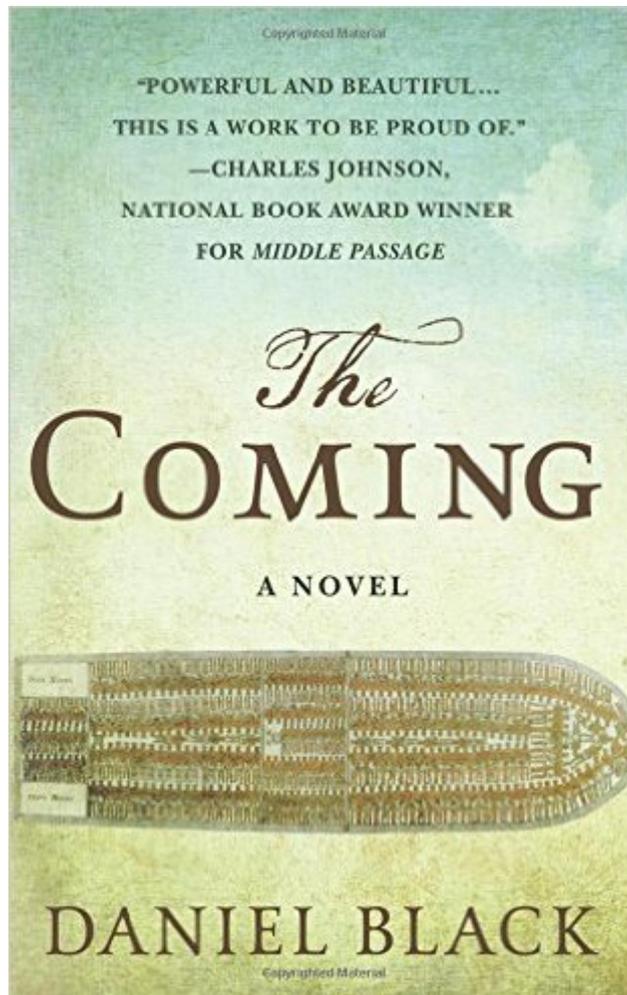


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The Coming



Synopsis

Lyrical, poetic and hypnotizing, the Coming tells the story of a people's capture and sojourn from their homeland across the Middle Passage

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

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Customer Reviews

If I could give "The Coming" fifty stars, it would not be enough. I have waited in high anticipation for this book. Daniel Black had given hints as to what The Coming was going to be about; The journey forced upon the Africans who were kidnapped, razed and locked into the holds of large ships heading to America. I never include spoilers in my reviews, but let me say, that I found it important to read "The Coming" out loud, like I did the previous four of Dr. Daniel O Black's books. I am getting goose-bumps right now, but I felt it was vital to carefully name aloud each tribe mentioned, every name that came across the page, was spoken out in honor and memorial...Yes, this is fiction, but we know how truth is so much stranger, and harder to swallow than truth dished cold. I am a serious fan of Dr. Daniel Black. I met him at our Arla (Arkansas Library Association) conference in 2014. He was a nominee of The Arkansas State Library's, "If Everyone in Arkansas Read the Same Book" award. for "Perfect Peace." During the conference, Daniel read a chapter from Perfect Peace. Written with precision and perfect grammar the setting and characters were Deep Southern genre, but more...Much more. His books are stand-alone, but I wanted it all. During Thanksgiving 2014, I read all four of the fictional novels that follow a genealogical and historical timeline from Africa to Conway County, Arkansas. Starting with "They Tell Me of a Home" I followed Tommy Lee Tyson back home to Swamp Creek, Arkansas. Based on Blackwell, Arkansas, it is just down the road

about 20 miles. The first day, it was my grown kids, one grandson, and two grand-dogs who sat and listened while I read out loud about dusty farm roads, and regal Peoples who have refused to succumb to the genocide wished upon them at the end of slavery. I laughed, cried, and sometimes had to stop, and get control of my emotions. Halfway through, everyone left for the holiday - it was me and the dogs. I continued to read aloud the beautiful and tragic pieces and bits of the lives of mighty peoples who have had to bide their time, awaiting their reward for being true and loving their Creator. "The Sacred Place" was next, following the timeline of Tommy Lee Tyson's family, community and history. I read to me, and I read to the dogs. I wept, I laughed, I was astonished. When I would stop reading, the dogs who appeared asleep, would growl slightly letting me know they wanted me to read on. I did. Next, was "Perfect Peace." Right now, I am starting to tear up, because words fail me. I am not black. Most of my life I have been poor, and lived among People of Color. Although I was poor, and lacked privilege, my whiteness gave me opportunities, and kept me from arrests and jail. I have always fought for human, civil and environmental rights. After re-locating from Southern California to Arkansas, I learned that The Civil rights movement was incomplete. Men and women were still using separate facilities, and being hung on trees out in the woods...simply for being a beautiful dark color. I will never "know" what my brothers and sister of color feel, but I am empathetic. I have always prayed for healing, and it has taken me over fifty years to understand that healing begins with acknowledgement. There is no going back. It is impossible to undo the murder, degradation, kidnapping, rapes, slavery, etc., but it can be spoken about. The stories can be told. Once there is an agreement that horrible things were visited on People of Color by greedy white men and women, then healing can start. Stories can be completed, healed voices can heal more souls. Humanity can find what it has lost in a grab for wealth and power. I finished my Thanksgiving week, with "Twelve Gates to the City." I will never be the same again. I did not purchase the first four books, I checked them out from our library. I have read many of the reviews done on the prior four books before "The Coming," and I was dismayed that so many thought Dr. Daniel Black was being preachy. It is unfortunate that they missed the story, the healing and the divinity of a Black Teacher who is sent to bring History, Roots and Healing.

I wish I could say that I loved this book, but that would be a lie. This book infuriated me beyond reason and disgusted me out of my mind. That proves however, that the author did EXACTLY what he was supposed to do. This isn't a "feel-good" book because this isn't a feel-good topic. The graphic depictions of the horrors of slavery were difficult to deal with, and the author refuses to allow you to turn away. Despite being fictionalized, I think this is probably one of the better (better

meaning more thorough) stories about the Middle Passage that I've read. I applaud the author for tackling this subject and letting us know that "It was the coming that was bad."

This is an important novel. A historical novel. A work of art. It is a fictionalized telling of Africans journey from the motherland to what eventually becomes Charleston, USA. The story is told from the perspective of "we" and is delivered in story form. It's a haunting telling of what "we" experienced from a typical trans-Atlantic trip from Africa to the shores of America. It's just one trip that is used to describe what is supposed to be representative of all such journeys. He tells what "we" went through in the holds of these evil vessels. He tells the story over the course of crossing the Atlantic and then arriving on these shores and being held in stalls awaiting a buyer. The way the book is arranged works very well. The prose is mostly poetic and is most necessary to deliver this tale of woe and devilment. If you ever asked the question, what did the enslavement process look like, feel like? What were "we" thinking? Daniel Black attempts to answer these questions. And although this is a work of fiction, many of the transgressions against the body and soul of Africans have been well documented. The book forces you to wonder what choices would you have made if you were stuffed like a sardine in the hold of a ship? How would you have handled being placed on an auction block, completely naked for all to see and being examined like an animal?"But if we all died, wouldn't they be undisputed victors? How would we redeem ourselves if everyone went with Death? Our options were few and inglorious. We wrestled, on land and sea, with Life and Death, wanting neither completely but needing both inherently. We decided silently, in the stillness of the stall, that both choices carried honor. Both held the integrity of our people. The job of the living was to resurrect the dead; the job of the dead was to invigorate the living. They were complimentary existences. What elders had taught was true"Life and Death are twins of the same mother. Now we understood."There are nuggets of information related to African culture and there are an abundance of pearls of wisdom, African proverbs. Daniel Black is trying to paint a picture of the impact the enslaving process had on an individual. What must they have been thinking? One day you're Ashanti or Yoruba and 90 days later, "We were no longer simply the Fon, the Ibo, the Hausa, the Yoruba, the Ewe. We were something other than the Ashanti, the Fante, The Fulani, the Serere, and the Mende. Something new, some combination of them all, some blending of culture and spirit our elders wouldn't have recognized. We were a different people now, with roots in every place we had trod. We were one tree, with branches reaching in every possible direction and leaves sprouting abundantly. We were one river, flowing together, yet having started as brooks and streams unnamed. In the midst of incomprehensible trauma, our specific identities

had merged into a larger collective Self, and thus we survived what should've been our demise." A story to be shared with all those who ever imagined the unimaginable.

Daniel Black does not disappoint with this new work. It is a rich, historical account of the trauma and experience of the African people stolen and sold into slavery. The book places the reader in the ship and with each new indignity the pain runs deep into the reader. It runs deep into the core of the reader without vulgar sensationalism but instead in a real way. It is a wonderful work reminiscent of W.E.B. DuBois' "The Quest for the Silver Fleece" where reality from the perspective of the enslaved and the slaveholder is witnessed changing the reader forever. I highly recommend this book and can't say enough about it in a short review.

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