



The Memory of Love

By Aminatta Forna

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Winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book

Finalist for the Orange Prize for Fiction

An *Essence* Book Club Pick

In contemporary Sierra Leone, a devastating civil war has left an entire populace with secrets to keep. In the capital hospital, a gifted young surgeon is plagued by demons that are beginning to threaten his livelihood. Elsewhere in the hospital lies a dying man who was young during the country's turbulent postcolonial years and has stories to tell that are far from heroic. As past and present intersect in the buzzing city, these men are drawn unwittingly closer by a British psychologist with good intentions, and into the path of one woman at the center of their stories. A work of breathtaking writing and rare wisdom, *The Memory of Love* seamlessly weaves together two generations of African life to create a story of loss, absolution, and the indelible effects of the past—and, in the end, the very nature of love.

“[A] luminous tale of passion and betrayal.”—Maaza Mengiste, *The New York Times Book Review*

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The Memory of Love By Aminatta Forna Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Forma, recipient of a Hurston/Wright Legacy Award for *Ancestor Stones*, returns to Africa's troubled conscience in this admirable if uneven outing. Adrian Lockheart is a well-meaning English psychologist who embarks on a temporary post at a Sierra Leone hospital intending to modernize treatment of the long-neglected schizophrenics, transients, and scarred victims of civil war who walk the hospital grounds. He soon meets his match in the elderly ex-professor Elias Cole, who speaks eloquently of his country's turbulent history--and also of his passion for the wife of a more radically minded colleague whose eventual disappearance Cole may be implicated in. As the holes in Elias's story widen, Adrian falls for a patient's daughter and into conflict with a surgeon, and ripples from the unexamined past threaten the present. Yet Forma's material doesn't measure up to the book's length. The book's prolixity, combined with scenes that drag or come off as forced, certainly doesn't ruin the experience, but it does occasionally glut what amounts to a heartening cry for moral responsibility in the thick of maddening injustice. (Jan.) (c)

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From [Booklist](#)

Set in Sierra Leone at the turn of the twenty-first century, Forna's absorbing second novel (after *Ancestor Stones*, 2006) revolves around three very different men. British psychiatrist Adrian Lockheart has fled his failing marriage in England in the hopes of doing some good in Sierra Leone. Adrian becomes fascinated by two of his patients, elderly Elias Cole, a former university professor, and Agnes, a woman lost in a fugue state. The dying Cole reveals to Adrian, Scheherazade-like, how he fell in love with a radical colleague's wife in the late 1960s, while Adrian must piece together the details of Agnes' life. Adrian finds a friend in a haunted young surgeon, Kai, who is contemplating leaving the country. Kai questions some of Adrian's risky decisions, such as his intention to track Agnes down once she leaves the hospital, but it is Adrian's involvement with a local woman from Kai's past that shocks the young doctor. Fate and tragedy intertwine in this stunning and powerful portrait of a country in the aftermath of a decade of civil war. --Kristine Huntley

Review

Praise for *The Memory of Love*:

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An *Essence* Book Club Pick

"Forna has achieved something . . . startling and impressive here. Here is a luminous tale of passion and betrayal. . . . At the core of this novel is the brave and beating heart, at once vulnerable and determined, unwilling to let go of all it has ever loved."—Maaza Mengiste, *New York Times Book Review*

"A remarkable feat of storytelling. . . . [and] a thrilling story of friendship and betrayal."—Karen Holt, *Essence*

"A sprawling, epic novel of love in Sierra Leone from Aminatta Forna, a rising literary star."—*Marie Claire*

"[Forna is] among the most powerful of new voices from Africa. . . . A novel about the persistence of hope

and the redemptive power of love.”—*The Globe and Mail*

“[An] elegantly rendered novel of loss and rehabilitation . . . [that] coalesces into an ambitious exploration of trauma and storytelling.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“The real pleasure of Forna’s storytelling is in her scrutiny of her characters’ inner lives and her ability to connect their choices to the moral dilemmas of a traumatized society.”—*The New Yorker*

“[Forna’s] visceral appreciation of her troubled country is evident on every page of *The Memory of Love*. So, too, is her probing intelligence—and her compassion.”—Brooke Allen, Salon.com

"She threads her stories like music. . . . One is left hauntingly familiar with the distant and alien; not quite able to distinguish the emotional spirits of fiction from the scars of real experience." —*The Times* (London)

“[A] wise, compassionate novel . . . A universal tale of love, of war’s power to cripple souls as it maims bodies, and of the triumphant human spirit, overcoming the forces that seek to crush it.”—Philip Caputo, author of *Rumor of War*, *Acts of Faith* and *Crossers*

“A poignant story about friendship, betrayal, obsession and second chances . . . Bold, deeply moving and accomplished, [Forna’s novel] confirms her place among the most talented writers in literature today.”—Commonwealth Writers’ Prize judges

“Often darkly funny, written with gritty realism and tenderness, *The Memory of Love* is a profoundly affecting work.”—Kiran Desai, winner of the Man Booker Prize for *The Inheritance of Loss*

“In careful, precise prose, Forna makes even the seemingly commonplace details meaningful. These particulars speak to overarching themes of human experience: devotion, betrayal, and resilience.”—Nora Dunne, *The Christian Science Monitor*

“A subtle and complex exploration, daring in depth and scope, of both the psyche of a war and the attractions which it holds for an outsider. Forna is a writer of great talent who does not shy from tackling the toughest questions about why humans do the things they do: from the smallest acts of betrayal to the greatest acts of love.”—Monica Ali, author of *Brick Lane*

“Brilliant . . . Forna . . . turn[s] each scene into a metaphor that reverberates with meaning beyond the event itself. . . . This is a remarkable novel.”—Helon Habila, *The Guardian* (UK)

“The author's visceral appreciation of her troubled country is evident on every page of *The Memory of Love*. So, too, is her probing intelligence—and her compassion.”—Brooke Allen, Barnes & Noble Review (online)

“A soft-spoken story of brutality and endurance . . . Forna’s insight, elegance and elegiac tone never falter. Tragedy and its aftermath are affectingly, memorably evoked in this multistranded narrative from a significant talent.”—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

“To read *The Memory of Love* is to experience, not simply learn about, the inner existences of its characters, even as they lapse in and out of their lives.”—Anjali Joseph, *Times Literary Supplement* (UK)

“Forna’s portrait of Sierra Leone—its citizens and the over-eager expatriates who pour in with good

intentions—throbs with life.”—Karen Valby, *Entertainment Weekly*

“Fate and tragedy intertwine in this stunning and powerful portrait of a country in the aftermath of a decade of civil war.”—Kristine Huntley, *Booklist*

"This is powerful and necessary reading."—Karen Briggs, Shelf Awareness (online)

"Intelligent, engrossing and beautifully crafted." —*The Daily Mail* (UK)

“*The Memory of Love* is the most significant novel that I have read since Orhan Pamuk’s *The Museum of Innocence*. . . . This is an extraordinary meditation on the capacity that men and women have to survive in the midst of the most overwhelming obstacles that war and all its attendant violence and degradation can throw in front of them. Aminatta Forna’s *The Memory of Love* is the first major novel of the new decade.”—Charles R. Larson, Counter Punch (online)

"*The Memory of Love* is a beautifully crafted tale of life in Sierra Leone in the aftermath of the civil war. . . . A book . . . to savour and share." —*Stylist* (UK)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Linda Spaulding:

Book is actually written, printed, or descriptive for everything. You can understand everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. To be sure that book is important issue to bring us around the world. Adjacent to that you can your reading proficiency was fluently. A reserve *The Memory of Love* will make you to always be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think that will open or reading a new book make you bored. It's not make you fun. Why they may be thought like that? Have you seeking best book or suitable book with you?

Terra Runyan:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be up-date about what going on or information even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is always change and move forward. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know which one you should start with. This *The Memory of Love* is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and need in this era.

David Brouwer:

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information these days can get by anyone on everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even a problem. What people must be consider any time those information which is inside former life are hard to be find than now's taking seriously which one works to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you find the unstable resource then you understand it as your main information there will be huge disadvantage for you. All those

possibilities will not happen within you if you take The Memory of Love as the daily resource information.

Stuart Rosado:

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