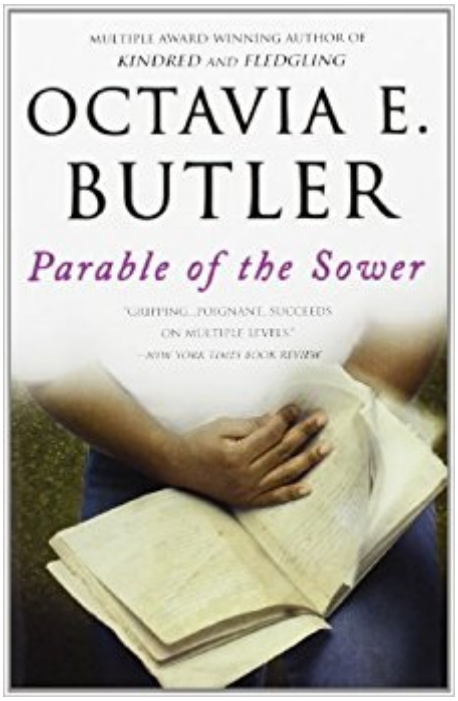
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Parable Of The Sower (Earthseed)



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Synopsis

Parable of the Sower is a dystopian classic of terror and hope-the story of an African American teenage girl trying to survive in an all-too-real future-from the "grand dame" of science fiction, Octavia E. Butler.When unattended environmental and economic crises lead to social chaos, not even gated communities are safe. In a night of fire and death, Lauren Olamina, an empath and the daughter of a minister, loses her family and home and ventures out into the unprotected American landscape. But what begins as a flight for survival soon leads to something much more: a startling vision of human destiny...and the birth of a new faith, as Lauren becomes a prophet carrying the hope of a new world and a revoltionary idea christened "Earthseed".Chilling and thought-provoking for adult and young adult readers alike, "...there isn't a page in this vivid and frightening story that fails to grip the reader" (San Jose Mercury News).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Octavia E. Butler, the grande dame of science fiction, writes extraordinary, inspirational stories of ordinary people. Parable of the Sower is a hopeful tale set in a dystopian future United States of walled cities, disease, fires, and madness. Lauren Olamina is an 18-year-old woman with hyperempathy syndrome--if she sees another in pain, she feels their pain as acutely as if it were real. When her relatively safe neighborhood enclave is inevitably destroyed, along with her family and dreams for the future, Lauren grabs a backpack full of supplies and begins a journey north. Along the way, she recruits fellow refugees to her embryonic faith, Earthseed, the prime tenet of

which is that "God is change." This is a great book--simple and elegant, with enough message to make you think, but not so much that you feel preached to. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hugo and Nebula Award-winner Butler’s first novel since 1989’s Imago offers an uncommonly sensitive rendering of a very common SF scenario: by 2025, global warming, pollution, racial and ethnic tensions and other ills have precipitated a worldwide decline. In the Los Angeles area, small beleaguered communities of the still-employed hide behind makeshift walls from hordes of desperate homeless scavengers and violent pyromaniac addicts known as "paints" who, with water and work growing scarcer, have become increasingly aggressive. Lauren Olamina, a young black woman, flees when the paints overrun her community, heading north with thousands of other refugees seeking a better life. Lauren suffers from ’hyperempathy," a genetic condition that causes her to experience the pain of others as viscerally as her own--a heavy liability in this future world of cruelty and hunger. But she dreams of a better world, and with her philosophy/religion, Earthseed, she hopes to found an enclave which will weather the tough times and which may one day help carry humans to the stars. Butler tells her story with unusual warmth, sensitivity, honesty and grace; though science fiction readers will recognize this future Earth, Lauren Olamina and her vision make this novel stand out like a tree amid saplings. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Forget 1984, Butler’s Earthseed series are the books one should read to get insight into our world today. Written in the mid-1990’s about the 2020’s and 2030’s they tell the story of a world not unlike the one we live in today. Corporate influence is suborning and even sublating government authority. A dissolute population turning inward with drugs and virtual entertainment and outward with violence and suspicion towards the ’other’. Those who can, build walls to keep the ’other’ out. Sometimes the walls work, but inevitably they fail.Amid all this two leaders arise: one, a demagogue playing on the nation’s fears and religious sensitivities promising to ’make America great again’ (the author’s words in 1993, mind you) convinces a large swath of the population to turn against those who don’t conform even as his ’Crusaders’ commit atrocities in his name (but never of course with his *official* sanction).The other is a young, very precocious black woman with a vision to transcend human misery and build a community to seek humankind’s Destiny. Barely escaping with her life when her once solid middle-class neighborhood is overrun by a violent gang, she sets off on a trek through a country that is much like ours if things were just a little more desperate, a little more divided, and a

lot less caring. It is a stark portrait made even more ominous by being entirely possible and exposing a lot about us as a society we may not care to confront. These books aren’t so much a portrait as a mirror.If there is a weak spot, it’s that Olaimina is too obviously an author avatar, but then again this *is* Butler’s philosophy and much of her personal experience laid bare. It is the closest thing to an autobiography of the notoriously private author as we are likely to see nearly 10 years after her death. It provides a warning...and, perhaps, a pathway out.

This isn’t like so many of today’s dystopian sci-fi novels--it has a slower feel to it but that doesn’t mean there aren’t tense moments. Once I got used to that more realistic pace, I was hooked.It made me stop many times to think about a passage or line that I’d just read, comparing it to today’s world or other dystopian settings. It’s an interesting take and highly readable with a good ending--always a plus in a dystopian universe. :)

This is my favorite book of all time. I’ve read it several times and I’m so happy to have a digital version rather than the ragged paperback I usually read.. If you like dystopian futures, this is the book for you.Really, the only reason I’m writing a review on it is because it has a very strange typo that I can’t get past. The version I have has Harry’s last name as Baiter... rather than Balter... repeatedly. Please fix this.

A somewhat frighting look at a possible future of the states. Which --unlike most books about the future There hasn’t been a war with another country,but it has become awful due to unemployment and the poverty that follows. This is a story of a young woman’s travels to a new life in a country place owned by her boyfriend, and a community they make with the people they pick up along the way.

It was 1993 when Butler created this dystopian sci-fi vision of Los Angeles circa 2025, whose closeness to the evils of present-day social and environmental ills is hauntingly uncanny. Through her teenaged black protagonist she offers a positive vision of the future (sort of), so it’s not unremittingly dark. One wishes the prose were a little more elegant, but the ideas here are brilliantly provocative. Like a philosophical action movie. Strongly recommended.

It’s been a long time since a novel re-set some of my paradigms. This one did so gently but powerfully.The story itself is not a gentle one. The world Lauren Olamina lives in is cruel and violent.

Climate change and economic collapse have devastated much of the US, but young Lauren -- only 13 when the book starts -- is mystified that those around her are unwilling to see and accept that things are probably going to get far worse. Her practicality leads her to a new spirituality, which she calls Earthseed: one which recognizes Change as the only 'divinity,' and human beings as capable of molding the force of Change, if they choose.While the adults around her refuse to plan for a worst case scenario, it's her own clear-eyed foresight that enables her to escape the destruction of her community and search for a new place. With one fellow survivor, she takes to the road, learning how to survive -- and scattering her idea of Earthseed among the people who gradually join to become a community.You don't have to accept Lauren's concept of Change as the only god to recognize its power and the affirmation it makes of the possibilities for human growth and development. Whether you characterize it as a philosophy or a spirituality, it is based on looking at the way the world works on a grand and fundamental scale and trying to constructively respect and partner with that reality.

This is seriously the scariest book I've ever read. I can't shake it.

Interesting world. Characters would not be deep enough if they were the main point, but deep enough for the purpose. The sequel won awards; this did not. I haven't read the sequel yet, but that seems right. If this book came out serialized in an SF magazine I subscribed to, I'd be very happy with it. As a separately purchased novel for someone who doesn't read very quickly, it's not enough. I want to know where it goes from here and if Butler makes the telling of that story more compelling than the story here.I still give it four stars because the world is very well done. It would be a good setting for derivative stories and/or role-playing games.

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