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### Fury over Haitian

#### author's kin

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The death of renowned Haitian-American author's elderly uncle has set off a wave of outrage and calls for a probe.

Joseph Dantica, a Haitian Baptist pastor and 81-year-old uncle of writer Edwidge Danticat, died in a U. S. immigration detention center in Miami on Nov. 3 - five days after arriving from Port-au-Prince with a valid U.S. visa.

He will be buried in New York tomorrow.

His relatives, public officials and a growing chorus of writers and artists are calling for a federal probe into his death.

"His whole life was his ministry in Haiti," said a devastated Danticat, 35, the author of "Krik? Krak!," who was reared by her uncle until she moved to Brooklyn when she was 12.

Her last name has a "t" at the end because of an old clerical error.

After a mob burned down his parish and school and seized his home in the besieged neighborhood of Bel-Air, Dantica fled Port-au-Prince on Oct. 29 with his son, Maxo, and requested asylum. John Pratt, Dantica's attorney, said immigration authorities could have released the pastor, who suffered from high blood pressure and a prostate condition, to his niece in Miami while his asylum case was decided.

Instead he was sent to the Krome Detention Center, an immigration jail in Miami-Dade County where Haitian refugees are routinely held. The U.S. government normally detains asylum seekers, but can exercise discretion for people with health concerns.

Pratt blasted federal authorities for treating the ailing Dantica like he was a criminal, saying he had never violated his multi-entry visa.

Federal officials also confiscated Dantica's medicine - "a voodoo-like potion," said Russ Knocke, a spokesman for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Washington. He said Dantica's cause of death was pancreatitis.

"His tragic passing was the result of a preexisting and fatal condition," Knocke said.

U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek (D-Miami), Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and the National Coalition for

Haitian Rights have called on the Homeland Security Department to investigate the pastor's death.

"That Joseph Dantica was doomed to a harsh and certain death by the prejudice and inhumanity of U. S. immigration laws pertaining to Haitian arrivals is inarguable," said "Silence of the Lambs" director Jonathan Demme.

There will be a wake for Dantica tonight at the Evangelical Crusade of Fishers of Men in Brooklyn. After a funeral service tomorrow, he will be buried at Cypress Hills Cemetery in Queens.