



Another Life

Derek Walcott

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In his longest and most ambitious poem, Derek Walcott reaches beyond an evocative portrayal of his native West Indies to create a moving elegy on himself and on man.

The fascinating and complex matrix of the author's life is illuminated with our candor, verve, and strength. Over four thousand lines of verse are grouped into four parts. He evokes scenes of his divided childhood, in which children live in shacks while fine khaki-clothed Englishmen drink tea. He depicts the influence of three intimate friends, including his first love, Anna, on his emergence as a man and artist. He chronicles the mixed remorse and resolution of maturity. He recalls of his youth: "We were blessed with a virginal, unpainted world / with Adam's task of giving things their names..." Yet in retrospect he acknowledges the irony of his artistic reliance on metaphor to transform reality--his search for "another life"

When the author's most recent collection of poetry, *The Gulf*, was published, Selden Rodman wrote in *The New York Times Book Review*: "Now, with the publication of his fourth book of verse, Walcott's stature in the front rank of all contemporary poets using English should be apparent." Chad Walsh in *Book World* said: "I am convinced one of the half-dozen most important poets now writing in English. He may prove to be *the* best."

Another Life helps to fulfill this prophecy.

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