

## The Dark Child Camara Laye

Already an international sensation and prize-winning bestseller in France, an evocative coming-of-age story of a young boy, a lost childhood and a shattered homeland. SHORTLISTED FOR THE ALBERTINE PRIZE • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY ESQUIRE • LONGLISTED FOR THE ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN FICTION • LONGLISTED FOR THE ASPEN WORDS LITERARY PRIZE Burundi, 1992. For ten-year-old Gabriel, life in his comfortable expatriate neighborhood of Bujumbura with his French father, Rwandan mother and little sister Ana, is something close to paradise. These are carefree days of laughter and adventure – sneaking Supermatch cigarettes and gorging on stolen mangoes – as he and his mischievous gang of friends transform their tiny cul-de-sac into their kingdom. But dark clouds are gathering over this small country, and soon their peaceful existence will shatter when Burundi, and neighboring Rwanda, are brutally hit by civil war and genocide. A novel of extraordinary power and beauty, *Small Country* describes an end of innocence as seen through the eyes of a child caught in the maelstrom of history. Shot through with shadows and light, tragedy and humor, it is a stirring tribute not only to a dark chapter in Africa's past, but

also to the bright days that preceded it.

Toundi Ondoua, the rural African protagonist of *Houseboy*, encounters a world of prisms that cast beautiful but unobtainable glimmers, especially for a black youth in colonial Cameroon. *Houseboy*, written in the form of Toundi's captivating diary and translated from the original French, discloses his awe of the white world and a web of unpredictable experiences. Early on, he escapes his father's angry blows by seeking asylum with his benefactor, the local European priest who meets an untimely death. Toundi then becomes the Chief Europeans' boy-the dog of the King. Toundi's attempt to fulfill a dream of advancement and improvement opens his eyes to troubling realities. Gradually, preconceptions of the Europeans come crashing down on him as he struggles with his identity, his place in society, and the changing culture.

The first novel to be translated from Wolof to English, *Doomi Golo—The Hidden Notebooks* is a masterful work that conveys the story of Nguirane Faye and his attempts to communicate with his grandson before he dies. With a narrative structure that beautifully imitates the movements of a musical piece, Diop relates Faye's trauma of losing his only son, Assane Tall, which is compounded by his grandson Badou's migration to an unknown destination. While Faye feels certain that his grandson will return one day, he also is convinced

that he will no longer be alive by then. Faye spends his days sitting under a mango tree in the courtyard of his home, reminiscing and observing his surroundings. He speaks to Badou through his seven notebooks, six of which are revealed to the reader, while the seventh, the "Book of Secrets," is highly confidential and reserved for Badou's eyes only. In the absence of letters from Badou, the notebooks form the only possible means of communication between the two, carrying within them tunes and repetitions that give this novel its unusual shape: loose and meandering on the one hand, coherent and tightly interwoven on the other. Translated by Vera Wülfing-Leckie and El Hadji Moustapha Diop.

. . . this gem of a book deserves a wide audience. Appropriate for African and women's studies courses and a must for college and university libraries.

--Choice . . . Mpho relates the story of her life with an integrity that makes for utterly compelling reading. . .

. The fortitude of this woman, now in her late 60s, is a lesson to us all. --The Bookseller, United Kingdom

This is a fascinating autobiography . . . --KLIATT . . .

a powerful autobiography of a Lesotho elder who tells her life as an African woman in South Africa.

The focus on black culture and concerns as much as racism allows for an unusual depth of understanding of black concerns and lifestyles in Africa.

--Reviewer's Bookwatch An African woman's

poignant and beautifully crafted memoir lyrically portrays the brutal poverty and reliance on ritual that shape the lives of her people, the Basotho. . . . A commanding and important work that will captivate readers with its unique voice, narrative power, and unforgettable scenes of life in Southern Africa.

--Kirkus Reviews . . . a stunning autobiography of a remarkable woman . . . Nthunya's telling is eloquent. Although her voice is generally one of dignified emotional distance, it is punctuated by her very human humor and pain. --Publishers Weekly . . . recommended for collections in African folklore.

--Library Journal I am telling my stories in English for many months now, and it is a time for me to see my whole life. I see that things are always changing. I was born in 1930, so I remember many things which were happening in the old days in Lesotho and which happen no more. I lived in Benoni Location for more than ten years, and I saw the Boer policemen taking black people and beating them like dogs.

They even took me once, and kept me in one of their jails for a while. --Mpho 'M'atsepo Nthunya A compelling and unique autobiography by an African woman with little formal education, less privilege, and almost no experience of books or writing.

Mpho's is a voice almost never heard in literature or history, a voice from within the struggle of ordinary African women to negotiate a world which incorporates ancient pastoral ways and the

congestion, brutality, and racist violence of city life. It is also the voice of a born storyteller who has a subject worthy of her gifts--a story for all the world to hear.

"Invitation to Live" by Lloyd C. Douglas. Published by Good Press. Good Press publishes a wide range of titles that encompasses every genre. From well-known classics & literary fiction and non-fiction to forgotten?or yet undiscovered gems?of world literature, we issue the books that need to be read. Each Good Press edition has been meticulously edited and formatted to boost readability for all e-readers and devices. Our goal is to produce eBooks that are user-friendly and accessible to everyone in a high-quality digital format.

Semiautobiographical and universal in appeal, *Street of Riches* is about a young girl's growing up in a suburb of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Here is Christine, the perceptive narrator of *The Road Past Altamont* (also a Bison Book), awakening to natural and sometimes terrifying beauty, to family history, to the nuances of social life, to sexuality, to selfhood. A mother's romantic yearning for freedom, a father's roving career as an immigration officer, a beautiful sister's early demise, a host of others in very human situations - all contribute to the way Christine will view the world as a writer. Gabrielle Roy has been called the Canadian Willa Cather because of their affinity in style and theme. *Street of Riches* won both

the Governor-General's Award for Fiction and the French Prix Duvernay.

Camara Laye (1928-1980) traveled to France from his native Guinea in 1947 on a scholarship to study automobile mechanics. While there, he was encouraged by a supporter of the French Union to record the memories of his childhood. The resulting book, *L'Enfant noir*, was praised for its style and its uncritical attitude toward French colonization. A year later Laye published *Le Regard du roi*, a Kafkaesque story of a white man in Africa, which was very different in tone, style, and content from *L'Enfant noir* and from any other African literature being published at the time. *L'Enfant noir* and *Le Regard du roi* became seminal works of African fiction in French and were translated into English as *The African Child* and *The Radiance of the King*. Adele King met Camara Laye in 1978, two years before his death, and in 1980 published the principal study about him, *The Writings of Camara Laye*. In 1991 King set out to disprove rumors that Laye was not the author of one of his novels, *Le Regard du roi*. Instead she became convinced that the rumors were true and in the process unexpectedly discovered a far more interesting story about the creation of Laye as an author and public figure. Rereading Camara Laye describes King's research, which has taken more than ten years. Her inquiry involved finding those who knew Laye in Paris in the 1950s and

interviewing them when possible as well as examining documents in libraries and archives in France and Belgium. King's findings provide important insights into French publishing and colonial politics in the years following World War II. She also shows how interpretations of Laye's novels have been shaped by the assumption that they were written by an African.

The Dark Child London : Collins

This "wonderful and enchanting" memoir tells the revelatory true story of one Muslim girl's life in her family's French Moroccan harem, set against the backdrop of World War II (The New York Times Book Review). "I was born in a harem in 1940 in Fez, Morocco..." So begins Fatima Mernissi in this illuminating narrative of a childhood behind the iron gates of a domestic harem. In *Dreams of Trespass*, Mernissi weaves her own memories with the dreams and memories of the women who surrounded her in the courtyard of her youth -- women who, without access to the world outside, recreated it from sheer imagination. A beautifully written account of a girl confronting the mysteries of time and place, gender and sex, *Dreams of Trespass* illuminates what it was like to be a modern Muslim woman in a place steeped in tradition.

James Olney demonstrates that autobiography, because it provides the most direct narrative enactments of the ways, motives, and beliefs of a

culture, is an excellent way to approach African literature. After a general discussion of the African ethos, each chapter takes up the "autobiographical" literature of a specific group in African society and treats it as both an expression of a personal vision and as a revelation of a permeating social reality. Originally published in 1974. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

A man lives in total solitude in an abandoned mountain village. But each night, at the same hour, a mysterious distant light appears on the far side of the valley and disturbs his isolation. What is it? Someone in another deserted village? A forgotten street lamp? An alien being? Finally the man is driven to discover its source. He finds a young boy who also lives alone, in a house in the middle of the forest. But who really is this child? The answer at the secret heart of this novel is both uncanny and profoundly touching. Antonio Moresco's "Little



Prince" is a moving meditation on life and the universe we inhabit. Moresco reflects on the solitude and pain of existence, but also on what we share with all around us, living and dead. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Presenting a diverse and dazzling collection from all over the continent, from Morocco to Zimbabwe, Uganda to Kenya. Helon Habila focuses on younger, newer writers - contrasted with some of their older, more established peers - to give a fascinating picture of a new and more liberated Africa. These writers are characterized by their engagement with the wider world and the opportunities offered by the end of apartheid, the end of civil wars and dictatorships, and the possibilities of free movement. Their work is inspired by travel and exile. They are liberated, global and expansive. As Dambudzo Marechera wrote: 'If you're a writer for a specific nation or specific race, then f\*\*\* you.'" These are the stories of a new Africa, punchy, self-confident and defiant. Includes stories by: Fatou Diome; Aminatta Forna; Manuel Rui; Patrice Nganang; Leila Aboulela; Zo Wicomb; Alaa Al Aswany; Doreen Baingana; E.C. Osondu.

First published in 1954, this volume was intended by its author, A. Paul, to present a complete and consecutive a history of the tribes which inhabit the mountains and deserts of eastern Sudan. The book begins with a description of the Beja tribes and an

investigation into their origins, and then traces their long history from roughly 2500 BC to the middle of the twentieth century. Containing numerous maps and illustrations, as well as several detailed appendices, this volume will be of interest to anyone looking for an introduction to the history of the Beja people.

With her award-winning debut novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was heralded by the *Washington Post Book World* as the “21st century daughter” of Chinua Achebe. Now, in her masterly, haunting new novel, she recreates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra’s impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in Nigeria during the 1960s. With the effortless grace of a natural storyteller, Adichie weaves together the lives of five characters caught up in the extraordinary tumult of the decade. Fifteen-year-old Ugwu is houseboy to Odenigbo, a university professor who sends him to school, and in whose living room Ugwu hears voices full of revolutionary zeal. Odenigbo’s beautiful mistress, Olanna, a sociology teacher, is running away from her parents’ world of wealth and excess; Kainene, her urbane twin, is taking over their father’s business; and Kainene’s English lover, Richard, forms a bridge between their two worlds. As we follow these intertwined lives through a military coup, the Biafran secession and the subsequent war, Adichie brilliantly

evokes the promise, and intimately, the devastating disappointments that marked this time and place. Epic, ambitious and triumphantly realized, *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a more powerful, dramatic and intensely emotional picture of modern Africa than any we have had before.

*Worker in the Cane* is both a profound social document and a moving spiritual testimony. Don Taso portrays his harsh childhood, his courtship and early marriage, his grim struggle to provide for his family. He tells of his radical political beliefs and union activity during the Depression and describes his hardships when he was blacklisted because of his outspoken convictions. Embittered by his continuing poverty and by a serious illness, he undergoes a dramatic cure and becomes converted to a Protestant revivalist sect. In the concluding chapters the author interprets Don Taso's experience in the light of the changing patterns of life in rural Puerto Rico. This is the absorbing story of Don Taso, a Puerto Rican sugar cane worker, and of his family and the village in which he lives. Told largely in his own words, it is a vivid account of the drastic changes taking place in Puerto Rico, as he sees them. A dark, poetic mystery about the women of the remote village of Kulumani and the lionesses that hunt them Told through two haunting, interwoven diaries, *Mia Couto's Confession of the Lioness* reveals the mysterious world of Kulumani, an isolated village in Mozambique whose traditions and beliefs are threatened when ghostlike lionesses begin hunting the women who live there. Mariamar, a woman whose sister was killed in a lioness attack, finds her life thrown into chaos when the outsider Archangel Bullseye, the marksman hired to kill the lionesses, arrives at the request of the village elders. Mariamar's father imprisons her in her home, where she relives painful memories of past abuse and hopes to be

rescued by Archangel. Meanwhile, Archangel tracks the lionesses in the wilderness, but when he begins to suspect there is more to them than meets the eye, he starts to lose control of his hands. The hunt grows more dangerous, until it's no safer inside Kulumani than outside it. As the men of Kulumani feel increasingly threatened by the outsider, the forces of modernity upon their traditional culture, and the danger of their animal predators closing in, it becomes clear the lionesses might not be real lionesses at all but spirits conjured by the ancient witchcraft of the women themselves. Both a riveting mystery and a poignant examination of women's oppression, *Confession of the Lioness* explores the confrontation between the modern world and ancient traditions to produce an atmospheric, gripping novel.

Uwem Akpan's stunning stories humanize the perils of poverty and violence so piercingly that few readers will feel they've ever encountered Africa so immediately. The eight-year-old narrator of "An Ex-Mas Feast" needs only enough money to buy books and pay fees in order to attend school. Even when his twelve-year-old sister takes to the streets to raise these meager funds, his dream can't be granted. Food comes first. His family lives in a street shanty in Nairobi, Kenya, but their way of both loving and taking advantage of each other strikes a universal chord. In the second of his stories published in a *New Yorker* special fiction issue, Akpan takes us far beyond what we thought we knew about the tribal conflict in Rwanda. The story is told by a young girl, who, with her little brother, witnesses the worst possible scenario between parents. They are asked to do the previously unimaginable in order to protect their children. This singular collection will also take the reader inside Nigeria, Benin, and Ethiopia, revealing in beautiful prose the harsh consequences for children of life in Africa. Akpan's voice is a literary miracle, rendering lives of almost unimaginable deprivation and terror into stories that

are nothing short of transcendent.

An Arabic-English edition of the Holy Book of Islam is presented in a poetic and contemporary translation that seeks to conserve the original cadences of the Quranic language and is complemented by explanatory notes that identify the full meanings of various terms. Reprint.

The co-founder of the Stanford d.School introduces the power of design thinking to help you achieve goals you never thought possible. Achievement can be learned. It's a muscle, and once you learn how to flex it, you'll be able to meet life's challenges and fulfill your goals, Bernard Roth, Academic Director at the Stanford d.school contends. In *The Achievement Habit*, Roth applies the remarkable insights that stem from design thinking—previously used to solve large scale projects—to help us realize the power for positive change we all have within us. Roth leads us through a series of discussions, stories, recommendations, and exercises designed to help us create a different experience in our lives. He shares invaluable insights we can use to gain confidence to do what we've always wanted and overcome obstacles that hamper us from reaching our potential, including: Don't try—DO; Excuses are self-defeating; Believe you are a doer and achiever and you'll become one; Build resiliency by reinforcing what you do rather than what you accomplish; Learn to ignore distractions that prevent you from achieving your goals; Become open to learning from your own experience and from those around you; And more. The brain is complex and is always working with our egos to sabotage our best intentions. But we can be mindful; we can create habits that make our lives better. Thoughtful and powerful *The Achievement Habit* shows you how.

Chinua Achebe is Africa's most prominent writer, the author of *Things Fall Apart*, the best known--and best selling--novel ever to come out of Africa. His fiction and poetry burn with a

passionate commitment to political justice, bringing to life not only Africa's troubled encounters with Europe but also the dark side of contemporary African political life. Now, in *Home and Exile*, Achebe reveals the man behind his powerful work. Here is an extended exploration of the European impact on African culture, viewed through the most vivid experience available to the author--his own life. It is an extended snapshot of a major writer's childhood, illuminating his roots as an artist. Achebe discusses his English education and the relationship between colonial writers and the European literary tradition. He argues that if colonial writers try to imitate and, indeed, go one better than the Empire, they run the danger of undervaluing their homeland and their own people. Achebe contends that to redress the inequities of global oppression, writers must focus on where they come from, insisting that their value systems are as legitimate as any other. Stories are a real source of power in the world, he concludes, and to imitate the literature of another culture is to give that power away. *Home and Exile* is a moving account of an exceptional life. Achebe reveals the inner workings of the human conscience through the predicament of Africa and his own intellectual life. It is a story of the triumph of mind, told in the words of one of this century's most gifted writers.

*The Dark Child* is a distinct and graceful memoir of Camara Laye's youth in the village of Koroussa, French Guinea. Long regarded Africa's preeminent Francophone novelist, Laye (1928-80) herein marvels over his mother's supernatural powers, his father's distinction as the village goldsmith, and his own passage into manhood, which is marked by animistic beliefs and bloody rituals of primeval origin. Eventually, he must choose between this unique place and the academic success that lures him to distant cities. More than an autobiography of one boy, this is the universal story of sacred traditions struggling against the encroachment of a modern

world. A passionate and deeply affecting record, *The Dark Child* is a classic of African literature.

Seigneur Haj Ferdi is a very wealthy and powerful aristocratic property-owner in the Moroccan capital city of Casablanca. The aristocrat has grown his family inheritance into a very big fortune. He is a generous benefactor. The entire household fears and obeys the Seigneur. Haj Ferdi is diagnosed to be suffering from the terminal disease cirrhosis of the liver. He leaves his family and stays away on an island in his tomato plantation for five years. After the five years, he returns home; and is found dead two days later in Driss's room. All the sons come around for Haj's funeral ceremony. Driss, the narrator of the story, returns after sixteen years from France, leaving his French wife, his mother-in-law and son behind. The mourning lasts for ten days in Haj Ferdi's family, during which all the sons stay and sparsely feed together with their lonely mother. Then, it comes to sharing Haj Ferdi's inheritance.

The protagonist of this fictional autobiography wrestles with race in America from the perspective of someone who learns that he is considered black but also that he can pass as white if he wants to. His personal ambitiousness and racial ambivalence makes him a sort of American Hamlet: undone by indecision. Will he be "a credit to his race" by advancing an African-American heritage he loves and appreciates in the face of a hostile culture, or will he retreat into the mediocrity of a safe, white, middle-class family life? Along the way, he shares his penetrating observations about race relations in the American north and south, about the "freemasonry" of

subterranean black American culture, about the emerging bohemian jazz subculture in New York City, and about traditions of African American religious music and oratory. This book is part of the Standard Ebooks project, which produces free public domain ebooks. The Dark Child is a vivid and graceful memoir of Camara Laye's youth in the village of Kouroussa, French Guinea, a place steeped in mystery. Laye marvels over his mother's supernatural powers, his father's distinction as the village goldsmith, and his own passage into manhood, which is marked by animistic beliefs and bloody rituals. Eventually, he must choose between this unique place and the academic success that lures him to distant cities. More than autobiography of one boy, this is the universal story of sacred traditions struggling against the encroachment of a modern world. A passionate and deeply affecting record, The Dark Child is a classic of African literature.

At the beginning of this masterpiece of African literature, Clarence, a white man, has been shipwrecked on the coast of Africa. Flush with self-importance, he demands to see the king, but the king has just left for the south of his realm. Traveling through an increasingly phantasmagoric landscape in the company of a beggar and two roguish boys, Clarence is gradually stripped of his pretensions, until he is sold to the royal harem as a slave. But in the end Clarence's bewildering journey is the occasion of a revelation, as he discovers the image, both shameful and beautiful, of his own humanity in the alien splendor of the king

[This book] is a ... memoir of [the author's] youth in the



village of Koroussa, French Guinea, a place steeped in mystery. [He] marvels over his mother's supernatural powers, his father's distinction as the village goldsmith, and his own passage into manhood, which is marked by animistic beliefs and bloody rituals of primeval origin. Eventually, he must choose between this unique place and the academic success that lures him to distant cities. More than the autobiography of one boy, this is the universal story of sacred traditions struggling against the encroachment of a modern world.-Back cover.

Obi Okonkwo is an idealistic young man who, thanks to the privileges of an education in Britain, has now returned to Nigeria for a job in the civil service. However in his new role he finds that the way of government seems to be backhanders and corruption. Obi manages to resist the bribes that are offered to him, but when he falls in love with an unsuitable girl - to the disapproval of his parents - he sinks further into emotional and financial turmoil. The lure of easy money becomes harder to refuse, and Obi becomes caught in a trap he cannot escape. Showing a man lost in cultural limbo, and a Nigeria entering a new age of disillusionment, *No Longer at Ease* concludes Achebe's remarkable trilogy charting three generations of an African community under the impact of colonialism, the first two volumes of which are *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*.

Jazz, aliens, and witchcraft collide in this collection of short stories by renowned author Emmanuel Dongala. The influence of Kongo culture is tangible throughout, as customary beliefs clash with party conceptions of scientific and rational thought. In the first half of *Jazz and*

Palm Wine, the characters emerge victorious from decades of colonial exploitation in the Congo only to confront the burdensome bureaucracy, oppressive legal systems, and corrupt governments of the post-colonial era. The ruling political party attempts to impose order and scientific thinking while the people struggles to deal with drought, infertility, and impossible regulations and policies; both sides mix witchcraft, diplomacy, and violence in their efforts to survive. The second half of the book is set in the United States during the turbulent civil rights struggles of the 1960s. In the title story, African and American leaders come together to save the world from extraterrestrials by serving vast quantities of palm wine and playing American jazz. The stories in Jazz and Palm Wine prompt conversations about identity, race, and co-existence, providing contextualization and a historical dimension that is often sorely lacking. Through these collisions and clashes, Dongala suggests a pathway to racial harmony, peaceful co-existence, and individual liberty through artistic creation.

Ivory Coast, 1978. It's a golden time, and the nation, too—an oasis of affluence and stability in West Africa—seems fueled by something wondrous. Aya is loosely based upon Marguerite Abouet's youth in Yop City. It is the story of the studious and clear-sighted 19-year old Aya, her easy-going friends Adjoua and Bintou, and their meddling relatives and neighbors. It's wryly funny, breezy account of the simple pleasures and private troubles of everyday life in Yop City. Clément Oubrerie's warm colors and energetic, playful line connect expressively with Marguerite Abouet's vibrant writing. This reworked edition offers readers the chance to immerse themselves in the lively world of Aya and her friends,

bringing together the first three volumes of the series in Book One. Drawn & Quarterly has release volumes four through six of the original French series (as yet unpublished in English) in *Aya: Love in Yop City*. *Aya* is the winner of the Best First Album award at the Angouleme International Comics Festival, the Children's Africana Book Award, and the Glyph Award; was nominated for the Quill Award, the YALSA's Great Graphic Novels list, and the Eisner Award; and was included on "best of" lists from The Washington Post, Booklist, Publishers Weekly, and School Library Journal. *Aya: Life in Yop City* has been translated from the French by Helge Dascher. Dascher has been translating graphic novels from French and German to English for over twenty years. A contributor to Drawn & Quarterly since the early days, her translations include acclaimed titles such as *Hostage* by Guy Delisle and *Beautiful Darkness* by Fabien Vehlmann and Kerascoët. With a background in art history and history, she also translates books and exhibitions for museums in North America and Europe. She lives in Montreal.

This is a simple and powerful tale of the effects of the Mau Mau war on individuals and families in Kenya.

The "Suns of Independence" considered a masterpiece of modern African literature, enables the reader to gain unique insight into African culture and conflicts. Through Fama and Salimata, the husband and wife at the heart of the story, Kourouma conveys the confusion that torments many Africans when a traditional and a later, more materialistic culture collide. The last of the Dumbuya princes who had reigned over the Malinke tribe before the European conquest, Fama seeks a place for himself within the new hierarchy of bureaucrats and border guards. Salimata, haunted by memories of a ritualistic excision and a brutal rape, searches for the means to have a child who will pass on the Dumbuya legacy to future generations. Interwoven with tales and

proverbs from the ancient Malinke traditions, this modern novel brilliantly captures the struggles, desires, and dreams of a people in a West African country living through the tumultuous days of Independence. -- Publisher description. At the beginning of this book, a masterpiece of African literature, Clarence, a white man, has been shipwrecked and stranded on the coast of Africa. Brimful of self-importance, he demands to see the king, but the king has just left for the south of his realm. Traveling through an increasingly phantasmagoric landscape in the company of a beggar and two roguish boys, Clarence is slowly stripped of his pretensions, until he is sold as a slave to the royal harem. But in the end Clarence's bewildering journey is the occasion of a revelation, as he discovers the image, both shameful and beautiful, of his own strange humanity in the alien figure of the king.

From the legendary author of *Things Fall Apart*—a long-awaited memoir of coming of age in a fragile new nation, and its destruction in a tragic civil war For more than forty years, Chinua Achebe maintained a considered silence on the events of the Nigerian civil war, also known as the Biafran War, of 1967–1970, addressing them only obliquely through his poetry. Decades in the making, *There Was a Country* is a towering account of one of modern Africa's most disastrous events, from a writer whose words and courage left an enduring stamp on world literature. A marriage of history and memoir, vivid firsthand observation and decades of research and reflection, *There Was a Country* is a work whose wisdom and compassion remind us of Chinua Achebe's place as one of the great literary and moral voices of our age.

*The Simple Past* came out in 1954, and both in France and its author's native Morocco the book caused an explosion of fury. The protagonist, who shares the author's name, Driss, comes from a Moroccan family of means, his father a self-

made tea merchant, the most devout of Muslims, quick to be provoked and ready to lash out verbally or physically, continually bent on subduing his timid wife and many children to his iron and ever-righteous will. He is known, simply, as the Lord, and Driss, who is in high school, is in full revolt against both him and the French colonial authorities, for whom, as much as for his father, he is no one. Driss Chraïbi's classic coming-of-age story is about colonialism, Islam, the subjection of women, and finding, as his novel does, a voice that is as cutting and coruscating as it is original and free.

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