

My Name Escapes Me

Alec Guinness

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Having filled roles in films as varied as "Lawrence of Arabia" and "Star Wars," Guinness is one of the most distinguished and beloved - movie actors of his generation. His charmingly sincere diary entries offer a glimpse of the private side of his often very public life. What makes Guinness a fine and versatile actor is precisely what also makes him a good diarist: an ironically observant eye. In his diary, which covers the 18 months from January 1995 to June 1996, he reveals the inner life of a hugely successful actor while remaining completely accessible. This work is, at the same time, a poignant account of a man coming to terms with being 82 and its accompanying infirmities and a delightfully humorous record of his extemporaneous opinions and careful reflections. Certain interests and preoccupations recur: theater and films, of course, but also books and paintings; the church, sometimes held up for amused observation, more often the focus of a personal faith; food and drink, whether fish 'n' chips with a group of fellow actors or a solitary entrecote at the Connaught; and the delights of being at home with his wife in the Hampshire countryside. Though Guinness shows a keen interest in contemporary events and culture (such as taking a perhaps surprising pleasure in the Wallace and Gromit cartoons), he also brings to the diary some fascinating anecdotes from his long and distinguished acting career and new tales of his current friendships.



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