



Tiepolo's Hound

Derek Walcott

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From the Nobel laureate, a book-length poem on two educations in painting, a century apart

*"Between me and Venice the thigh of a hound;
my awe of the ordinary, because even as I write,*

*paused on a step of this couplet, I have never found
its image again, a hound in astounding light."*

Tiepolo's Hound joins the quests of two Caribbean men: Camille Pissarro--a Sephardic Jew born in 1830 who leaves his native St. Thomas to follow his vocation as a painter in Paris--and the poet himself, who longs to rediscover a detail--"a slash of pink on the inner thigh / of a white hound"--of a Venetian painting encountered on an early visit from St. Lucia to New York. Both journeys take us through a Europe of the mind's eye, in search of a connection between the lost, actual landscape of a childhood and the mythical landscape of empire.

Published with twenty-five full-color reproductions of Derek Walcott's own paintings, the poem is at once the spiritual biography of a great artist in self-imposed exile, a history in verse of Impressionist painting, and a memoir of the poet's desire to catch the visual world in more than words.

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