



The Orchid House

By Professor Phyllis Shand Allfrey

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Lally helps to raise three white sisters in the Orchid House on the Island of Dominica and observes as each flees to the cold northern lands of England and America only to return to their magical past and the man they love.

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The Orchid House By Professor Phyllis Shand Allfrey Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

First published in 1954, *The Orchid House*, Phyllis Shand Allfrey's only published novel, is a classic of Caribbean literature. In this markedly autobiographical story of the three daughters of a once-powerful but now impoverished white family, Allfrey interweaves her family's history with the history of her home island of Dominica in the twentieth century. The novel is written in a sensuous style and the story remarkably told through the eyes of Lally, the black nurse of the three sisters. Often praised for the clear-sightedness of its analysis of the Dominican historical process, *The Orchid House* stands at a crucial intersection of West Indian politics. It was during this period that the colonized took over from the colonizer the direction of local governments. Allfrey, a Fabian socialist and founder of Dominica's first political party, articulates in this novel the central tenet of a political philosophy that guided a lifetime of grassroots activism: that profound changes had to take place in the power structures of Caribbean societies to bring social justice to its peoples, and that those who persevered in seeking to revive the past were doomed. This edition makes this classic novel available in paperback for the first time in years.

About the Author

PHYLLIS SHAND ALLFREY, novelist and poet, was born in Dominica, where her father was Crown Attorney. Her work has often been compared to that of her compatriot and friend, Jean Rhys. The novel has been made into a film for British television.

LIZABETH PARAVISINI-GERBERT an associate professor in the Department of Hispanic Studies at Vassar College. She co-edited *Green Cane and Juicy Flotsam: Short Stories by Caribbean Women* (Rutgers University Press).

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Eloisa Hurd:

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Shirley Eagle:

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