

# Alan Potter memoir for his lovely wife

## FOR YOU DEPARTED

By Alan Paton

Charles Scribner's Sons, \$5.95

In 69 short lyrical passages, Alan Paton, celebrated author of "Cry, The Beloved Country," "South Africa in Transition," and in 1963, "South African Tragedy: The Life and Times of Jan Hofmeyr," which he considers equal to his internationally-acclaimed masterpiece, writes this very person memoir to and for his lovely wife, Dorrie.

Alan Paton was born in South Africa, graduated from Natal University, and in 1924 began teaching at Ixopo where in 1926 he married a spirited young woman, his senior by a few years.

"What fortune that is," he writes, "to fall in love with a woman knowing nothing of her except that she is alive and mischievous and then to find

this great integrity." Sometimes one instinctively feels the existence of qualities before they become apparent, he indicates.

"Cry, The Beloved Country," begun in Norway and finished in San Francisco, is "a song of love for one's far distant country, a story of the beauty and terror of human life."

"For You Departed" a tender, poignant love memoir, reveals the innermost

thoughts of a talented husband, and the response of his gracious wife. Out of his own experience, he distills sound advice for young husbands and wives, indeed for all husbands and wives, "Don't be too niggardly with your words."; good words I assume he means.

The encomium opens with a short, affecting account of Dorrie's death in 1967 after a long illness. In the following chapter he describes the first

meeting of him, a guileless youth of 22 and the clear-eyed, zestful girl on the tennis court.

Then in chapters alternating between past and present he commemorates their years together and their happiness in their two sons.

Particularly significant are the thirteen years they spent at the Diepkloof Reformatory, where at thirty-two he has given the opportunity of converting a prison to a school.

In the final chapter he writes, "Something in me is waking from long sleep," and the book is done too, this kontakion. (Orthodox Greek term for a hymn honoring a saint) for you departed.

And now he is married again.

Reviewed by  
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