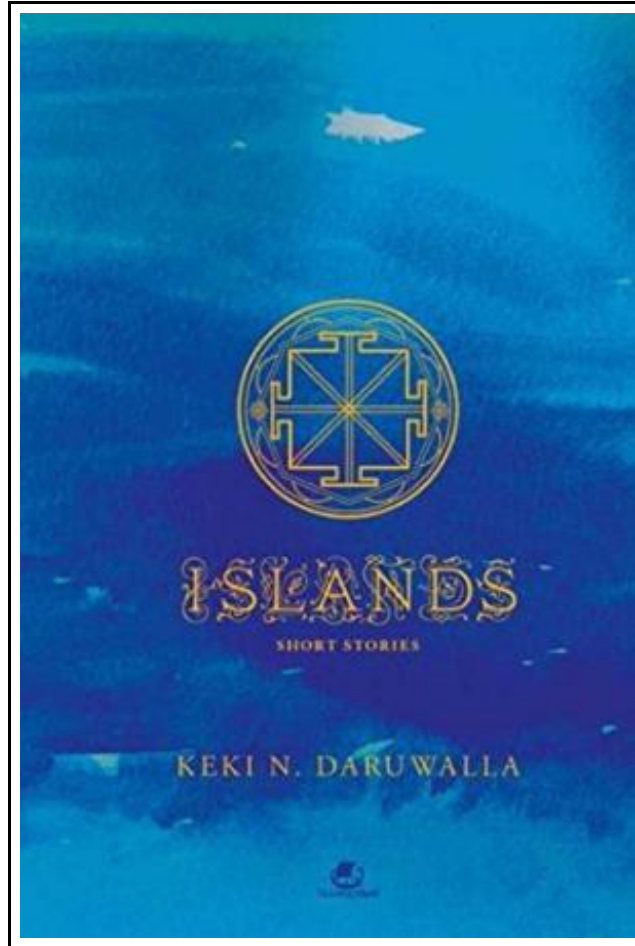


Islands: Short Stories



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ISLANDS: SHORT STORIES



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Westland Limited, New Delhi, India. Softcover. Book Condition: New. Keki N. Daruwallas short stories circle around islands-solitary tracts of land, self-contained mini-continents. Sometimes, these autonomous landmasses are conjured up in a sadhus third-eye- Yogananda builds them like he would a dream scape. Sometimes, they transform into objects of desire Arnaaz sails towards the declining sun, in search of an islet of aloneness and youth. Sometimes, they come with the promise of abundance Vidyarthi scours his reef for a magic shrub. And sometimes, they silently disappear Santa Xavier is swept away by blustery winds and rumours. Through these stories, each linked, each disparate, Daruwalla asks what it means to abandon an island or inhabit one. He also asks what it means to allow an island to sail within us. For each of the characters is on a private journey, a reclusive flight inwards, towards an isle of peace, an isle beyond questions of faith and unbelief, an isle past remembrance and forgetting. Ultimately, each character is an island unto himself or herself, from the retiring vagrant on bird island, to Dinaz, feeling her way on her own through a fast receding past, to the wild Khampa, severed from his people, who realises there must be worse things than being alone, but I dont know what they are. In these short stories, Daruwallas love for the sea becomes evident, as also his yearning for a kind of solitude, which evades us in this overcrowded century. Equally, in a style rich in humour, irony and compassion, his preoccupation with the modern human condition comes to the fore-its drift away from an anchoring mainland, its island-like seclusion, its quiet search for fullness.



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