



Chronicles of My Life: An American in the Heart of Japan

Donald Keene

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"I sometimes think that if, as the result of an accident, I were to lose my knowledge of Japanese, there would not be much left for me. Japanese, which at first had no connection with my ancestors, my literary tastes, or my awareness of myself as a person, has become the central element of my life."

In this eloquent and wholly absorbing memoir, the renowned scholar Donald Keene shares more than half a century of his extraordinary adventures as a student of Japan. Keene begins with an account of his bittersweet childhood in New York; then he describes his initial encounters with Asia and Europe and the way in which World War II complicated that experience. He captures the sights, scents, and sounds of Japan as they first enveloped him, and talks of the unique travels and well-known intellectuals who later shaped the contours of his academic career.

Keene traces the movement of his passions with delicacy and subtlety, deftly weaving his love for Japan into a larger narrative about identity and home and the circumstances that led a Westerner to find solace in a country on the opposite side of the world. *Chronicles of My Life* is not only a fascinating tale of two cultures colliding, but also a thrilling account of the emotions and experiences that connect us all, regardless of our individual origins.

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