

Either/Or: A Fragment of Life (Penguin Classics)

By Soren Kierkegaard

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In *Either/Or*, using the voices of two characters—the aesthetic young man of part one, called simply "A," and the ethical Judge Vilhelm of the second section—Kierkegaard reflects upon the search for a meaningful existence, contemplating subjects as diverse as Mozart, drama, boredom, and, in the famous Seducer's Diary, the cynical seduction and ultimate rejection of a young, beautiful woman. A masterpiece of duality, *Either/Or* is a brilliant exploration of the conflict between the aesthetic and the ethical - both meditating ironically and seductively upon Epicurean pleasures, and eloquently expounding the noble virtues of a morally upstanding life.

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Editorial Review

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

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About the Author

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55) was born in Copenhagen, the youngest of seven children. His childhood was unhappy, clouded by the religious fervour of his father, and the death of his mother, his sisters and two brothers. Educated at the School of Civic Virtue, he went on to study theology, liberal arts and science at university, gaining a reputation for his academic brilliance and extravagant social life. He began to criticize Christianity, and in 1841 broke off his engagement to concentrate on his writing. Over the next ten years he produced a flood of works, in particular twelve major philosophical essays, many written under noms de plume. By the end of his life he had become an object of public ridicule, but he is now enjoying increasing acclaim.

Alastair Hannay was educated at the Edinburgh Academy, the University of Edinburgh and University College London. In 1961 he became a resident of Norway and is now Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oslo.

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