



Even in Paradise

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"*King Lear* in the Caribbean—except in this novel, the flattery and deceit of Glynis (Goneril) and Rebecca (Regan) lose out to the principled, honest love of their younger sister, Corinne (Cordelia)."

--*O, the Oprah Magazine*, 10 Titles to Pick Up Now

"An epic tale of family betrayal and manipulation couched in superbly engaging prose and peopled with deftly drawn characters. In a story structure as rhythmic as the ebb and flow of the water surrounding Trinidad and Barbados, this revisiting of the classic story of *King Lear* becomes a subtle, organic exploration of politics, class, race, and privilege. A dazzling, epic triumph."

--*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred review

"[Narrator] Émile remarks on parallels to *King Lear* repeatedly, but there is much more to unpack here. The issue of racism is woven throughout, as are regional problems such as access to Barbados's beaches and poverty in Jamaica's Tivoli Gardens. This is also a celebration of the arts, culture, and natural beauty of the islands. Shakespeare's work is a tragedy, but for Émile 'the future shimmers before [him] full of wondrous possibilities.' Nunez treats her source material with a deft touch, making this story impressive in its own right."

--*Publishers Weekly*

"Nunez's textured and engaging novel explores familial discord, along with questions of kinship and self-identity....With a nod to *King Lear*, Nunez crafts an introspective tale as her vividly drawn characters navigate complications of heritage, race, and loyalty."

--*Booklist*

"Nunez has written a Caribbean reimagining of *King Lear* that adds colonialism and racism to the story of three sisters, the men they love and their battle over the deed to their father's beloved property. Themes of greed, jealousy and resentment play out after their father confuses flattery with love and disowns his favorite daughter."

--*Ms. Magazine*

"Nunez has written a very readable...engaging novel that deals with big themes worthy of good storytelling."

--*New York Journal of Books*

"[Nunez's] prose has a timeless quality, abundant in detail and vivid description, and her rich evocation of culture, place, and identity make this an easy and compelling read--the Caribbean islands of Trinidad, Barbados, and Jamaica are just as much characters as any of the people in the novel...Nunez draws the *Lear* comparisons so expertly, you'll find yourself wondering if the Caribbean wasn't the original setting for this story after all...*Even in Paradise* is a fast and thought-provoking read, as well as being a great juicy drama to dive into just as the weather gets warmer."

--MuggleNet

Peter Ducksworth, a Trinidadian widower of English ancestry, retires to Barbados, believing he will find an earthly paradise there. He decides to divide his land among his three daughters while he is

alive, his intention not unlike that of King Lear, who hoped "That future strife/May be prevented now." But Lear made the fatal mistake of confusing flattery with love, and so does Ducksworth. Feeling snubbed by his youngest daughter, Ducksworth decides that only after he dies will she receive her portion of the land. In the meantime, he gives his two older daughters their portions, ironically setting in motion the very strife he hoped to prevent.

Beautifully written in elegant prose, this is a novel about greed, resentment, jealousy, betrayal, and romantic love in the postcolonial world of the Caribbean, giving us a diverse cast of characters of African, Indian, Chinese, Syrian/Lebanese, and English ancestry.

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Kent Walker:

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