

NAXOS
AudioBooks

Lawrence Durrell
Clea

Read by **Nigel Anthony**

**CLASSIC
FICTION**

**MODERN
CLASSICS**



NA306612D

THE ALEXANDRIA QUARTET • IV

1	A summons back to the Underworld	8:11
2	The Queen of Spades	8:10
3	Departure from the island	8:44
4	Nessim and other remembered faces	6:56
5	A job and old Pombal	7:54
6	The old haunts	7:51
7	A different haunted Justine	9:12
8	Alone with her again	7:44
9	Balthazar once more	11:26
10	Clea in the Rue Fuad	5:20
11	El Scob	8:03
12	The Auberge – the furniture of my dreams	9:19
13	So the city claimed me once more	5:49
14	The office of censorship	12:55
15	Liza and Mountolive	7:56
16	A revelation of intimacy	9:36

17	Unpremeditated brilliance and prolixity	5:14
18	Keats – a greek god	10:09
19	An epistolary flare	4:51
20	The ebb of war	11:12
21	The elusive island of Narouz	8:02
22	The halcyon summer moves to an end	6:20
23	A new post – a new escape	5:01
24	A last picnic on the island	6:30
25	A disastrous accident	10:04
26	A hospital visit	8:58
27	Balthazar – a farewell	10:05
28	A letter to Clea and a reply	11:18
29	A nudge	1:44

Total time: 3:54:50

Lawrence Durrell

Clea

Clea is the fourth and last volume of Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet* – although the work remains open-ended as if Durrell intended to return one day to follow the further fortunes of his characters and their love affairs. Indeed, he leaves pointers to what might happen in the future – but in Europe, and particularly Paris, not in Alexandria. Still, in *Clea*, Alexandria remains the *deus loci*. Darley returns to the city with the child of Nessim and Melissa, when Nessim asks him to bring her back, leaving the island where he has been writing about the events in the lives of his various friends, Balthazar, Nessim, Justine and Clea. He now claims he has abandoned this work, since reading Balthazar's 'Interlinear', because it has made him feel that he did not really know the truth about people and events which had taken place in Alexandria, and in which he had been a participant.

Now it is wartime, and Alexandria seems the same, but everything has changed. Darley feels like an ancient inhabitant of the city, coming back from the other side of the grave to visit it. His friends remain much

as they once had been, except that all of them have begun to turn new facets of themselves toward each other.

And now Darley and Clea fall in love. Mountolive and Liza are together. The letters which Purswarden has left to his sister, after his suicide, serve to present what is surely Darley's own view of the writer:

'I saw, in fact that we artists form one of those pathetic human chains which human beings form to pass buckets of water up to a fire, or to bring in a lifeboat. An uninterrupted chain of humans born to explore the inward richness of the solitary life on behalf of the unheeding, unforgiving community, manacled together by the same gift.

I began to see too that the real 'fiction' lay neither in Arnauti's pages nor in Purswarden's – nor even in my own. It was life itself that was a fiction – we were all saying it in our different ways, each understanding it according to his nature and gift. We were three writers, I now saw, confided to a mythical city from which

we are to confirm our gifts. Arnauti, Pursewarden, Darley – like Past, Present and Future tense! And in my own life the three women who also arranged themselves as if to represent the moods of the great verb Love: Melissa, Justine and Clea. And realising this I was suddenly afflicted by a great melancholy and despair in recognising the completely limited nature of my powers.'

Clea, and Darley's love for her, provides the dominant theme of this fourth volume, which begins to draw the threads together, without telling us that anything is complete or final. We see that the books have been about love and fiction, about politics and psychology, about the magic of writing and art, and their deep limitations. Life itself is a fiction, and that fiction is just one perspective on a subject and a place filled with endless complexity. But the need and wish for art survives and after a terrible accident, first of all Clea and then Darley rediscover their talents and their abilities to express their art.

The whole cycle is renewed.

Notes by Elizabeth Bradbury

**The music on this recording is taken from the
NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues**

RAVEL PIANO CONCERTO IN G MAJOR Francois-Joel Thiollier, piano; Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra (Katowice)/Antoni Wit	8.550753
DEBUSSY/RAVEL STRING QUARTETS Kodaly Quartet	8.550249
DEBUSSY/POULENC/RAVEL/SAINT-SAËNS FRENCH VIOLIN SONATAS Dong-Suk Kang, violin/Pascal Devoyon, piano	8.550276
MACDOWELL PIANO MUSIC James Barbagallo	8.223631

Cover picture: Photo by Rodolphe Hammadi from 'Alexandrie d'Egypte,
les lieux du Quartuor d'Alexandrie' (Editions Eric Koehler)

Lawrence Durrell

Clea

Read by **Nigel Anthony**

'I knew that Clea would share everything with me, withholding nothing – not even the look of complicity which women reserve only for their mirrors.'

In *Clea*, the concluding part of *The Alexandria Quartet*, Darley returns to Alexandria now caught by war-fever. The conflagration has its effect on his circle – on Nessim and Justine, Balthazar and Clea, Mountolive and Pombal – but a clarity of purpose emerges as the story moves towards its cadence.



Nigel Anthony has worked in television (*Coronation Street*, *Spender*, *Casualty* etc.) and in the theatre, with the RSC and with Alan Ayckbourn at Scarborough. He is, however, best known for his numerous broadcasts on BBC Radio. For many years he has been one of the leading actors in that medium and as a master of vocal disguise has played countless different character roles. He has twice won awards for best actor. Nigel Anthony also reads Durrell's *Justine*, *Balthazar* and *Mountolive* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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Total time
3:54:50