



The Cowherd's Son (Kundiman Prize)

Rajiv Mohabir



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Broadening the scope of his award-winning debut to consider the wider Indo-Caribbean community in migration across the Americas and Europe, Rajiv Mohabir uses his queer and mixed-caste identities as grace notes to charm alienation into silence. Mohabir's inheritance of myths, folk tales, and multilingual translations make a palimpsest of histories that bleed into one another. A descendant of indentureship survivors, the poet-narrator creates an allegorical chronicle of dislocations and relocations, linking India, Guyana, Trinidad, New York, Orlando, Toronto, and Honolulu, combining the amplitude of mythology with direct witness and sensual reckoning, all the while seeking joy in testimony.

Praise for Rajiv Mohabir's previous book: "In his excellent debut, Mohabir exposes desire and inner turmoil through the measured incantations of a queer, Indian-American voice that refuses the burdens of a homophobic and racist world. He eloquently describes how the brown body survives, clinging vigilantly to longing, lust, and love: 'I mean to say / I am still -- this trembling breath of a comma, this coincidental object of your want.' . . . Mohabir illuminates his own wounds, and as the reader watches him dresses and stitches those wounds, 'A queer flutter knocks about your ribs.'" -- *Publishers Weekly*

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