



Spoon River Anthology: AN ANNOTATED EDITION

Edgar Lee Masters

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One of the most striking and original achievements in American poetry is now available in a remarkable edition that comprehends the poet and his book in an entirely new way. This edition of Spoon River Anthology probes the social background of the smalltown world that Edgar Lee Masters loved and hated--and finally transmuted into powerful literary art. Extensive annotations identify the people whose lives inspired the 243 poetic accounts of frustration, violence, struggle, and triumph that once shocked American readers. The most extraordinary feature of this edition is the extensive introduction that provides the key to this misunderstood American classic. The book's relationship to Whitman is clearly established, and the important influences of Browning, Goethe, Spinoza, and others are revealed for the first time. John Hallwas's approach combines cultural, biographical, philosophical, psychoanalytic, mythic, and symbolic insights--and concludes with a stunning reassessment of "Our New Poet." The annotated Spoon River Anthology supersedes 75 years of largely misdirected critical commentary. It will send a new generation of readers back to this surprisingly complex book that probes so deeply into the American consciousness--and will send Masters back into our national anthologies.



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