



The Serpent and the Rainbow

Wade Davis

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The Serpent and the Rainbow Wade Davis

A scientific investigation and personal adventure story about zombis and the voodoo culture of Haiti by a Harvard scientist.

In April 1982, ethnobotanist Wade Davis arrived in Haiti to investigate two documented cases of zombis—people who had reappeared in Haitian society years after they had been officially declared dead and had been buried. Drawn into a netherworld of rituals and celebrations, Davis penetrated the voodoo mystique deeply enough to place zombification in its proper context within voodoo culture. In the course of his investigation, Davis came to realize that the story of voodoo is the history of Haiti—from the African origins of its people to the successful Haitian independence movement, down to the present day, where voodoo culture is, in effect, the government of Haiti's countryside.

The Serpent and the Rainbow combines anthropological investigation with a remarkable personal adventure to illuminate and finally explain a phenomenon that has long fascinated Americans.

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