

The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves

M.T. Anderson

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The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation: Volume II: The Kingdom on the Waves by M.T. Anderson looks at the American Revolution from a unique vantage point. When the embattled British governor of Virginia Colony, Lord Dunmore, guarantees freedom for blacks who take up arms on his behalf, the classically educated Octavian is one of many to throw in against Liberty-loving slave-owners. Anderson convincingly defies convention, casting the British in a fairly favorable light, showing that justice and injustice are determined by perspective. He's thematically concerned with shifting identity: "How do we change—within moments the whole form of our habits and dispositions may become alien to us, and we almost cannot remember what we were." Volume I won the National Book Award, and this book is no less notable.

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