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"Poor Visitor": Jamaica Kincaid on Place, Belonging, and Environmental Justice

Abstract I: Con esempi tratti da *Lucy* (1990), *A Small Place* (1988) e *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* (2005), e rifacendomi al dibattito teorico sullo spazio e la giustizia ambientale, in questo articolo esploro la riflessione di Jamaica Kincaid sulla giustizia socio-ambientale e su categorie fluide quali 'senso del luogo', 'visitatore', 'turista' e 'residente'. Nell'opera di Kincaid, lo spazio non è mai neutro; emerge piuttosto come un costrutto socioculturale plasmato da forze sociali ed economiche e segnato da strutture di dominio e disuguaglianza. Kincaid suggerisce infine che qualsiasi autentico 'senso del pianeta' debba fondarsi su una profonda coscienza storica, condizione indispensabile per un attivismo ambientale e politico realmente significativo.

Abstract II: Drawing on *Lucy* (1990), *A Small Place* (1988), and *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* (2005), as well as on theoretical debates surrounding space and environmental justice, in this article I explore Jamaica Kincaid's engagement with socio-environmental justice and with such fluid categories as 'sense of place', 'visitor', 'tourist', and 'resident'. In Kincaid's oeuvre, space is never neutral; rather, it emerges as a socio-cultural construct shaped by social and economic forces and deeply entangled with structures of domination and inequality. Kincaid ultimately suggests that any genuine 'sense of planet' must be grounded in a profound historical consciousness, which alone can provide the basis for meaningful forms of environmental and political activism.

Keywords: Jamaica Kincaid, Postcolonial Ecocriticism, Environmental Justice, Mobility and Tourism, Planetary Consciousness.

In *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet*, Ursula Heise offers a critical reflection on the localism that characterized much of the American environmental debate until the final decades of the twentieth century, and links it to what, in a broader context, philosopher Hans Jonas and sociologist Zygmunt Bauman call an "ethics of proximity": the idea that moral obligations derive from, or are primarily connected to, what is close, familiar, and concrete (Heise 2008: 28 ff.). In the words of poet Wendell Berry, quoted by Heise, "without a complex knowledge of one's place, and without the faithfulness to one's place on which such knowledge depends, it is inevitable that the place will be used carelessly, and eventually destroyed" (Heise 2008: 31). According to this perspective, in order to reconnect with the natural world and

overcome the alienation from nature produced by modern societies, people need to develop a 'sense of place', a detailed knowledge of the ecosystems around them, which in turn generates a special attachment to those places. To paraphrase the title of Scott Russell Sanders' book *Staying Put: Making a Home in a Restless World* (1993), people need 'to stay put'. In *Slow Violence*, Rob Nixon revisits and expands Heise's argument, emphasising how American environmental debates, from Ralph Waldo Emerson to Gary Snyder, have often centred on a notion of place infused with an aura of mysticism. In this line of thought, the ideal place, the place that prompts a meaningful connection with the Earth, is often wild, pure and "natural" (Nixon 2011: 233 ff.). Yet the American wilderness, much like the English pastoral, has never been *pure* or *natural*. Both wilderness and the pastoral are socio-historical constructs, shaped by processes of idealisation and the exclusion of other spaces and other histories. "To stand as a self-contained national heritage landscape", Nixon writes, "English pastoral has depended on the screening out of colonial spaces and histories, much as the American wilderness ideal has entailed an amnesiac relationship toward the Indian wars of dispossession" (Nixon 2011: 245). But what happens, Nixon asks, when the memory of the colonial past breaks into the pastoral idyll, exposing its ideological assumptions? This is precisely what occurs in the works of Antiguan American writer Jamaica Kincaid, who debunks the idea that places are stable, pure, or natural. In her novels, essays, and travelogues, space is never natural, but rather a socio-cultural product (Lefebvre 1991), created and experienced through social and economic structures, and embedded in patterns of domination and inequality. Ahead of her time, Kincaid investigated the nexus of colonial history and ecological disaster long before these issues became central to contemporary critical debates. Drawing on *Lucy* (1990), *A Small Place* (1988), and *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* (2005), as well as on theoretical debates on environmental justice (Nixon 2011; Robbins 2017), in the following pages I will shed light on Kincaid's analysis of some highly unstable notions such as "sense of place", "visitor", "tourist", and "resident". Such categories are unstable because relationships to place are continually reshaped by history – both personal and collective – memory, perspective, and representation; however, this instability does not erase the unequal structures of power that determine how one can inhabit a place or define its meaning[1]. If our sense of place sets us apart, Kincaid suggests, our sense of planet, "a sense of how political, economic, technological, social, cultural, and ecological networks shape our daily routines" (Heise 2008: 55), should unite us, and must ultimately rest on a deep historical consciousness – the only foundation for any meaningful activism.

I will begin with *Lucy*, a novel from 1990. *Lucy* tells the story of a Caribbean girl who goes to the United States to work as an *au pair* with a wealthy family. At first glance, Lewis and Mariah, her employers, are the image of familial happiness – handsome, rich, in love, and blessed with four beautiful blonde children. The family spends long summers in a house on the lake: an old, restored house that belonged to Mariah's family, where she used to spend her summers as a child. While there, Mariah becomes involved with some friends

[1] Literary critic Steve Mentz expands the metaphor of flow to embrace historical narratives themselves: "Thinking in terms of cyclical flows rather than linear progress makes historical narratives messier, more confusing, and less familiar. These are good things" (2020: XVII).

in a campaign against the ecological degradation of the landscape surrounding the house. Lucy, the West Indian *au pair*, muses:

> Like her [Mariah], all of the members of this organization were well off but they made no connection between their comforts and the decline of the world that lay before them. […] I could have told them how nice it was to see them getting a small sip of their own bad medicine. Some days she would go out from early morning until late afternoon sketching specimens of all sorts in their various habitats; she gave me the impression that everything was on its last legs and any day now would disappear from the face of the earth. Mariah was the kindest person I had ever known. And that was the reason I couldn't bring myself to point out to her that if all the things she wanted to save in the world were saved, she might find herself in reduced circumstances; I couldn't bring myself to ask her to examine Lewis's daily conversations with his stockbroker, to see if they bore any relation to the things she saw passing away before her eyes[2].

Having fled the patriarchal society of her small island, in the United States Lucy discovers feminism and environmentalism through Mariah; through Paul (an artist she meets at a party and who later becomes her lover), she encounters the artistic avant-garde. These movements open new horizons for her, and yet Lucy, with her remarkable ability to cut through the falseness of things and ideas, also perceives the limits of such progressive currents. With her unconventional perspective on the world, Lucy "pulls the rug out from under the carefully balanced assumptions" of the American left-wing intelligentsia (Nichols 2009: 205). Mariah's feminism does not save Lucy from the painful relationship with her mother left behind in Antigua, nor does it save Mariah herself from the myth of domestic happiness and, ultimately, from the breakdown of her marriage. When Lucy confides to Mariah that her suffering stems from the fact that her mother reserved brilliant careers for her brothers born after her, while planning only a career in nursing for Lucy, Mariah tries to console her by generalising her situation:

> Mariah wanted to rescue me. She spoke of women in society, women in history, women in culture, women everywhere. But I couldn't speak, so I couldn't tell her that my mother was my mother and that society and history and culture and other women in general were something else altogether (103).

Paul, the bohemian artist who smokes marijuana, is drawn to things distant and mysterious: "He loved things that came from far away and had a mysterious history" (122). On the windowsill of his living room grow two plants that Lucy recognises as coming from her part of the world: "cassy and dagger" – the first a good purgative, the second a plant children use for dressing up in costumes.

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[2] Kincaid (2022: 54-55). All quotations are from this edition; page numbers will hereafter be given parenthetically in the text.

> These two plants grew so plentifully where I came from that sometimes they were regarded as a nuisance, weeds, and were dug up and thrown in the rubbish. And now here they were, treasured, sitting in a prominent place in a beautiful room, a special blue light trained on them. And here I was also, a sort of weed in a way, and across the room Paul's eyes, a sparkling blue light, were trained on me (77).

By identifying with plants that Paul finds exotic and mysterious, but which she sees as ordinary and invasive, Lucy exposes Paul's love for distant lands as mere exoticism. When one afternoon Paul takes her to visit an old mansion in ruins, "formerly the home of a man who made a great deal of money in the part of the world I was from, in the sugar industry" (100), Lucy wishes that man was dead. As they drive along, Paul speaks of the great explorers who had crossed the oceans, "not only to find riches, he said, but to feel free, and this search for freedom was part of the whole human situation". Lucy observes, corrosively, that it had never occurred to her that Paul had "such a hobby – freedom". On the sides of the road, Lucy notices dead animals – badgers and raccoons – which, in their attempt to cross the road, were run over by speeding cars – and comments: "On their way to freedom, some people find riches, some people find death" (101).

During the stay at Lewis' and Mariah's holiday home, Dinah, Mariah's best friend (who will eventually steal her husband), also a proud environmentalist, approaches Lucy and asks her whether she is "from the islands". Lucy flushes with anger and comments: "I was about to respond to her in this way: 'Which islands exactly do you mean? The Hawaiian Islands? The islands that make up Indonesia, or what?'" (42).

What unites Mariah, Lewis, Paul, Dinah, and the group of privileged environmentalists holidaying by the lake, in Lucy's eyes, is their lack of historical awareness – or perhaps simply their habit of seeing the world from their own historical perspective, what Rob Nixon calls "spatial amnesia" (Nixon 2011: 238). Like much American environmental writing and criticism, Lucy's privileged American friends seem "amnesiac toward non-American geographies in which America is implicated" (Nixon 2011: 239). They tend to forget their complicity in the slow violence they inflict, simply through their lifestyle, on less privileged people who live in places like Lucy's small island. On the other hand, Lucy – the racialised migrant domestic servant – knows that every space she occupies is imbued with history and traversed by a dense network of power relations. For Lucy, nothing exists in abstract or universal terms, because it is not she, her culture, or her history that set the standard considered universal. From the very first chapter, Lucy is described by her employers as a "visitor", a "poor visitor", with the implication that she is awkward, does not fit in, or even voluntarily resists integration. During a dinner at home, described with biting irony, Lewis asks Lucy, jokingly, if she has ever seen anyone bring a forkful of French-cut green beans to their mouth. Mariah and Lewis mistake Lucy's bewildered gaze for the naïve look of a poor girl captivated by the comforts of a superior culture. Lucy's bewildered gaze, however, reorients the reader's gaze, inviting them to unmask Mariah and Lewis' cultural arrogance. Would it really be good for Lucy to integrate? Would it be a good thing if she shed the role of the "poor visitor" and embraced the American dream? Does her ability to understand multiple worlds and hold them together in a single vision (the American metropolis and her small

island, Mariah's feminism and her mother's teachings, the superficial progressivism of her American friends and the ecological and social decay of her island fuelled by their lifestyle) not make her a valuable observer? Does her strength not stem precisely from her mobility, from her "sense of existential homelessness" (Mufti 2016) learned through the painful experience of migration?

On the train from the city to Lewis' and Mariah's holiday home, Mariah is ecstatic, already anticipating her embrace with the nature awaiting her at the lake. In the morning, on the train, Mariah opens the door to Lucy's compartment to show her the freshly ploughed fields streaming past the window. Mile after mile, Lucy looks at those turned-up fields and comments, "Well, thank God I didn't have to do that" (24). Mariah then invites Lucy to the dining car, but she seems oblivious to what does not escape Lucy's notice:

> Mariah did not seem to notice what she had in common with the other diners, or what I had in common with the waiters. She acted in her usual way, which was that the world was round and we all agreed on that, when I knew that the world was flat and if I went to the edge I would fall off (23).

For Lucy, the world is not a sphere where the force of gravity bears equally on every point, but a flat surface like the conquerors' map, where the centre is firmly at the centre, while she is always precariously seated on the edge.

Mariah's love for the natural world is depicted in the novel with biting irony. Her environmentalism is intimate, romantic, and "largely indifferent" – we could say, appropriating Nixon's words – "to the international relationship between social inequities, environmental practices, and the cultures of nature espoused by the poor" (Nixon 2011: 253). One March morning, Mariah asks Lucy if she has ever seen spring.

> She said the word "spring" as if spring were a close friend, a friend who dared to go away for a long time and soon would reappear for their passionate reunion. She said, "Have you ever seen daffodils pushing their way up out of the ground? And when they're in bloom and all massed together, a breeze comes along and makes them do a curtsy to the lawn stretching out in front of them. Have you ever seen that? When I see that, I feel so glad to be alive". And I thought, So Mariah is made to feel alive by some flowers bending in the breeze. How does a person get to be that way? (11).

The scene in which Mariah leads Lucy, blindfolded, into a daffodil park, to share the joy of seeing the daffodils' heads bowing in the wind, is a locus classicus of postcolonial responses to dominant cultures. Faced with the daffodils, Lucy stiffens, remembering the morning many years earlier when she had been forced to recite Wordsworth's poem in front of the whole school. At that time Lucy had never seen a real daffodil. The night after the recital she dreamed that an army of daffodils was chasing her, and she fell, and the daffodils covered her until she was buried alive[3]. Mariah, "who wanted all of us, the children and

[3] For a discussion of the English landscape as a normative ideal in colonial education, see Tiffin (2005).

me, to see things the way she did" (26), is hurt; she thinks Lucy takes some pleasure in not participating, in remaining forever 'a visitor', 'a poor visitor'. But how can Lucy possibly explain to Mariah what she feels?

> Where should I start? Over here or over there? […] I felt sorry that I had cast her beloved daffodils in a scene she had never considered, a scene of conquered and conquests; a scene of brutes masquerading as angels and angels portrayed as brutes (21).

The fish in the lake, the forest, the rain, and the snow are sources of pleasure for Mariah; more than that, they are part of her personal happiness, one to which she seems to feel entitled. When, after the beginning of spring, a final, belated snowfall arrives, Mariah sulks, as if she had experienced a personal betrayal. Lucy laughs at her and wonders how one gets to be a person who is made miserable because "the weather changed its mind, because the weather doesn't live up to your expectations?" (13).

Mariah and Lewis' friends – those same friends who are unable to see the connection between their wealth, their stock-market dealings, their expensive cars, their cheerful and 'innocent' consumerism, and the environmental degradation around them – go on holiday to the islands. By now, Lucy has learned that when wealthy Americans from the East Coast say, "the islands", they mean the Caribbean.

> They had somehow all been to the islands – by that, they meant the place where I was from – and had fun there. I decided not to like them just on that basis; I wished once again that I came from a place where no one wanted to go, a place that was filled with slag and unexpectedly erupting volcanoes, or where a visitor was turned into a pebble on setting foot there; somehow it made me ashamed to come from a place where the only thing to be said about it was "I had fun when I was there" (49).

In a book from a few years earlier, *A Small Place* (1988), an essay on the painful situation of Antigua, plagued both by its bad administration and by a reckless tourism industry, Lewis and Mariah's friends had already made their appearance. The "American or, worse, European" tourist visiting Antigua, to whom Kincaid addresses her outrage throughout the pamphlet, is one of them. This is the tourist who hopes that it won't rain during their two-week holiday, without questioning the consequences – let alone the causes – of the drought that afflicts the island (the reader is reminded of Mariah's disappointment in *Lucy*, when she frowns because an unexpected snowfall ruins her weekend; incidentally, Lucy could reassure them: at one point in the novel, we learn that on her island it hasn't rained for a year and a half). This is the tourist who goes to the islands for fun, but, like Dinah, Mariah's shallow friend, might not be able to locate them on a map. It is the tourist who would do well not to wonder where the contents of their intestines end up, because they might discover that Antigua has no sewage system.

> You must not wonder what exactly happened to the contents of your lavatory when you flushed it […] Oh, it might all end up in the water you are thinking of taking a

> swim in; the contents of your lavatory might, just might, graze gently against your ankle as you wade carefree in the water, for you see, in Antigua, there is no proper sewage-disposal. But the Caribbean Sea is very big and the Atlantic Ocean is even bigger; it would amaze even you to know the number of black slaves this ocean has swallowed up (Kincaid 2000: 14).

In Kincaid's terse vocabulary of power relations, "visitor" has become "tourist". The social condescension, if not outright racism, that Lucy is forced to endure among Mariah and Lewis' friends, in *A Small Place* appears in the form of the tourist's carefree attitude, which Kincaid describes as a continuation, under another name, of the colonial outlook (Corso 2025). "A tourist is an ugly human being", writes Kincaid, and this ugliness stems from blindness. The tourist's enjoyment is directly proportional to their blindness to the actual living conditions of the locals; it is proportionate to the tourist's amnesia, their ability to forget history. In *Lucy*, when the protagonist confesses to Mariah that, for her, the daffodils symbolise not the rebirth of nature but an education that annihilates, the kind, liberal, well-intentioned Mariah responds, "What a history you have", prompting Lucy's caustic reply: "You are welcome to it, if you like" (Kincaid 2022: 12). Without historical awareness, communication breaks down; Mariah's feminism becomes a blunt instrument, and her environmentalism a ridiculous sentimentality. Although Mariah desperately wants to connect with Lucy, their dialogues often end in silence or misunderstanding.

The tourist, however, represents a larger group. In *The Beneficiary*, Bruce Robbins argues that the target of Kincaid's critique is not merely "the white-skinned tourist in a dark-skinned people's country", but rather the citizen of the global North in their economic, political, and social relationship with the citizen of the global South (Robbins 2017: 37). Kincaid seeks to shake them, not just because the tourist's country has a sewage system while Antigua does not, but "for the lines of causality that connect the lack of a sewage system in Antigua with a more sanitized life back in the United States" (Robbins 2017: 38). The citizen of the global North, who enjoys a disproportionate share of the world's resources and generates waste to an extent far beyond that of the average inhabitant of the global South, is a beneficiary of a system built on inequality, whether they like it or not (Robbins 2017: 2, 40). Incidentally, Kincaid has long aligned herself with the group identified by Robbins as the beneficiaries. With typical frankness in *My Garden (Book)* she writes: "I had lived in America for a long time and had adjusted to the American habit of taking up at least twenty times as much of the available resources as each person needs" (Kincaid 2024: 40).

Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya (2005) sees Kincaid adopt yet another narrative voice. The travelogue emerged from a journey to Nepal in the autumn of 2002, which the writer – an avid botanist – made together with her friend Daniel Hinkley, a renowned American horticulturist, and Bleddyn and Sue Wynn-Jones, British botanists and nursery owners. For the four travellers, the aim of the expedition was to collect 'garden-worthy seeds' to bring back to Vermont or Wales, enriching their nurseries and gardens. Thus Kincaid, who had previously written memorable pages on the relationship between gardening and colonialism, now finds herself, somewhat curiously, assuming the role of the Western explorer. At night she reads *The Kangchenjunga Adventure* by Frank Smythe, an account of a 1930 expe-

dition to Kangchenjunga; during the day she photographs flowers she had first encountered in the writings of Joseph Banks, personal botanist to Captain Cook. The Sherpas carry her luggage and cook her meals; they bear on their backs the tent in which she sleeps and the table at which she sits to eat. The porters' names are "so difficult to pronounce" that the travellers, with Victorian condescension, simply refer to them as "Cook" (the boy who cooks) or "Table" (the one who carries the table on his back)[4]. At times the four travellers scold them because the young men are too slow or because they have chosen an inconvenient campsite. The narrator observes:

> We were very used to being comfortable, and in our native societies (Britain, for Bleddyn and Sue; America, for Dan and me) when we were not comfortable, we did our best to rid ourselves of the people who were not making us comfortable. We wished Sunam would fire the porters. But he couldn't even if he wanted to. There were no other porters around (149-150).

The narrator has so fully slipped into the role of the Western tourist – albeit an elegant tourist, a trekker in search of rare seeds – that in a revealing lapse she refers to America as 'my native society'. Has her status as a privileged citizen, a *beneficiary* in Robbins' terms, truly eclipsed the memory of Antigua? Actually, her past repeatedly resurfaces, subtly unsettling the discourse of the explorer. In Tumlingtar, the town from which one of the routes to Everest begins, people stare at her curiously; although they are accustomed to seeing people from other parts of the world, "people who looked like Bleddyn, Sue and Dan", they "were not used to seeing people like me, someone of African descent" (70). A Nepalese woman touches her hair and wishes the writer would style hers the same way; another brushes her face to discover whether she is wearing a mask. Small episodes such as these reveal "Kincaid's interstitial perspective within the group of plant hunters" (Didur 2010: 176) and reproduce, albeit in a different context, the many dislocations of perspective already encountered in *Lucy*. The privileged explorer has retained Lucy's shifting gaze, her sense of estrangement. From the window of her hotel in Kathmandu, the writer sees a large open area crossed by pipes from which water gushes out. People go there to wash themselves, do their laundry, and collect drinking water. The narrator remarks:

> Because of my own particular history, every person I saw in this situation seemed familiar to me. But then again, because of my own particular history, every person I saw in the Thamel was familiar also. The person in the restaurant complaining about the lack of some luxury was familiar, the person at the public baths longing for luxuries of every kind was familiar, the person confused and in a quandary was familiar (55-56).

It is this confused and perplexed person, suddenly sensing a mysterious affinity with the local people, who declares: "Life itself was perfectly fair, people had created injustices; it

[4] Kincaid (2020: 52). All quotations from *Among Flowers* are taken from this edition; page numbers will hereafter be included in the text.

was the created injustices that led to me being here, dependent on Sherpas, for without this original injustice, I would not be in Nepal and the Sherpas would be doing something not related to me" (149).

Unlike *A Small Place*, a lucid indictment of irresponsible tourism portrayed as a new form of colonialism, *Among Flowers* is a contradictory text in which the narrator's voice is never univocal: at times it is the voice of the rich and privileged class that plunders and renames the beauties of the world in order to adorn their own garden; at other times it is the voice of someone fully aware of the power relations that shape human interactions, someone who never deceives herself about the fact that travelling, observing, and writing are forms of power to be handled with care: "I saw the people and I took them in, but I made no notes on them, no description of their physical being since I could see that they could not do the same to me" (139-140). While Kincaid acknowledges that she shares the passion of those seed hunters who worked side by side with colonisers for centuries, she also recognises that this passion arises from an attitude as universal as it is ordinary: "this really normal thing called human curiosity" (Warner 2006: 54). Yet in *Among Flowers* the narrator's confident voice occasionally falls silent: not only when the awareness of social injustice erupts to disturb taken-for-granted privileges, but also when the impenetrable beauty of the landscape itself invites silence:

> More than a few people have gone beyond the boundaries of the Earth's atmosphere and on returning, participate in parades and festivals and ceremonies with joy and enthusiasm. They have made the unknown normal-seeming immediately. It is just as well that one of these people were me. Had I been the first person to walk on the surface of the Moon, I don't think I would be able to speak for one hundred years afterward. As it is, I just went to Nepal on a plant-hunting, seed-collecting trek and the landscape at the foothills of the Himalayan mountains have left my tongue somewhat stilled, perhaps permanently so (221-222).

Among Flowers is filled with descriptions of a landscape of vibrant beauty. A single day's hike can encompass several climate zones, from subtropical to alpine. In Nepal, the rivers' water, the sunlight, the rain, the sky, and the snow are so perfect that they seem freshly shaped by Nature's own hands: "Every way in which the weather can manifest itself represents the ideal way for it to do so" (260). This bewilderment before the impenetrable beauty of the landscape gives rise to a kind of planetary sublime – an awareness of human smallness in the face of the animal, vegetal, and mineral forces of the universe. Yet, despite this smallness, human beings leave profound traces and envelop the planet in an endless web of connections. It is history that connects distant places, which, however remote and isolated they may appear, bear the imprint of human actions unfolding across time and space. In an essay titled "In History", collected in *My Garden (Book)*, we read:

> What to call the thing that happened to me and all who look like me? Should I call it history? If so, what should history mean to someone like me? Should it be an idea, should it be an open wound with each breath I take in and expel healing and opening the wound again and again, over and over, and is this healing and opening a moment

> that began in 1492 and has not yet come to an end? Is it a collection of facts, all true and precise details, and if so, when I come across these true and precise details, what should I do, how should I feel, where should I place myself? (Kincaid 2024: 171).

Across her works, Jamaica Kincaid repeatedly asks the question: "Where should I place myself?" For many of her characters, it is an existential necessity; for every human being, it ought to be an ethical imperative. Where should we place ourselves? Lucy asks it – the poor visitor in a world that refuses to acknowledge her perspective. The author herself asks it in *Among Flowers*, when she dons the Western mantle of botanist-explorer and climbs the Himalayan foothills in search of seeds. Mariah ought to ask it, too, when her daffodils trigger a nervous breakdown in Lucy, or when she frets over the shrinking wilderness around her country house. Even the tourist visiting the Southern beaches should ask it – but, by definition, this tourist never questions anything. In *A Small Place*, Kincaid, as a reminder, compiles a list of questions that such a tourist would do well to consider.

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