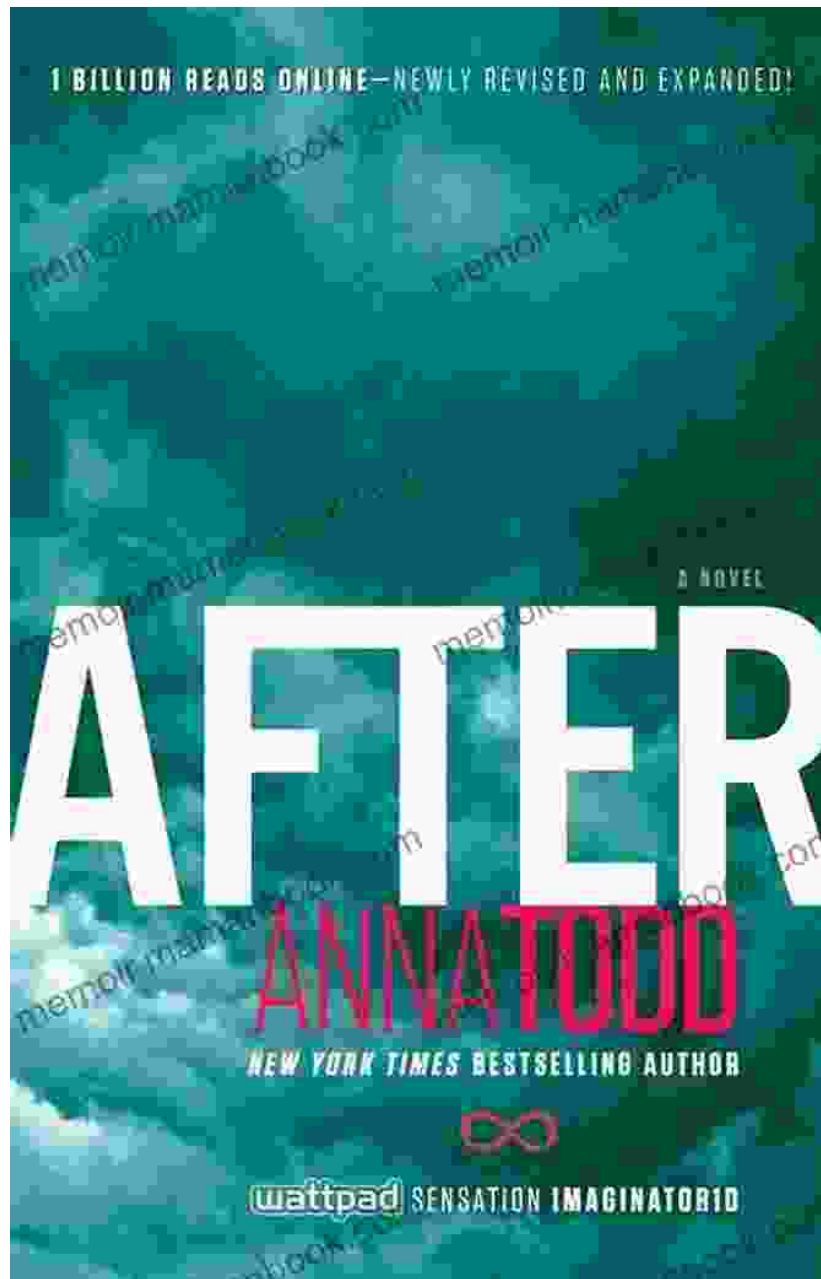
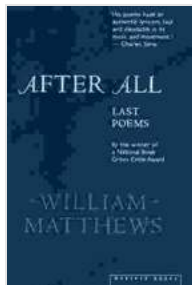


After All: Last Poems by William Matthews: A Profound Exploration of Mortality, Loss, and Hope



William Matthews's *After All: Last Poems*, a posthumous collection published in 2010, stands as a testament to the enduring power and beauty

of poetry. Written during the final years of his life, these poems confront the profound themes of mortality, loss, and hope with an unflinching honesty and a lyrical grace that transcends the boundaries of time and sorrow.



After All: Last Poems by William Matthews

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
Paperback	: 64 pages
Item Weight	: 3.32 ounces
Dimensions	: 1 x 1 x 1 inches
File size	: 541 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 60 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Themes of Mortality and Loss

Death is a constant presence in *After All*, casting a long shadow over the poems. In "Evening at Bay Pointe," Matthews confronts his own mortality with both stoicism and a sense of wonder:



"The waves are stepping toward me, step by step,

A slow encroachment that will end in sleep,

And I will gladly let them have their way."

The poems also explore the profound loss that accompanies death, particularly the loss of loved ones. In "Widow," Matthews writes with raw emotion about the aftermath of his wife's passing:



“I am not whole, I am not halved, I am

A splintered thing that cannot be made one.”

These poems do not shy away from the pain of loss but instead embrace it as an integral part of the human experience. Through them, Matthews offers solace and a reminder that even in the face of death and absence, love endures.

The Search for Meaning and Hope

Despite the pervasive presence of mortality, *After All* is not a collection of despair. Instead, it is a testament to the human spirit's ability to find meaning and hope even in the darkest of times. In "The Abundant Garden," Matthews celebrates the beauty and resilience of nature:



“The world is more than we can ever know,

And yet it is enough,

Enough to walk in the abundant garden,

To smell the flowers, to taste the fruit.”

Other poems, such as "To My Friends" and "The World to Come," express a deep sense of gratitude and wonder for the gift of life and the promise of an afterlife:



***“I want to thank you for the world I have lived in,
For the love and the beauty, for the pain and the joy,
For all that has made me who I am.”***

Lyrical Grace and Poetic Form

Matthews was a master of language, and his poems are characterized by their lyrical grace and attention to form. He employs a wide range of poetic devices, including rhyme, meter, and metaphor, to create poems that are both musically pleasing and deeply resonant.

In "After All," the title poem of the collection, Matthews reflects on the nature of poetry itself and its ability to transcend the limitations of language:



***“After all, we are only words,
But words can make a world.”***

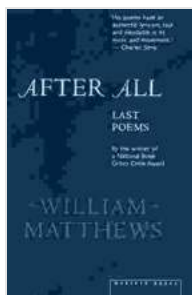
Through his meticulous craftsmanship, Matthews demonstrates the transformative power of poetry to evoke emotions, challenge assumptions, and offer solace.

Legacy and Impact

After All: Last Poems is a profoundly moving and thought-provoking collection that has had a lasting impact on the literary landscape. It has been praised by critics for its honesty, its lyrical beauty, and its exploration of universal human themes.

The poems in *After All* continue to resonate with readers today, offering comfort, inspiration, and a reminder that even in the face of loss and mortality, we are never truly alone. Through his words, William Matthews has left an enduring legacy that will continue to inspire and uplift generations to come.

After All: Last Poems by William Matthews is a masterpiece of contemporary American poetry that confronts the profound themes of mortality, loss, and hope with honesty, grace, and unwavering humanity. Through his lyrical language and masterful use of poetic form, Matthews invites readers to explore the depths of the human experience and to find meaning and solace even in the face of adversity. This collection is a testament to the enduring power of poetry and a fitting tribute to one of America's most gifted and beloved poets.



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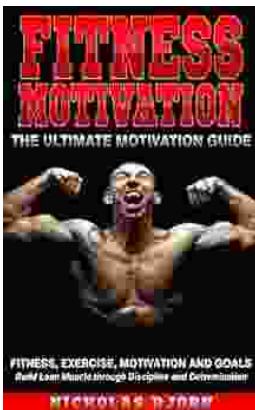
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