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The Eclipse of the Century

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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To mark the end of the millennium here is a story with the sense of a dream, and often a nightmare, suggestive of where we are, where we have been and where we are heading for. It is full of endings and set in motion by a near-death experience, where 'heaven' proves to be a real place in Asia, Qantoum, to which Keith then travels. History has washed over it: the Arabs, the British, and the Russians have all come and gone, or mostly gone, leaving the native Sturyat waiting for a promised eclipse when they will move from the city. Keith finally settles in the museum, an appropriate backdrop with its collection resembling 'an international car-boot sale', and the residence of an assortment of colonials supervised by Ernie Fahrenheit (a woman). In a parody of the nativity, unwise men and women, strange cults, and armies converge from east and west, following an internet promise of a wonder in the heavens. It is a remarkable book, compulsively readable while mysterious ('quantum' literature perhaps) which imbues some of the madness and sadness of the centuries with grim and often surreal humour (the moving, water-filled plants are described as 'itinerant lilos').

Running Order:

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