



The Jules Verne Steam Balloon: Nine Stories

Guy Davenport

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Guy Davenport's cerebral and innovative stories intricately assemble centuries' worth of images and ideas

Guy Davenport's stories seamlessly illuminate his vast knowledge of theology, philosophy, botany, and art, in his singular style of finding harmony in the juxtaposition of different themes. Whether critiquing the politics of socialist realist art in "We Often Think of Lenin at the Clothespin Factory," revisiting biblical tales in "Jonah," or depicting an ancient Greek philosopher in "The Meadow," Davenport demonstrates his talent for blending high-minded ideas with literary wit.

Davenport's writing is at its most confident when the author weaves between time periods and ideas, such as when he revisits Descartes through the eyes of an ancient Greek skeptic in "Pyrrhon of Elis," wherein a doubting philosopher declares, "I may not be, I think"; or in "The Bicycle Rider," in which a doctoral student studying imagery of demons in the Gospels is visited by angelic spirits and attempts to save the life of a nihilistic prostitute. In these stories and the others collected in *The Jules Verne Steam Balloon*, Davenport's signature approach to culture and humanity is on bold display.

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