

John Fraser has lived in Rome since 1980. Previously, he worked in England and Canada.

Also by John Fraser and published by AESOP

Animal Tales	The Observatory
The Answer	The Other Shore
Black Masks	People You Will Never Meet
Blue Light /Starting Over	The Red Bird
The Case	The Red Tank
Confessions	Runners
Down from the Stars	'S'
Enterprising Women	Short Lives
The Future's Coming	Sisters
Everywhere	Soft Landing
Happy Always	The Storm
Hard Places	Thirty Years
An Illusion of Sun	Three Beauties
The Magnificent Wurlitzer	Tomorrow the Victory
Medusa	Wayfaring
Military Roads	

Visit online at:

[johnfraserfiction.com/animaltales](http://johnfraserfiction.com/animaltales)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/answer](http://johnfraserfiction.com/answer)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/blackmasks](http://johnfraserfiction.com/blackmasks)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/bluelight](http://johnfraserfiction.com/bluelight)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/case](http://johnfraserfiction.com/case)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/confessions](http://johnfraserfiction.com/confessions)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/downfromthestars](http://johnfraserfiction.com/downfromthestars)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/ends](http://johnfraserfiction.com/ends)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/enterprising](http://johnfraserfiction.com/enterprising)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/future](http://johnfraserfiction.com/future)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/happy](http://johnfraserfiction.com/happy)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/hardplaces](http://johnfraserfiction.com/hardplaces)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/illusion](http://johnfraserfiction.com/illusion)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/medusa](http://johnfraserfiction.com/medusa)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/military](http://johnfraserfiction.com/military)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/observatory](http://johnfraserfiction.com/observatory)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/othershore](http://johnfraserfiction.com/othershore)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/people](http://johnfraserfiction.com/people)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/redbird](http://johnfraserfiction.com/redbird)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/redtank](http://johnfraserfiction.com/redtank)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/runners](http://johnfraserfiction.com/runners)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/s](http://johnfraserfiction.com/s)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/shortlives](http://johnfraserfiction.com/shortlives)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/sisters](http://johnfraserfiction.com/sisters)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/softlanding](http://johnfraserfiction.com/softlanding)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/storm](http://johnfraserfiction.com/storm)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/thirty](http://johnfraserfiction.com/thirty)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/threebeauties](http://johnfraserfiction.com/threebeauties)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/tomorrow](http://johnfraserfiction.com/tomorrow)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/wayfaring](http://johnfraserfiction.com/wayfaring)  
[johnfraserfiction.com/wurlitzer](http://johnfraserfiction.com/wurlitzer)

Jacket art and design by Martin Noble  
AESOP Publications [www.aesopbooks.com](http://www.aesopbooks.com)

### Three stories about The Ends of the Earth by John Fraser

Making the world uninhabitable is a prospect facing us all, each has a strategy to hasten or retard – even avoid – it. Such a project would be the greatest exploit of an evolving species – greater than the creation, quicker than biology and a cock-eyed triumph of the good life and its sciences. Most of us alive won't know if the plan succeeds, so hypothesis is the mode proposed.

The people described in these thematically connected tales are precarious, but very human. Extinction would come when the exploration of the planet has barely finished – one thinks of the poet's 'round earth's imagined corners'. If the world indeed is not flat, it still can be conceived of as having ends.

In 'Rain', the characters display their comfortably familiar habits – competition, jealousy, distraction. They find they're ill-equipped to wait out their end – which comes (or maybe not) from an unanticipated direction.

'Summer Nights' has its protagonists at the edge of modernity – in the shadow of a monster tower, they seek their space, a 'green', beyond exploitation, beyond the limitations of their work and relationships – and only partly do they succeed.

'The Esplanade' sets its scene in an imaginary 'Cambodia', where the past, war and massacres, still looms over the new visitors and long-term occupants. Preservation of the ruins means also preserving the realm of Death. The story ends with a parade where Death and human power are both featured, in a temporary equilibrium.

'One of the most extraordinary publishing events of the past few years has been the rapid, indeed insistent, appearance of the novels of John Fraser.'

*John Fuller, Whitbread Award winning poet and Booker Prize nominee*

Front cover illustration: Vishnu's future avatar Kalkin. Now in the Cambodian National Museum, reproduced in *Lost Kingdoms, Hindu-Buddhist Sculpture of Early Southeast Asia*, MOMA, New York, 2014



THE ENDS OF THE EARTH John Fraser

# THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

John Fraser

'the most original  
novelist of our time'  
John Fuller

AESOP Modern

AESOP  
Modern  
Oxford



'This humanitarian stuff,' says Achilles. 'It's our space, our universe – it's been examined thoroughly, and – so what? Nothing is changed. It's like a star too far away to reach – it's known about, but there it ends. The earth is dying from a thousand cuts. What do you hope for, Zenia? Justice and revelation – always afterwards, after the fact. Nothing's undone – "Next time, next time" you chant.... And next time is the same or slightly different. Accept it – that is health, recovery. Otherwise, you're sad, lie unconsolated in bed, if bed you have, or else you tramp and maybe there's a tent ahead, will do you for an hour or years....'

'I could have been a humanist – or humanitarian. Everybody is. Quite unavailing. Or a communist – no one is, and all those countries disappeared, no fence is left. I chose not to be a human. Not knowing how to be immortal, I was left in the province "in between", where no one else frequents. The project, the human epic – has collapsed. An enormity. Can you grasp it? Evolution ends in disillusion. They – the bosses, chieftains – couldn't manage, steer, our little rock. Left alone, it's on automatic! Our brains are grafted on machines, and on they sail, down to the other stars, round us and around, bringing louche stories to our hearth....'

From *The Ends of the Earth*

ISBN: 978-1-910301-61-6