

John Fraser was born in London. He wrote on and taught social and political theory (especially Marxism) in the UK, Canada and, after 1980, in Rome and Ferrara. Since 1982 he has lived in Rome and has also worked as a musician.

Also by John Fraser and published by AESOP Modern:

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'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. There are few parallels in literary history to this almost simultaneous and largely belated appearance of a mature oeuvre, sprung like Athena from Zeus's forehead. And the novels in themselves are extraordinary. I can think of nothing much like it in fiction.'

'Fraser maintains a masterfully ironic distance from the extreme conditions in which his characters find themselves. There are strikingly beautiful descriptions, veiled allusions to rooted traditions, unlikely events half-glimpsed, abrupt narratives, surreal but somehow apposite social customs. Like Thomas Pynchon, whom in some way he resembles, Fraser is a deep and serious fantasist, wildly inventive.'

'The reader rides as on a switchback or luge of impetuous attention, with effects flashing by at virtuoso speeds. The characters seem to be unwitting agents of chaos, however much wise reflection the author bestows upon them. They move with shrugging self-assurance through circumstances as richly detailed and as without reliable compass-points as a Chinese scroll.'

John Fuller, English poet, novelist, Booker Prize nominee
and Fellow Emeritus at Magdalen College, Oxford



Front cover:
'Suitcase of memories'
sculpture by
Paul Harbutt (b. 1947)



Back cover:
'Poppy'
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JOHN FRASER
THE CASE

THE CASE



JOHN FRASER

AESOP Modern

John Fraser's *The Case* is a novel about loss – loss of memory, of love, of money, of friends. The protagonist searches throughout the book for a suitcase – maybe valuable in itself, maybe because it represents resources and a destination.

The Case takes us on a trip through the American dream, of wealth, cowboys and Hollywood movies, and out the other side, to police shootouts, mortal danger and revolution, on a quest for the missing case.

'I was with the Indians,' he says, into the blue, then back he turns to me. 'They've understood technology, those phones the guys have given them, and then the movies that they're in. They're far ahead. Of course, they're just a block, no one can pronounce their names. Everything's been lost, for them. They're what we'll be. After the breaking; then we build it up again.'

'You're crazy, Dan,' I say. 'To break it down and build it up? You're into liberalism? Just leave it be.'

'No,' he says, 'I'm really quite indifferent. It's just survival, that is all. There you are, into the jungle, a foul and threatening place, your food is cool and poisonous, and every beetle, every grub, is suffering and all its life will suffer from the screeching of the parrots and its emptying gut, the ghosts behind the trees, the pits that's full of skulls, the suffering of each and all, the moths that eat your eyes, the grass that darts and grows inside your penis – yes, my friend, be sure it's love that sets the whole thing up and makes it spin!'

from *The Case*

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