



Through the Arc of the Rain Forest

Karen Tei Yamashita

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Through the Arc of the Rain Forest is a burlesque of comic-strip adventures and apocalyptic portents that stretches familiar truths to their logical extreme in a future world that is just recognizable enough to be frightening. In the Author's Note, Karen Tei Yamashita writes that her book is like a Brazilian soap opera called a novela: "the novela's story is completely changeable according to the whims of the public psyche and approval, although most likely, the unhappy find happiness; the bad are punished; true love reigns; a popular actor is saved from death ... an idyll striking innocence, boundless nostalgia and terrible ruthlessness." The stage is a vast, mysterious field of impenetrable plastic in the Brazilian rain forest set against a backdrop of rampant environmental destruction, commercialization, poverty, and religious rapture. *Through the Arc of the Rainforest* is narrated by a small satellite hovering permanently around the head of an innocent character named Kazumasa. Through no fault of his own, Kazumasa seems to draw strange and significant people into his orbit and to find himself at the center of cataclysmic events that involve carrier pigeons, religious pilgrims, industrial espionage, magic feathers, big money, miracles, epidemics, true love, and the virtual end of the world. This book is simultaneously entertaining and depressing, with all the rollicking pessimism you'd expect of a good soap opera or a good political satire." - Kirsten Backstrom, *500 Great Books by Women*

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