



The Three-Arched Bridge

Ismail Kadare

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In 1377, the Balkan peninsula is a bridge between cultures. On one side lies the flotsam of the receding Byzantine empire, an unruly alliance whose peoples quarrel in half a dozen tongues; on the other, the encroaching hordes of Ottoman Turkey. On the banks of a river somewhere in between these powers, another bridge is rising. And in telling its story, Albania's greatest living writer creates what is at once a magnificently realized historical novel and a chilling parable of the new barbarism that has swept the Balkans.

When mysterious acts of sabotage halt construction of the three-arched bridge, a man suspected of the crimes is discovered walled up in the foundation, with only his head protruding from the stone. Is his death meant to deter other saboteurs or to appease the spirits of the river? Does it fulfill an ancient prophecy or predict further bloodshed? Superbly written, resonant with menace and sorrow, *The Three-Arched Bridge* is as powerful an evocation of a vanished world as *The Name of the Rose*.

"A vivid, macabre and wise novel, set in the 14th century, when the author's Albanian homeland was suffering disruptions that suggest the Balkans of today." - *The New York Times Book Review*

"One of the most compelling novelists now writing in any language." - *Wall Street Journal*

"Kadare's prose glimmers with the magic realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez." - *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

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