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# The Pyramid Ismail Kadare

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*The Pyramid Ismail Kadare*

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## KYLAN NYASIA

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**Free** Random House

Lleshanaku's poems are "full of objects and souls, transformed and given wings in Chagall-like metaphor" (Sasha Dugdale, Poetry Nation Review) \*Shortlist for the Griffin International Poetry Prize\*

"Language arrived fragmentary / split in syllables / spasmodic / like code in times of war," writes Luljeta Lleshanaku in the title poem to her powerful new collection *Negative Space*. In these lines, personal biography disperses into the history of an entire generation that grew up under the oppressive dictatorship of the poet's

native Albania. For Lleshanaku, the "unsaid, gestures" make up the negative space that "gives form to the woods / and to the mad woman—the silhouette of goddess Athena / wearing a pair of flip-flops / and an owl on top of a shoulder." It is the negative space "that sketched my onomatopoeic profile / of body and shadow in an accidental encounter." Lleshanaku instills ordinary objects and places—gloves, used books, acupuncture needles, small-town train stations—with subtle humor and profound insight, as a child discovering a world in a grain of sand.

**A Novel** Skyhorse

Egypt in the twenty-sixth century BC. The young pharaoh Cheops wants to forgo the

construction of a pyramid in his honor, but his court sages hasten to persuade him otherwise. The pyramid, they tell him, is not a tomb but a paradox, designed to appease the masses by oppressing them. It is a symbol of nothing, a useless and infinite project designed to waste the country's wealth and keep security and prosperity, ever the fonts of sedition, constantly at bay. And so the greatest pyramid in the world has ever seen begins to rise. Rumors multiply. A secret police is formed. Conspiracies—real and imagined—swirl around the rising edifice. The most drastic purges follow. By the time the first stone is laid, Cheops's subjects are terrified enough to yield to his most murderous whims. Each time one of

the massive stones is hoisted into place, dozens of men are crushed, and there are tens of thousands of stones. . . .

**Pyramid** Canongate Books

June 28, 1389: Six hundred years before Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic called for the repression of the Albanian majority in Kosovo, there took place, on the Field of the Blackbirds, a battle shrouded in legend. A coalition of Serbs, Albanian Catholics, Bosnians, and Romanians confronted and were defeated by the invading Ottoman army of the Sultan Murad. This battle established the Muslim foothold in Europe and became the centerpiece of Serbian nationalist ideology, justifying the campaign of ethnic cleansing of Albanian Kosovars that the world witnessed with horror at the end of the past century. In this eloquent and timely reflection on war, memory, and the destiny of two peoples, Ismail Kadare explores in fiction the legend and the consequences of that defeat. *Elegy for Kosovo* is a heartfelt yet clear-eyed lament for a land riven by hatreds as old as the Homeric epics and as young as the latest news broadcast.

**Elegy for Kosovo** Penguin UK

Winner of the NESTOR LUJÁN HISTORICAL NOVEL PRIZE."I was nervous about this book. Finding a good novel in translation from the tiny state of Andorra, nestling in the Pyrenees between Spain and France, was always going to be tricky... I was in for a pleasant surprise... Salvadó has certainly done his homework: the book is painstakingly researched... By and large, the level of detail and historical knowledge is well-handled... The text itself felt professional and slick... this is a highly readable light novel... powerful flashes of insight into human greed, pride and ambition..." (ANN MORGAN, *Andorra: Buried treasure, A Year of Reading the Word*, <http://ayearofreadingtheworld.com/2012/02/22/andorra-buried-treasure/>, London, february 22, 2012)This is the history of the time of Pharaoh Snefru and Queen Hetepheres, the parents of Cheops, who built the largest and most impressive pyramid of all. It is also the story of Sedum, a slave who became Cheops' teacher, the high priest Ramosi, and how the first pyramid came to be built. Sebekhotep, the great wise man of that time, said, "Everything is written in

the stars. Most of us live our lives unaware of it. Some can read the stars and see their destiny. But very few people learn to write in the stars and change their destiny." Ramosi and Sedum learned to write in them and tried to change their destinies, but fortune treated them very differently. This is a tale of the confrontation between two men's intelligence: one fighting for power, the other struggling for freedom. Other critics' opinions: "It is a long time since a prize was so justly awarded. THE TEACHER OF CHEOPS deserves every honour... An intrigue that develops at a good pace without causing anxiety... A restrained and inspired piece of writing; an outstanding, intelligent and well-constructed novel." (RAMÓN VENTURA, *El Periódico*) "Salvadó develops the mystery with great skill in his novel." (JACINTO ANTÓN, *El País*) "Salvadó presents a story about power and knowledge through a fast-paced plot combining intrigue, love, mystery, murder and adventure." (ROSA M<sup>a</sup> PIÑOL, *La Vanguardia*) "Albert Salvadó displays seasoned writing skill in this novel... A very well-organised plot... A straightforward, effective style that is a

pleasure to read... He achieves accuracy in his writing.” (IGNASI ARAGAY, Avui)  
*The Three-Arched Bridge* HarperPerennial  
 CHICAGO, SOMETIME—Two people meet in the armory of the Art Institute by chance. Prior to their encounter, he is a doctoral student who manages his destructive thoughts with compulsive calculations about time travel; she is a bipolar counterfeit artist undergoing court-ordered psychotherapy. After their meeting, those things do not change. Everything else, however, is slightly different. Both obsessive, eccentric personalities, Aldo Damiani and Charlotte Regan struggle to be without each other from the moment they meet. The truth—that he is a clinically depressed, anti-social theoretician and she is a manipulative liar with a history of self-sabotage—means the deeper they fall in love, the more troubling their reliance on each other becomes. An intimate study of time and space, *ALONE WITH YOU IN THE ETHER* is a fantasy writer's magicless glimpse into the nature of love, what it means to be unwell, and how to face the fractures of yourself and still love as if you're not broken.

*The Concert* Random House

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER •  
 “Magisterial . . . [A] rich portrait of ancient Egypt’s complex evolution over the course of three millennia.”—Los Angeles Times  
 NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The Washington Post • Publishers Weekly  
 In this landmark volume, one of the world’s most renowned Egyptologists tells the epic story of this great civilization, from its birth as the first nation-state to its absorption into the Roman Empire. Drawing upon forty years of archaeological research, award-winning scholar Toby Wilkinson takes us inside a tribal society with a pre-monetary economy and decadent, divine kings who ruled with all-too-recognizable human emotions. Here are the legendary leaders: Akhenaten, the “heretic king,” who with his wife Nefertiti brought about a revolution with a bold new religion; Tutankhamun, whose dazzling tomb would remain hidden for three millennia; and eleven pharaohs called Ramesses, the last of whom presided over the militarism, lawlessness, and corruption that caused a political and societal decline. Filled with new information and unique interpretations, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt* is a

riveting and revelatory work of wild drama, bold spectacle, unforgettable characters, and sweeping history. “With a literary flair and a sense for a story well told, Mr. Wilkinson offers a highly readable, factually up-to-date account.”—The Wall Street Journal  
 “[Wilkinson] writes with considerable verve. . . . [He] is nimble at conveying the sumptuous pageantry and cultural sophistication of pharaonic Egypt.”—The New York Times

*A Visual History, From Stone Tools to Space Travel* Harvill Press

This epic journey of scientific discovery starts in ancient times and travels through centuries of invention before fast forwarding into the future. In this ultimate home reference, you'll see simple machines and modern-day marvels, following incredible illustrated timelines that plot the entire history of science and highlight the most momentous discoveries. A jaw-dropping collection of more than 1,500 photographs, illustrations, maps, and graphics charts the evolution of science year by year, century by century. You'll meet influential inventors and famous faces from the past,

including Aristotle, Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Marie Curie, and Stephen Hawking. You'll visit places of scientific importance, such as prehistoric cave art, Stonehenge, Hiroshima and the first atomic bomb, the Moon landings, and the Higgs boson particle. These huge events are made simple thanks to eye-catching images, helpful timelines, and accessible, informative text. Landmark people and periods are combined in this one stunning family reference, showcasing the ideas, experiments, and technologies that have shaped our daily lives and transformed the world we live in today. Budding scientists, get ready for a time travelling trip like no other.

**A Novel** Canongate Books

Masterful in its simplicity, *Chronicle in Stone* is a touching coming-of-age story and a testament to the perseverance of the human spirit. Surrounded by the magic of beautiful women and literature, a boy must endure the deprivations of war as he suffers the hardships of growing up. His sleepy country has just thrown off centuries of tyranny, but new waves of domination inundate his city. Through the boy's eyes, we see the terrors of World

War II as he witnesses fascist invasions, allied bombings, partisan infighting, and the many faces of human cruelty—as well as the simple pleasures of life. Evacuating to the countryside, he expects to find an ideal world full of extraordinary things, but discovers instead an archaic backwater where a severed arm becomes a talisman and deflowered girls mysteriously vanish. Woven between the chapters of the boy's story are tantalizing fragments of the city's history. As the devastation mounts, the fragments lose coherence, and we perceive firsthand how the violence of war destroys more than just buildings and bridges.

**I Remember Abbu** Arcade Publishing

The deeply prolific and widely celebrated author of such books as *Segu* and *Tales from the Heart*, Maryse Condé returns with an unforgettable new novel, *Who Slashed Celanire's Throat?* Inspired by a tragedy in the late twentieth century, Condé sets this fiction in the late nineteenth century with her characteristic blend of magical realism and fantasy. Condé lyrically, hauntingly imagines Celanire: a woman who was mutilated at birth and left for dead.

Mysterious, seductive, and disarming, she

is driven to uncover the truth of her past at any cost. On one hand, Celanire appears to be a saint; she is a tireless worker who has turned numerous neglected institutions into vibrant schools for motherless children. But she is also a woman apprehended by demons, as death and misfortune seem to follow in her wake. *Who Slashed Celanire's Throat?* follows both her triumphs and her trials as this survivor becomes a beautiful and powerful woman who travels from Guadeloupe to West Africa to Peru in order to solve the mysteries of her past and avenge the crimes committed against her. This beautifully rendered story, translated by Richard Philcox from the French edition, is sure to be considered the most dazzling addition to Condé's brilliant body of work.

**Albanian Spring** Simon and Schuster

When it was first published in the author's native country, *THE PALACE OF DREAMS* was immediately banned. The novel revolves around a secret ministry whose task is not just to spy on its citizens, but to collect and interpret their dreams. An entire nation's unconscious is thus tapped and meticulously laid bare in the form of images and symbols of the dreaming

mind.

*Cries in the Drizzle* I.B. Tauris

1958. In a dorm room in Moscow, a young writer is woken by the sound of angry voices on the radio. Through the fog of a hangover he hears the news that a novel called *Doctor Zhivago* has earned its author the Nobel Prize. There is uproar. The author, Boris Pasternak, faces exile, the press hound him and demand that he refuse the award. A few days earlier the young writer found a copy of this book - could those simple pages really be so dangerous? Based on Ismail Kadare's own experience, *Twilight of the Eastern Gods* is a fictionalised recreation of his time as a student at the prestigious Gorky Institute for World Literature - a strange 'factory of the intellect' set up to produce a new generation of Socialist writers. With its drunken nights, uninspiring professors, specially selected students and enforced Socialist Realism his time at the Gorky Institute brought Kadare to the brink of abandoning writing altogether. In English for the first time, *Twilight of the Eastern Gods* is a portrait of a city and a time, it is a story of youth, of disenchantment and of the incredible importance of the written

word.

*Alone With You in the Ether* Skyhorse Publishing Inc.

A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice "Erotic, paranoiac and lightly fantastical." —The Wall Street Journal "Ismail Kadare's readers are astonished every year when the Nobel committee overlooks him. . . . *A Girl in Exile*, published in Albanian in 2009, may rekindle the worldwide hopes." —The New York Times Book Review During the bureaucratic machinery of Albania's 1945-1991 dictatorship, playwright Rudian Stefa is called in for questioning by the Party Committee. A girl—Linda B.—has been found dead, with a signed copy of his latest book in her possession. He soon learns that Linda's family, considered suspect, was exiled to a small town far from the capital. Under the influence of a paranoid regime, Rudian finds himself swept along on a surreal quest to discover what really happened to Linda B. "At a time when parts of the world are indulging nostalgia for communism, Kadare's novel confronts the infuriating impossibility of art in an autocratic, anti-individualist system." —The Washington Post "A Girl in

Exile confirms Kadare to be the best writer at work today who remembers—almost aggressively so, refusing to forget—European totalitarianism." —The New Republic

**Journeys in Albania** New Directions Publishing

Psychologically incisive and impeccably crafted, *Agamemnon's Daughter* tells the crushing story of passion shattered by a heartless regime. Once again, Kadare denounces with rare force the machinery of oppression, drawing us back to the ancient roots of Western civilization and tyranny. This collection also showcases two masterful stories: "The Blinding Order," a parable about the uses of terror in the Ottoman Empire, and "The Great Wall," a chilling duet between a Chinese official and a soldier in the invading army of the great conqueror, Tamerlane.

*Pyramids* Anchor

In the mid-1930s, two Irish Americans travel to the Albanian highlands with an early model of a marvelous invention, the tape recorder. Their mission? To discover how Homer could have composed works as brilliant and as long as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* without ever putting pen to

paper. The answer, they believe, can be found only in Albania, the last remaining habitat of the oral epic. But immediately upon their arrival, the scholars' seemingly arcane research excites suspicion and puts them at the center of ethnic strife in the Balkans. Mistaken for foreign spies, they are placed under surveillance and are dogged by gossip and intrigue. It isn't until a fierce-eyed monk from the Serbian side of the mountains makes his appearance that the scholars glimpse the full political import of their search for the key to the Homeric question.

The File on H. Simon and Schuster

In Greater America, with sleep under siege, this lucid and prophetic novel of ideas depicts the end of human reverie. An unnamed, unemployed, dream-prone narrator finds himself following Chevauchet, diplomat of Onirica, a foreign republic of dreams, to resist a prohibition on sleep in near-future Greater America. On a mission to combat the state-sponsored drugging of citizens with uppers for greater productivity, they traverse an eerie landscape in an everlasting autumn, able to see inside other people's nightmares and dreams. As

Comprehensive Illusion - a social media-like entity that hijacks creativity - overtakes the masses, Chevauchet, the old radical, weakens and disappears, leaving our narrator to take up Chevauchet's dictum that "daydreaming is directly subversive" and forge ahead on his own. In slippery, exhilarating, and erudite prose, *The Eyelid* revels in the camaraderie of free thinking that can only happen on the lam, aiming to rescue a species that can no longer dream. "A slight but quick-witted and thoughtful philosophical parable that falls somewhere between Camus and Gaiman's Sandman universe." —Kirkus Reviews "S. D. Chrostowska's *The Eyelid* is a brilliant, visionary satire on the digital mindscape of twenty-first-century late capitalism embodied in the new global state of Greater America. Insomnia is in; dreams are seditious; sleep is outlawed. Lulled by false fantasies projected by Artificial Intelligence (AI in the book), video games, and media collaborators, humans drug themselves to stay awake so they can slave through the now standard twenty-hour work days. Witty, oracular, Surreal, trenchant, politically astute, and often

hilarious, *The Eyelid* is a throwback to the classics of the genre, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*. We are turning into a race of sleep-deprived automatons, Chrostowska warns, increasingly unable to mount political opposition or even dream a different future." —Douglas Glover  
*A Novel!* Bond Street Books

Set in the desert kingdom of Djelibeybi, *Pyramids* follows the adventures and, more often, misadventures of Teppic, a teenage pharaoh faced with a terror-filled world of mad high priests, sacred crocodiles, marching mummies and exploding pyramids.

*The Pyramid* Simon and Schuster

Yu Hua's beautiful, heartbreaking novel *Cries in the Drizzle* follows a young Chinese boy throughout his childhood and adolescence during the reign of Chairman Mao. The middle son of three, Sun Guanglin is constantly neglected ignored by his parents and his younger and older brother. Sent away at age six to live with another family, he returns to his parents' house six years later on the same night that their home burns to the ground, making him even more a black sheep. Yet

Sun Guanglin's status as an outcast, both at home and in his village, places him in a unique position to observe the changing nature of Chinese society, as social dynamics — and his very own family — are changed forever under Communist rule. With its moving, thoughtful prose, *Cries in the Drizzle* is a stunning addition to the wide-ranging work of one of China's most distinguished contemporary writers.

*The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt* Arcade Publishing

On the autobahn in Vienna a taxi leaves the carriageway and strikes the crash barrier, flinging its male and female passengers out of its back doors as it spins through the air. The driver cannot explain why he lost control; he only says that the mysterious couple in the back seat seemed to be about to kiss . . . Set against the tumultuous backdrop of war and its aftermath in the Balkans, *The Accident* intimately documents an affair between two people caught in each other's webs. The investigation into their deaths uncovers a mutually destructive obsession that mirrors the conflicts of the region. A destabilising mixture of vivid hallucination and cold reality, Ismail Kadare's new novel

is a bold and fascinating departure.

*The Palace of Dreams* Catapult

It's the 1970s and cracks are starting to appear in the alliance between China and its Communist cohort Albania. When an Albanian steps on the foot of a Chinese diplomat the tension cranks up – couriers between Tirana and Beijing carry annotated x-rays of the foot back and forth. The Chinese intend to punish their interfering little ally discreetly. But is the Sino-Albanian axis about to come adrift? This is Kadare's surreal black comedy about the inner sanctums of political power and the mysterious causal chains that transform ordinary lives.

**A Short History** Canongate Books  
 THE SUNDAY TIMES MEMOIR OF THE YEAR  
 RADIO 4 BOOK OF THE WEEK CHOSEN AS  
 A BOOK OF THE YEAR BY THE GUARDIAN,  
 FINANCIAL TIMES, SUNDAY TIMES, TLS,  
 DAILY MAIL, NEW STATESMAN AND  
 SPECTATOR \*SHORTLISTED FOR THE  
 COSTA BIOGRAPHY AWARD\*  
 \*SHORTLISTED FOR THE BAILLIE GIFFORD  
 PRIZE FOR NON-FICTION\* 'Wonderfully  
 funny and poignant. . . a tale of family  
 secrets and political awakening amid a  
 crumbling regime. One of the nonfiction

titles of the year' Luke Harding, Observer  
 'Astonishing and deeply resonant . . . Ypi  
 weaves magic in this book: I was  
 entranced from beginning to end' Laura  
 Hackett, Sunday Times 'I never asked  
 myself about the meaning of freedom until  
 the day I hugged Stalin. From close up, he  
 was much taller than I expected.' Lea Ypi  
 grew up in one of the most isolated  
 countries on earth, a place where  
 communist ideals had officially replaced  
 religion. Albania, the last Stalinist outpost  
 in Europe, was almost impossible to visit,  
 almost impossible to leave. It was a place  
 of queuing and scarcity, of political  
 executions and secret police. To Lea, it  
 was home. People were equal, neighbours  
 helped each other, and children were  
 expected to build a better world. There  
 was community and hope. Then, in  
 December 1990, a year after the fall of the  
 Berlin Wall, everything changed. The  
 statues of Stalin and Hoxha were toppled.  
 Almost overnight, people could vote freely,  
 wear what they liked and worship as they  
 wished. There was no longer anything to  
 fear from prying ears. But factories shut,  
 jobs disappeared and thousands fled to  
 Italy on crowded ships, only to be sent

back. Predatory pyramid schemes eventually bankrupted the country, leading to violent conflict. As one generation's aspirations became another's disillusionment, and as her own family's

secrets were revealed, Lea found herself questioning what freedom really meant. *Free* is an engrossing memoir of coming of age amid political upheaval. With acute

insight and wit, Lea Ypi traces the limits of progress and the burden of the past, illuminating the spaces between ideals and reality, and the hopes and fears of people pulled up by the sweep of history.