



The Animal Garden

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Philip and Shanya arrive from their different cultures to meet their scientist fathers in a desert camp. They have a clash of personalities within a clash of cultures, a clash of warring factions within the country and then, when the children wake to find the camp deserted, a clash of realities as they come across ape-like creatures who speak very like their fathers. After they are chased by rebel troops and escape into an underground area, they begin to adapt to their new circumstances, their new companions and the struggle for survival. A short and distinctive story from Mayne where again the ordinary is never firmly in control: 'Philip felt the world twitch for him.' It's partly too in the language, not totally secure for the apes, where the failure of a well is that the water 'has changed to dry', where the apes do share but 'towards themselves, not with others'. The return of the adult world and water comes with the growth of the children's understandings and relationships so that this bit of the desert finally blooms richly.

Running Order:

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