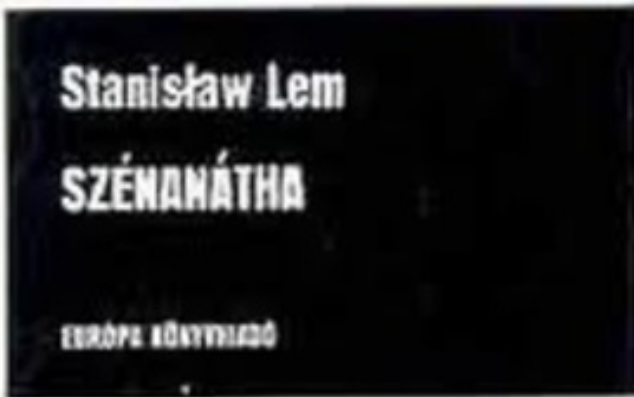

Stanisław Lem

Szénanátha [Fekete könyvek]



Title: Szénanátha [Fekete könyvek]

Author: Stanisław Lem

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Description

Tucatnyi középkorú magányos férfi hal meg váratlanul, megdöbbenően hasonló körülmények közt Nápolyban. A rendszég tehetetlen. A címadó kisregény hűségnek, egy volt amerikai rhajósnak a saját élete kockáztatásával kell megfejtenie a titkot. Mi történik akkor, ha a gépbe táplált túl sok információ önálló életet kezd élni, és mintegy elrevelíti és meghatározza azt, ami bekövetkezik? Hogyan materializálódik a túl nagy mennyiségben adagolt információ és vezet a világ pusztulásához? Hogyan válhat az információ a gépbe kódolva ítéletté és egyúttal sorssá? Ezekre a kérdésekre keres választ a tudományos-fantasztikus irodalom világhírszerzője kötetünk további három elbeszélésében. A gép, amelyet a fennálló hatalom ellenségeinek kinyomzására, üldözésére és kivégzésére konstruáltak, voltaképpen nem robot, hanem a jövő eltorzult emberének víziója.

Insightful reviews

Yooproprof: This was my first Lem, and I picked it up "by chance" as it were, at a used book sale a few months ago. I don't usually read "speculative" fiction, but Lem is considered to be one of the genre's great masters, perhaps best known for "Solaris" which has twice been made into a film.

"The Chain of Chance" also riffs on the detective genre, featuring as its main character a paunchy middle-aged American former astronaut who is seeking to "solve" a series of unexplained and mysterious deaths of paunchy middle-aged men. I don't want to say more than that.

The story-telling in the book is somewhat "clunky" at times - it was annoying how much of the narrative was "unloaded" all at once in a long section in the middle of the book. (Another reviewer appropriately calls it a "data dump.") That flaw notwithstanding, there's no doubt the Lem is a masterful storyteller, the plot is quite clever, and I was truly riveted by the last 25 pages. I thought that the ending was "a real corker"!

But what really makes "The Chain of Chance" a notable book is Lem's persona - he is a bona fide twentieth century European intellectual, a survivor of World War II in Poland, a witness to the political, scientific and technological revolutions of modernity. The novel was originally published in 1975, and is saturated with a mid to late 20th century weariness, reminiscent of Camus or Boll, perhaps. (No coincidence that the action of the novel takes place amidst the great faded glories of Naples, Rome and Paris.) There's an atmosphere of unease, almost dread, a kind of bleak acceptance of the uncertainties of the present. There's no doubt that this is "literature," if you know what I mean.

"Nonchalantly, the conversation turned to the tribulations of the world. Not nonchalantly, really, but in a mood of surrender now that Europe's eternal mission had come to an end. . . . Europe had survived, but only in an economic sense. Prosperity had been restored, but not the feeling of self-confidence. It was not the cancer patient's fear of malignancy, but the awareness that the spirit of history had moved on, and that if it ever returned it would not be here. . . . McLuhan's

prophecies were coming true, but in an inverse sort of way, as prophecies have a habit of doing. His global village was already here, but split into two halves. The poorer half was suffering, while the wealthier half was importing that suffering via television and commiserating at a distance. That is couldn't go on like this was everywhere taken for granted, but it went on just the same."

Oskar Swierad: It's a mock crime story, where the crime is connected to areas typically reserved for science-fiction - medicine, mathematics, science in general. This idea is interesting, as well as the ending. The story, though, was boring until maybe the last 1/3 of the book.

Jim: It had been a long time since I'd read one of Lem's novels, and as I got deeper into **The Chain of Chance** I was afraid that I had not chosen a good one. The middle of the book is a vast core-dump of facts relating to the strange deaths of various people visiting Naples who had all died in a way peculiar to how they lived. The hero, who goes by the name of one of the victims, Adams, is a washed-out American astronaut who tries to call forth the same circumstances that led to the deaths and in so doing solve the case. How the case actually is solved is brilliant and fascinating, so I will not spill the beans. I will, however, hint that there is a definite link between this novel and the same author's **The Futurological Congress** which remains the best Lem I have read to date.

Ken: it's not usually that you simply learn a detective novel that's established absolutely on rules on the topic of likelihood and probability, but when you take pleasure in books similar to Innumeracy or the literature on judgment and decision-making, this can be the appropriate read. Crisp and illuminating story of the random stroll and the commonality of inconceivable events.

Vadim: I used to learn loads of Lem's fiction whilst i used to be teenager. i used to be very long time in the past and it used to be translated to Russian. Seeing normal identify i purchased this publication and used to be waiting for lots on enjoyable analyzing it. It used to be not. I controlled approximately 0.5 of it prior to giving up. The writing type is tediously monotone and boring. maybe it's a translator's fault.

Marc: This used to be one other expertly-written sci-fi tale through my favourite sci-fi author. The language and vocabulary is high-caliber and the tale itself is sort of interesting. it truly is an strange detective thriller, yet no longer a super-exciting thriller. Stanislaw Lem indicates once more his excellent mind's eye and knowing for technology.

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