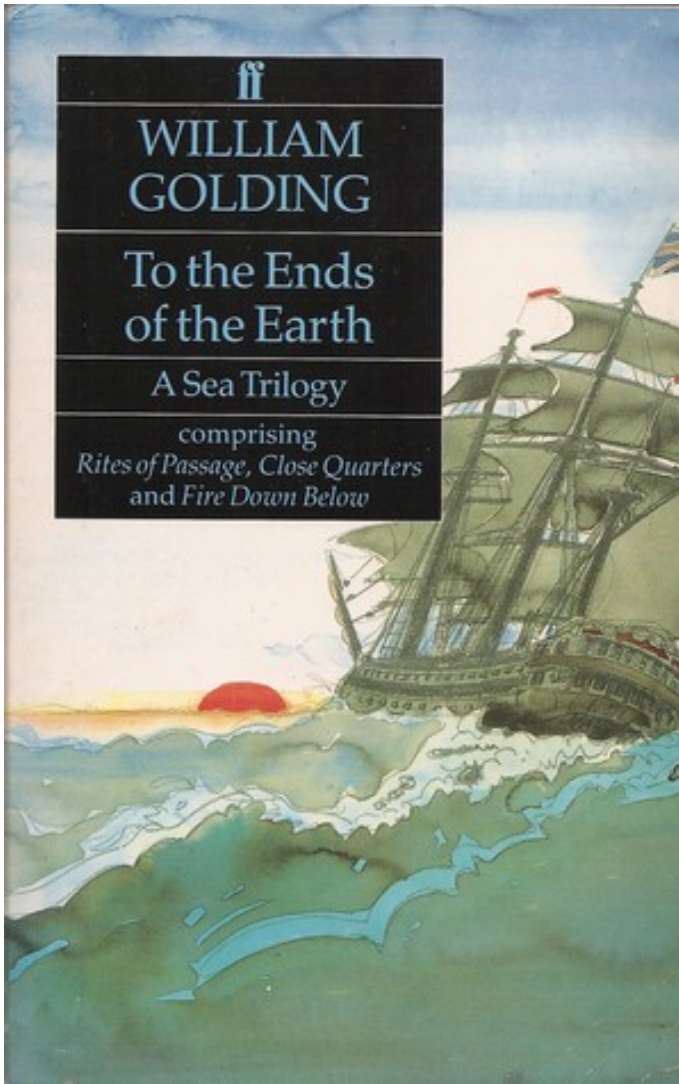

William Golding

To the Ends of the Earth



Title: To the Ends of the Earth

Author: William Golding

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Description

To the Ends of the Earth, William Golding's great sea trilogy, presents the extraordinary story of a warship's troubled journey to Australia in the early 1800s. Told through the pages of Edmund Talbot's journal--with equal measure of wit and disdain--it records the mounting tensions and growing misfortunes aboard the ancient ship. An instant maritime classic, and one of Golding's finest achievements, the trilogy was adapted into a major three-part Mastpiece Theatre drama in 2006.

Insightful reviews

Stephanie: I didn't even make it through the first story in this trilogy. The main character seemed like such a jerk.

Alger: This review is in three parts because the collection is not a coherent single story. The three books of the volume share a voyage, a ship, and a common narrator (Talbot) scribbling in a journal. What they don't share is a plot, a narrative voice, or a jot of surprise or narrative tension.

So hereafter there be spoilers...

Book one revolves around the Talbot's too-slow discovery that a parson he disdains is gay. This leads to pages of blah blah blah and what Golding assumes is enlightened self-examination by Talbot, who feels guilty that he wasn't nicer to the man when he was alive. The parson's self-willed suicide is an extremely tedious interruption to the already dragging descriptions of shipboard life that make up the rest of the volume. I imagine that a reader in 1980 picking up this novel could be expected to be blind to the ham-fisted hints throughout the book of why the parson was so ashamed that he willed himself to death, and to be shocked at the revelation that comes in the very closing pages of a drunken blowjob in the foredeck. To me, who lives in a jaded age, this revelation was not only an anticlimax (snicker) but a badly written bathetic close to a book essentially without any other narrative center. This reads as if Golding decided to write a novel designed to shock with scandalous detail but lacked the imagination or experience to be convincing. This was my least favorite book of the series by far.

The next two books, which people seem less impressed with, are better written and have far more solid story arcs. This doesn't, however, explain why the series is so well-loved. One annoying detail is that Golding links the books of the series together by having Talbot reflect upon how his talents as an author cannot compare to those of the dead parson on a regular schedule of every 75 pages. I defy anyone to discover a substantial difference in language, style, or voice between Talbot's telling and the parson's. Anyway, on to the other two volumes. Close Quarters alternates a by-the-numbers love story with silly byplay involving the end of the Napoleonic Wars, a chums subplot straight from a Victorian boys novel that is far more homoerotic than anything the parson did in book one, and the return from the dead of a character that should never have been in the books to begin with. Yes, Golding was so infused with cliché that he had to find a virtuous maiden for our hero in the mid-Atlantic. Also, we are more than two-thirds of the way through the series and the ship has barely made a quarter of the voyage.

Fire Down Below is completely predictable in the style of a Hollywood film where the

screenwriter realizes he has 15 minutes to wrap up the movie and he needs a happy ending, but not TOO happy because this is a realistic depiction of life. The title gives away everything you need to know about the climax of the book so literally that as I came to the last few pages I was actually propelled by a horrified fascination to see if Golding was really that transparent an author. He was. Golding drops our hero in Australia for about 10 pages before rescuing him by delivering his lady-love (who is supposed to be in Calcutta), and a brilliant future in a single page. There is more deus ex machina in this novel than the Old Testament.

On the whole, this is a barely readable series that is too long, predictable, and wholly unworthy of the veneration it receives. I have no idea why Golding decided to locate this story when and where he did since the plot elements are completely transferable. Ignore anyone's recommendation of these books on the basis that they compare to other classic sea novels, because for all Golding knew of sailing ships this series could have happened on a long bus ride through the desert. The Tarpaulin language that people get excited about is rare and occasionally misused, and really only noticeable because Golding points it out every time it puts in an appearance.

Read if you have nothing better to occupy your time.

Monique Van hest: Just not my cup of tea.

Tasha: the tale itself used to be an outstanding read, yet in a few components it did are inclined to drag as i discovered myself skipping pages, with out wasting the stream of the storyline. I by no means proposal i might be interpreting this sort of book, yet to extend my horizons i have to get out of my convenience analyzing zone. I loved half 2 shut Quarters the most. in the direction of the top i used to be commencing to locate the most personality infuriating.

Eleanor: Okay--I've simply truly learn Rites of Passage, that's the 1st booklet of this trilogy, and which gained the Booker Prize in 1980. Its pastiche of a late-eighteenth century colonial administrator's voice is excellent, and conveys personality very skillfully, however the constitution of the publication has its problems. it really is challenging to inform what the purpose of the narrative is: Colley's downfall, yes, however the booklet contains on for it slow after his destiny is sealed. Why it does this can be unclear. Moreover, the foundation of Colley's malaise is so stepped-around that the reader involves the basic cognizance very past due within the book--after which, a slightly unsubtle exposition is shoehorned into the final page. it really is an relaxing book, yet given its shaky administration of emotional funding and narrative arc, its Booker Prize win surprises me.

Meg: the tale used to be excellent, even if the writing appeared to drag-on after awhile. Surely, there have been riviting elements of this book, and absolutely the size of it was once intended to reveal the size of this kind of sea voyage, yet after awhile i did not are looking to be pulled into the boredom of the ship. Also, the most character's realized seaman's language made it demanding to persist with what used to be happening the complete time. I virtually consider as if it can were greater to have him ignorant to sea-language, in order that every thing that used to be happening must be defined a bit better. Still, a major tale and price a read.

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