The Ghosts of Heaven

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Review

What does a prehistoric ritual, a medieval witch-hunt, a turn-of-the-century mental hospital, and a hundred-year journey through space all have in common? In this book, the reader is taken on a journey to answer this question. It begins with a young prehistoric girl hoping to be chosen as the apprentice to an old man who wields magic. She embarks on a journey with him, and in the end discovers that life has a much greater meaning than she first believed. Next, a young woman accused of being a witch. She, like in the first story, begins to understand the never-ending nature of life. In the third part of the book, a man is hired to work as a doctor at a mental institution. While there, he finds that the ideas of some of the patients are saner than those in charge of them. Finally, in the fourth section, a man is traveling alone through space, in charge of hundreds of lives. His journey takes an unexpected turn and he discovers that time and space were never linear, but always spiraling.

In this book, four seemingly unrelated stories are told that begin to tie together in a completely unexpected way through the symbolism of spirals. The different protagonists begin to wonder about the meaning of spirals in the world, and by the last story, the final protagonist makes a discovery that alters everything he knew about the universe. This book should not be considered if the audience is looking for a quick, easy read. It takes a little time to become attached to the characters, and the ideas about life spiraling onward are not explicitly stated until the end. However, the conclusion of the stories was very satisfying because the author expected the reader to work for it. It took time to arrive where the author was leading, but it was well worth the effort, and one will walk away feeling more enlightened than before.

*Contains mild language, violence, and brief, mild sexual content.