



Terra Firma Triptych: When Robots Fly (Kindle Single)

By J. M. Ledgard

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From the author of *Submergence* comes a digital-original triptych of essays that examine humanity in the modern age.

Terra Firma Triptych begins in a wilderness in South Sudan. J. M. Ledgard is there in search of a still point, untouched by humankind--a goal complicated by the contingent of armed rangers accompanying him. Next, a trip through Rwanda--taking a borrowed car toward crocodile-infested lakes near the border with Burundi--a road trip that unexpectedly ends up at the site of the country's proposed future in the sky. And finally Ledgard takes us straight into a vision of that very future, of a continent poised to take advantage of current and near-future technological advances--a vision that feels *Star Trek* fanciful at first, then not just practical but necessary.

As a novelist, Ledgard is celebrated for his ability to allow his imagination and ideas to fly wide and free even as he grounds his stories in contemporary political reality, earning simultaneous comparisons to both W. G. Sebald and John le Carré. As a journalist, he has covered East Africa for *The Economist* for more than a decade. In *Terra Firma Triptych*, Ledgard is able to summon the searching, soaring, poetic voice of the novelist and to latch it to the gritty vision of the reporter on the ground to show us a world in which connectivity has become paramount, in which isolation and uncharted landscapes verge on obsolete, and yet new frontiers still beckon. Each panel of the triptych informs the one before--each goads us forward even as it questions the acceleration. What is certain is that we are hurtling into tomorrow together, and our potential depends on the generosity of our imagination.

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