



The Last Kiss (Love in the Asian Century Book 2)

Bruce Grant

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A dramatic meeting at night in a garden in New Delhi is the beginning of a tragic affair between a young Australian archaeologist, Annie, and an Indian poet, Gopala. "A meeting like this only happened when the signs were right... It was like Krishna and Radha at the lily pond."


The pace of the novel is swift and direct, moving from love scenes that are sometimes sensual, sometimes tender, to diplomatic and political life. It is a study of India as an ancient civilisation adapting to the contemporary world and of Australia, secular and modern, searching for an identity in its region. Love poems of a 14th century Indian poet Vidyapati are used as a leitmotiv.

Eventually, Annie says the three words that lovers down the ages have said to each other. It is too late, but Gopala hears the words and acknowledges them. A moment in life becomes eternal; because she said "I love you", death has lost its sting. Annie returns to Australia determined that her experience in India will change her life.

Author Biography:

Australian writer-diplomat Bruce Grant has written ten works of non-fiction, three novels, essays and short stories published in *The New Yorker*, *Mademoiselle*, *Playboy*, *Cleo*, *The Bulletin*, *Quadrant*, *Overland* and *Meanjin*. His first book, *Indonesia*, became a classic. *The Last Kiss* is one of three novels on the theme "Love in the Asian Century". He was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, Australian High Commissioner in New Delhi, foundation chairman of the Australia-Indonesia Institute, chairman of the Australian Dance Theatre, chairman of the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, president of Melbourne's International Film Festival and president of Melbourne's International Arts Festival. His essay "The Great Pretender at the Bar of Justice", written at the trial of Slobodan Milosevic, was published in *The Best Australian Essays 2002*. "Bali: The Spirit of Here and Now", written after the October 2002 bombings, was published in *The Best Australian Essays 2004*. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) by Monash University in December 2003 and distinguished Fellow by the Australian Institute of International Affairs in 2010.

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