



Sirius Loss: A Star Lost, a New Future

Tim Edwards

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When astronomer Jennifer Bass is told that Sirius, the Dog Star, is flickering strangely, she thinks it's a joke. She takes a look for herself, however, and quickly changes the observatory telescopes to take some readings and calls in the help of another astronomer, Dr. Banerjee. She is able to capture the last light from the star before it goes dark. The star's disappearance is a scientific puzzle that becomes big news, and Jennifer finds herself at the heart of a media frenzy. Her theory that a black hole has swallowed Sirius is not widely accepted until Dr. Banerjee confirms her statements. Suddenly, Jennifer is in charge of a huge scientific operation to save the human race.

In *Sirius Loss*, Tim Edwards presents an interesting and well-paced story. The text flows beautifully, and the reader will appreciate the author's eloquent writing style and the accessible way in which he describes scientific events. For example, Dr. Banerjee explains the evidence he finds to support the theory of a black hole: "There was no evidence of any dust cloud where Sirius had been, but these diffraction waves were passing through ever more distant stars from the coordinates of Sirius. I suspect the waves or ripples are distortions in the light from those stars caused by a huge gravitational pull that has to be caused by a black hole somewhere between those stars and us."

Unfortunately, the book's strengths are undermined by its flat characters. Jennifer and her husband, David, are both wonderful scientists who are completely fulfilled by their careers and family life. Their teenage son is down to earth, serious, and respectful; their preteen daughter is playful, bright, and inquisitive. The characters' interactions are equally two-dimensional. They speak with a formality that is hard to accept. For example, Jennifer tells her children that, "Everything we know is about to change forever, and there's still so much we don't know. All of this must seem so incredible to you, as it is to me, the other scientists, and even the president. I think this is one of those times that Pastor Scott has preached about, where we learn what we can, do the best we can, and take it all, especially the unknowns, on faith."

Throughout the story, Jennifer and her family make choices based on their unwavering faith in God. This is a lovely ideal, but what drives any story is the way its characters change when confronted with a major obstacle. Edwards' characters do not seem to struggle with what is happening to their planet. Nonetheless, fans of Christian fiction will appreciate the role that faith plays in the story.

The science-fiction genre is full of books that predict the end of the world. Though just such a doomsday scenario drives *Sirius Loss*, the author has managed to come up with a unique and original story that readers are sure to enjoy despite its lack of character development.

CATHERINE THURESON (March 5, 2013)

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