Eclipses in Adult Fiction

Banville, John *Eclipse*. 2000, Picador. Complex enigmatic novel about a failed actor where an eclipse of the Sun is a key event. (An eclipse also plays a role in his second novel in this series, *Shroud*, 2002, Picador.)

Byrd, Max *Shooting the Sun*. 2003, Bantam. Historical fiction: young woman astronomer in 19th century on an expedition in American southwest to photograph a total eclipse for the first time. Many historical characters accompany her.

Dorricott, Fran *After the Eclipse*. 2019, Titan Books. Two young girls disappear during two different eclipses, and the first one’s sister tries to solve the mystery.


Kelley, Erin *He Said, She Said*. 2017, Minotaur. Psychological thriller, where the events are set off during a trip to see a solar eclipse in Cornwall.

King, Stephen *Gerald’s Game* (1992, Viking) and *Dolores Claiborne* (1992, Viking). Two horror novels both of which feature eclipses as parts of the complex plot.


Neville, Daphne *A Celestial Affair*. 2016, Lulu. Part of the *Trengillion Cornish Mystery* series, this book is about a village that hosts many visitors for a total eclipse.


Seagren, Ronnie *Seventh Daughter*. 2008, Flying Pen Press. Fantasy adventure: a woman born during an eclipse must see an eclipse in Peru to regain powers she needs to fight an evil entity.

Sawyer, Robert *Illegal Alien*. 1997, Ace Books. Aliens who arrive on Earth go see a total solar eclipse and humans learn that it is a sight unique to Earth.

Twain, Mark *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*. 1889. Many editions. A modern American transported back in time is condemned as a magician but saves himself by predicting an eclipse.

Verne, Jules *The Fur Country*. 1873. One of Verne’s *Extraordinary Voyages* novels, in which a predicted total eclipse showing as partial is one of the things that alerts the protagonists that they are not where they think they are.

Whitaker, Phil *Eclipse of the Sun*. 1997, Phoenix Books. An Indian science teacher uses an eclipse to allow him to forge a relationship with an English tutor.

White, A. “Solar Eclipses Have Been a Science Fiction Theme for Thousands of Years” (an interview with Lisa Yaszek,)  
Hockey, Thomas “Totality Tales” (AAS Education Blog Post):  
https://aas.org/posts/news/2022/07/totality-tales

**Eclipses in Children’s Fiction**

Blyton, Enid *The Secret Mountain*. 1941, several publishers. Children’s adventure in Africa, where an upcoming eclipse is part of the plot.  
Fraknoi, Andrew & Schatz, Dennis *When the Sun Goes Dark*. 2017, National Science Teaching Association Press. Grandparents return from an eclipse expedition and tell kids all about it. (For ages 9-12)  
Mass, Wendy *Every Soul a Star*. 2008, Little Brown. A total eclipse of the Sun brings together three disparate teenagers. (Young adult fiction)  
Whitethorne, Baje *Sunpainters: Eclipse of the Navajo Sun*. 1994, Salina. Tells the story of how the Navajo people explained eclipses.  

**Eclipses in Films and Videos**

Fifteen Movies that Feature Eclipses (from Astronomy magazine):  
How Solar Eclipses are Used in TV and Film (7 min. video):  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RItRn8kc2zo

**Eclipses in Music**

Classical:  
Halper, Mathew *Shadow over the Andes* (for strings) – performed by the Arco Ensemble, Paul Dunker, conductor. Inspired by the total eclipse visible from southern Argentina in July 2010:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMDf64SuNAk
Handel, George F. “Total Eclipse:” an aria from the oratorio Samson. (many recordings). Poignant song, comparing Samson going blind with an eclipse of the Sun. See, for example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bWE1vZ9OKw

Hovhaness, Alan Sonata on the Long Eclipse of the Moon July 6, 1982 (Nicola Giosmin on Taukay). Portrays some of the physical and personal aspects of watching the full Moon turn dark and then coming back into the light; by a prolific 20th century Armenian-American composer who plays with astronomy in a number of his pieces. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJ3RbNINJ-s&list=PLCFE80FA9C1305F8)

Saariaho, Kaija Notes on Light (Orchestre De Paris on Ondine). In this modern piece for cello and orchestra, the composer tries to portray properties of light and phenomena with light through musical textures. The fourth movement is called “Eclipse”. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQSV5qFv_To&list=OLAK5uy_kX8BGQgfOGRIj3BOkeTk5Z6DiTLOiybo)

Tsontakis, George Eclipse (piece for clarinet, violin, cello, and piano; Broyhill Chamber Ensemble on Koch). Written after composer saw a lunar eclipse, the music reminds him of “the eclipsing shadow... as it softly invaded the hazy luminescent circle, and later, the shadow leaving the sphere just as quietly as it had first entered.” (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGxaqBTVsgeOaaOKKhUpJKzmMUTbxFpf)

Popular Music:
Hollywood Principle “Solar Eclipses” – song from the San Diego-based electronic pop music group which uses an eclipse as a metaphor for a broken relationship: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKRYgZVXDMc

Pink Floyd “Eclipse” on Dark Side of the Moon (1973, Capitol Records.) Short philosophical song which ends with “…and the Sun is eclipsed by the Moon.” See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9xOl8qZ7tc

Tyler, Bonnie “Total Eclipse of the Heart” on Faster than the Speed of Night (on Sony). 1983 song by a Welsh singer using eclipse images -- shadows, being in the dark, “no one in the universe as magical as you” -- to describe a love affair going wrong: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcOxhH8N3Bo

Further Reading:

Eclipses in Art


Shahrouri, Saha: Eclipses throughout Art History: https://artmejo.com/eclipses-throughout-art-history/


Articles on Other Connections


Websites on Other Connections

Also: http://mseclipse.free.fr/timbres/timbres.htm
Tourist Posters for Eclipse Destinations (by Tyler Nordgren): https://www.tylernordgren.com/
Eclipses in Many Areas of Popular Culture: https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/TotalEclipseOfThePlot

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For more guides to connections between astronomy and other fields, check out http://bit.ly/fraknoiguides