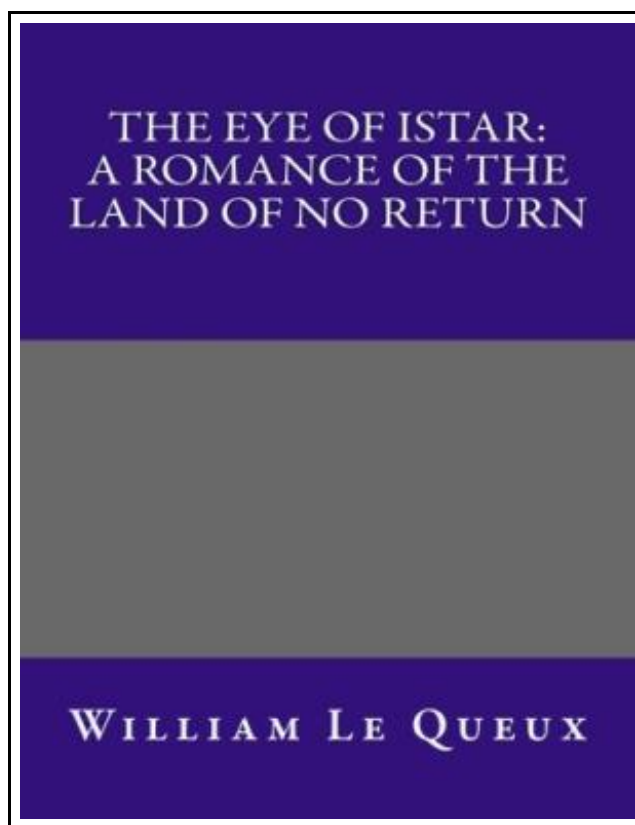


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Createspace, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 279 x 216 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Thrice hath the Fast of Ramadan come and gone since the Granter of Requests last allowed my eyes to behold the well-remembered landscape, scarcely visible in the pale light of dawn. Hills, covered with tall feathery palms, rose abruptly from the barren, sun-scorched plain, and, at their foot, stood the dazzlingly-white city of Omdurman, the impregnable and mysterious headquarters of Mahdiyyism, while beyond, like a silver ribbon winding through the marshes, the Nile glided, half veiled by its thin white cloud of morning vapours. Within the walled and strongly-guarded city was a scene, strange and fantastic. The air, heavy with war rumours, was rent by the deafening strokes of enormous brazen tam-tams, mingling with the loud shouts of dark-faced Jalins, half-naked negro fanatics of the Kunjara and the Dinka, armed cap a pie, ready for battle at a moment s notice. The excitement, which had increased daily for many months, had risen to fever heat. Throughout the short, hot night, the great nahas-those huge brass war drums of the Khalifa Abdullah, Ruler of the Soudan-had been beaten by relays of perspiring negro slaves, glittering with beads and trinkets, the indescribable monotonous rhythm causing the wildly-excited populace to cry, Nakelkum! and Naklulkum! as, in the fresh, cool hour, when the Wolf s Tail-the first brushes of grey light which appear as forerunners of dawn-showed in the heavens, they seized guns, spears and shields, and rushing from their houses across the great square of Abu Anga they congregated in the wide, open space near the Tree of Hadra, where the Raya Zerga, or dreaded black standard of the Khalifa, hung ominous and motionless in the morning air.



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