



A SKY OF WRETCHED SHELLS

by **Mark Blackham**
Cuba Press — \$25

Beneath the delicately balanced surface of Woleai, the atoll that is this story's setting, there lurks . . . something. We explore what this might be mainly through the eyes of Mala, who wants to know more about the world. And ever since Genesis, characters who want to know more have always created trouble for everyone around them. There are not one but two serpents in this Eden — white scientists Dune and Adrina who bring with them a virus. Ironically, their investigations into why the atoll enjoys continuous abundance and environmental good health while the rest of the world is struggling put life on Woleai at risk.

With its adroitly managed plot in a brief space, the third in Cuba Press's exemplary novella series is a climate warning parable dressed up in a scenario that HP Lovecraft would find congenial.