

Loren Eiseley (1907–1977), an anthropologist, an educator, and a poet, was one of the most highly respected and prolific scientific writers of the twentieth century. Born in Nebraska, Eiseley was educated at the University of Nebraska (B.A., 1933) and at the University of Pennsylvania (A.M., 1935; Ph.D., 1937). His graduate field work took him to the American West, where he did research on the remains of the earliest humans in North America. He taught anthropology at the University of Kansas, from 1937 to 1944, and at Oberlin College, from 1944 to 1947, before joining the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught anthropology and history of science until his death in 1977. He was the curator of early man at the University of Pennsylvania museum and served briefly as the university's provost. He was also a visiting professor at several other leading universities. The recipient of numerous honors and awards for public service, Eiseley is also known for his work as a conservationist and nature lover. In 1964 and 1965, he was a member of a presidential task force on the preservation of natural beauty, advising the Director of the Interior. He was the recipient of numerous awards and over thirty-five honorary degrees. He contributed scores of scientific studies and articles to scholarly journals, but also wrote popular books and books on scientific subjects for lay readers. Eiseley's major works include *The Journey* (1957), *Darwin's Century: Evolution and the Men Who Discovered It* (1959), *The Immensity of Time* (1960), *The Unexpected Universe* (1969), and *The Invisible Pyramid* (1970).

The Judgment of the Birds

Loren Eiseley

It is a commonplace of all religious thought, even the most primitive, that the seeker of visions and insight must go apart from his fellows and live for a time in wilderness. If he is of the proper sort, he will return with a message. It may not