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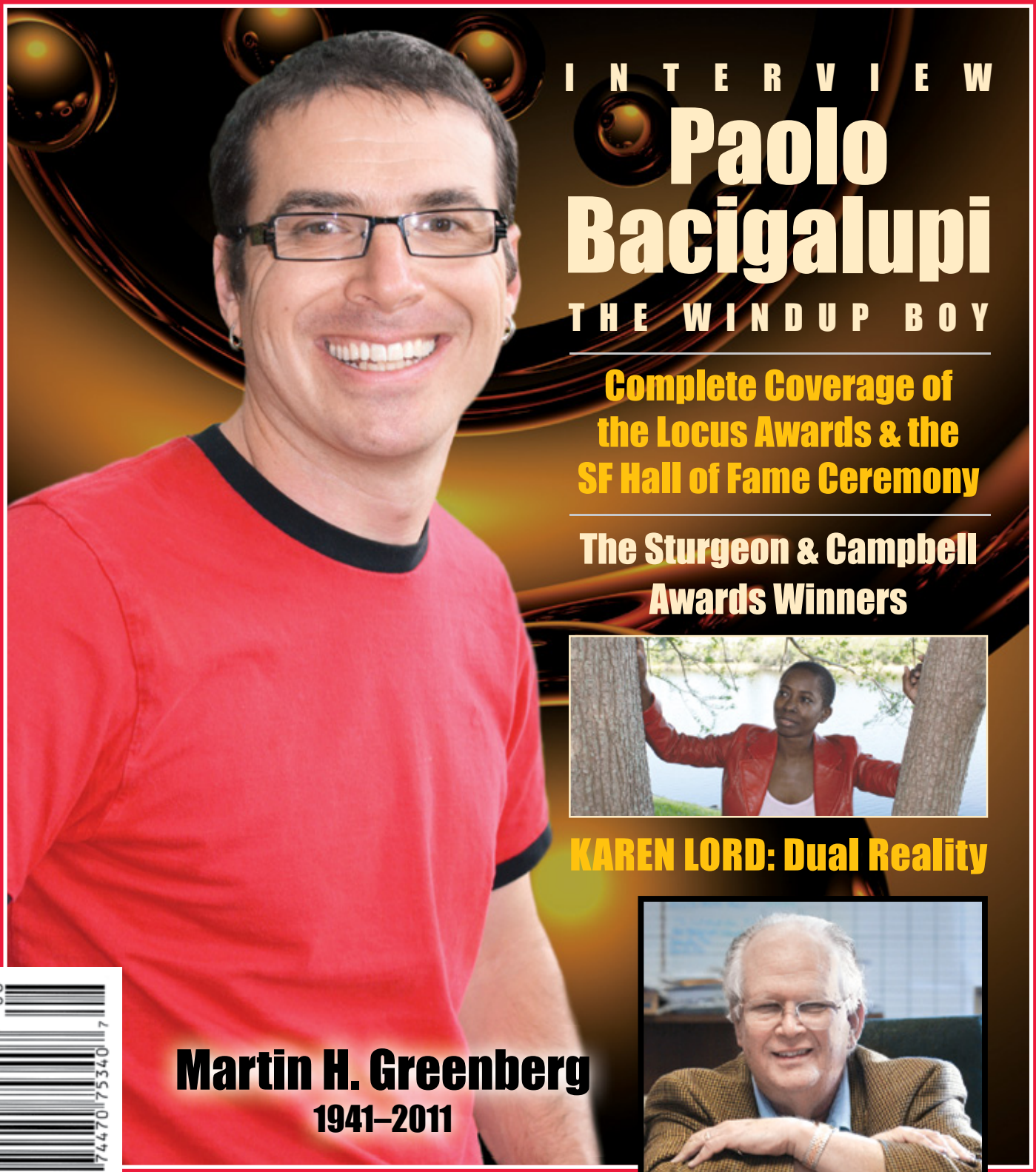

INTERVIEW

Paolo Bacigalupi

THE WINDUP BOY

Complete Coverage of the Locus Awards & the SF Hall of Fame Ceremony

The Sturgeon & Campbell Awards Winners

KAREN LORD: Dual Reality

Martin H. Greenberg
1941–2011

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(1968-2009)

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CORRECTIONS TO *LOCUS* #606 (JULY 2011)

In the Table of Contents we added an extra "e" to Mercedes Lackey's name. We also spelled Toni Kelner's name incorrectly, adding an extra "l" both in the Table of Contents and in Carolyn Cushman's review of **Home Improvement: Undead Edition**. We apologize for the errors.

In our New and Notable listing (pg. 55), we incorrectly awarded a Hugo award to Kurt Vonnegut's **Cat's Cradle** and both a Hugo and a Nebula to Vonnegut's **Slaughterhouse-Five**. Both books were nominees for the respective awards, but neither book won. ■

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Kathleen Ann Goonan (2011)

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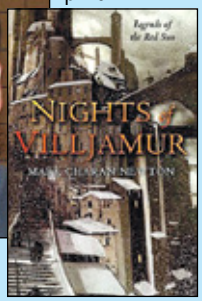

Mark Charan Newton (2008)

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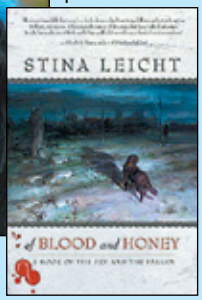

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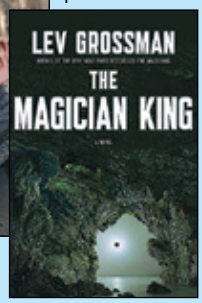


Lev Grossman (2010)

In July and August *Locus* Online (www.locusmag.com) will feature a review of the film *Cowboys & Aliens*, and will post a selection of comments from voters in this year's Locus Poll and Survey. *Locus* Online continues regular updates of what's new in SF/F e-zines (as well as print 'zines), and has begun periodic posts of notable new e-books. Lois Tilton contributes thrice-monthly short fiction reviews.

Plus, daily and weekly updates with –

- **Breaking news**
- **"Blinks" to online reviews, articles, and SF/F/H e-publications**
- **Descriptions of notable new books and magazines, with links to online excerpts and reviews**
- **Up-to-date author event and convention listings**

2010 World Fantasy Awards Nominations

BEST NOVEL
Zoo City, Lauren Beukes (Jacana South Africa; Angry Robot)
The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms, N.K. Jemisin (Orbit)
The Silent Land, Graham Joyce (Gollancz; Doubleday)
Under Heaven, Guy Gavriel Kay
(Viking Canada; Roc; Harper Voyager UK)
Redemption In Indigo, Karen Lord (Small Beer)
Who Fears Death, Nnedi Okorafor (DAW)

BEST NOVELLA
Bone and Jewel Creatures, Elizabeth Bear (Subterranean)
The Broken Man, Michael Byers (PS)
"The Maiden Flight of McCauley's *Bellerophon*", Elizabeth Hand
(**Stories: All-New Tales**)
The Thief of Broken Toys, Tim Lebbon (ChiZine)
"The Mystery Knight", George R.R. Martin (**Warriors**)
"The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window",
Rachel Swirsky (*Subterranean* Summer 2010)

BEST SHORT FICTION
"Beautiful Men" , Christopher Fowler
(**Visitants: Stories of Fallen Angels and Heavenly Hosts**)
"Booth's Ghost", Karen Joy Fowler
(**What I Didn't See and Other Stories**)
"Ponies", Kij Johnson (Tor.com 11/17/10)
"Fossil-Figures", Joyce Carol Oates (**Stories: All-New Tales**)
"Tu Sufrimiento Shall Protect Us", Mercurio D. Rivera
(*Black Static* 8-9/10)

BEST ANTHOLOGY
The Way of the Wizard, John Joseph Adams, ed. (Prime)
My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me,
Kate Bernheimer, ed. (Penguin)
Haunted Legends, Ellen Datlow & Nick Mamatas, eds. (Tor)
Stories: All-New Tales, Neil Gaiman & Al Sarrantonio, eds.
(Morrow; Headline Review)
Black Wings: New Tales of Lovecraftian Horror, S.T. Joshi, ed. (PS)
Swords & Dark Magic, Jonathan Strahan & Lou Anders, eds. (Eos)

BEST COLLECTION
What I Didn't See and Other Stories, Karen Joy Fowler (Small Beer)
The Ammonite Violin & Others, Caitlín R. Kiernan (Subterranean)
Holiday, M. Rickert (Golden Gryphon)
Sourdough and Other Stories, Angela Slatter (Tartarus)
The Third Bear, Jeff VanderMeer (Tachyon)

BEST ARTIST
Vincent Chong
Kinuko Y. Craft
Richard A. Kirk
John Picacio
Shaun Tan

SPECIAL AWARD, PROFESSIONAL
John Joseph Adams, for editing and anthologies
Lou Anders, for editing at Pyr
Marc Gascoigne, for Angry Robot
Stéphane Marsan and Alain Névant, for Bragelonne
Brett Alexander Savory and Sandra Kasturi, for ChiZine

SPECIAL AWARD, NON-PROFESSIONAL
Stephen Jones, Michael Marshall Smith, & Amanda Foubister,
for **Brighton Shock!: The Souvenir Book Of**
The World Horror Convention 2010
Alisa Krasnostein, for Twelfth Planet Press
Matthew Kressel, for *Sybil's Garage* and Senses Five Press
Charles Tan, for *Bibliophile Stalker*
Lavie Tidhar, for *The World SF Blog*

WORLD FANTASY AWARDS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
WINNERS 2011 (for 2010 Award Year)
Peter S. Beagle
Angélica Gorodischer

Winners will be announced Sunday, October 30, 2011 at the World Fantasy Convention held in the Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego CA. The judges who will pick this year's awards are Andrew Hook, Sacha Mamczak, Mark Rich, Sean Wallace, and Kim Wilkins. The awards administrator is Peter Dennis Pautz. ■

Locus Awards/SF Hall of Fame Weekend

The Locus Awards returned to Seattle for the sixth consecutive year, on the weekend of June 24-26, 2011, during the Science Fiction Awards Weekend, held in conjunction with the Science Fiction Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. The Locus event finally outgrew the Lake Union Courtyard Marriott, with 140 in attendance, and was hosted in the Best Western Executive Inn, at the Seattle Center right across the street from the EMP|SF Museum.

Winners, Accepters, and Others: back: Tim Minchin (for Sean Tan), Neil Gaiman, Connie Willis (and for William H. Patterson, Jr.), Nancy Kress (for *Asimov's*), Ellen Datlow (and for N.K. Jemisin), Gardner Dozois (and for George R.R. Martin), Ted Chiang; Seated: Maria Dahvana Headley (for China Miéville), Eric Raab (for Tor), Jeremy Lassen (for Paolo Bacigalupi and for Fritz Leiber), Liza Groen Trombi (with the award for *Spectrum 17*)

After a Friday reading and signing with Connie Willis and Terry Bisson at the Best Western, Clarion West sponsored a kick-off party in honor of Paul Park, for Clarion West students and supporters, awards weekend ticket holders, and special guests. Attendees from the thriving Seattle SF community included Greg Bear & Astrid Anderson Bear, Ted Chiang, Nancy Kress & Jack Skillingstead, Nicola Griffith & Kelley Eskridge, Bruce Taylor, Cat Rambo, Maria Dahvana Headley, Nisi Shawl, Leslie Howle, and Eileen Gunn & John Berry. Other guests included Mary Robinette Kowal, Jay Lake, J.A. Pitts, Ellen Datlow, Gardner Dozois, Geoffrey Landis & Mary Turzillo, Jeremy Lassen, Gary K. Wolfe, and many more.

Designated Hecklers: Gardner Dozois and Nancy Kress with Mistress of Ceremonies: Connie Willis

Bisson and Willis held day-long workshops sponsored by NW Media Arts, at the nearby Richard Hugo House. Bisson's workshop, "The Ruthless Writer: Making Dialogue Work Overtime", included directed dialogue exercises and an opportunity to share a writing sample. The Willis workshop, "From ***Much Ado About Nothing*** to ***It Happened One Night*** and ***You've Got Mail***: The Art of Writing the Romantic Comedy", examined romantic comedy conventions, and was enlivened by film clips and discussions of movies.

A full Saturday schedule began with two panels moderated by

⏭ p. 59

"There are a lot of things in my writing that somebody can find to hate. If you're looking for escapism, you're not necessarily going to find it. If you're looking for something really nifty and cool, you're not necessarily going to find it. If you're looking for an exploration of fears, you're gonna find it! That's where I work. Is the world going to fall apart, and if so what is it going to look like? I'm interested in the process of us not getting our shit together."

PAOLO BACIGALUPI

THE WINDUP BOY

Paolo Tadini Bacigalupi was born August 6, 1972 in Colorado Springs, moving with his hippie parents to western Colorado soon after. They lived in a commune briefly and remained in the area afterward; when his parents divorced he split his time between them, going to various schools, finishing high school at the private Colorado Rocky Mountain School, where he learned the basics of writing. He attended Oberlin College in OH, where he met his wife-to-be Anjula (they married in 1998) and majored in East Asian Studies, spending time in China for foreign-language immersion. After graduating in 1994 he worked in China as a consultant helping foreign companies enter the Chinese market. He returned to the US, and in 1996 worked for an early Web development company in Boston. He and Anjula lived in Denver before returning to the small town of Paonia ten years ago, where they live with their son. Bacigalupi worked as the online editor for High Country News*, a bi-weekly environmental newspaper in print and online, before becoming a full-time fiction writer.*

Bacigalupi is a frequent contributor to F&SF*, publishing his first story there, "Pocketful of Dharma", in 1999, though he first came to wide attention with Sturgeon finalist "The Fluted Girl" (2003) and Hugo and Nebula Award nominee "The People of Sand and Slag" (2004). His work has also appeared in* Asimov's*, various anthologies, and* High Country News*. Other stories include "The Pasho" (2004), Hugo nominee and Sturgeon Award winner "The Calorie Man" (2005), "The Tamarisk Hunter" (2006), "Pop Squad" (2006), Hugo and Sturgeon Award finalist and* Asimov's *Award winner "Yellow Card Man" (2006), "Small Offerings" (2007), "Softer" (2007), and Hugo, Sturgeon, and Nebula Award nominee "The Gambler" (2008). Many of his stories were collected in Locus Award winner* ***Pump Six and Other Stories*** *(2008).*

His first novel ***The Windup Girl*** *(2009) was a huge critical and commercial success, named one of the top ten fiction books of the year by* Time *magazine, and won Hugo, Campbell Memorial, Compton Crook, Locus, and Nebula Awards. His first YA novel* ***Ship Breaker*** *(2010) won the Michael L. Printz Award, was nominated for the Andre Norton Award, was a finalist for the 2010 National Book Award for Young People's Literature, and made the Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adults list, presented by the American Library Association's Young Adult Library Services Association.*

•

"I used to think of my hometown as the place that kept me most grounded. What I was doing as a writer in the outside world really had no bearing. I could sell short stories, and get nominated for awards, and go out to a convention and have a little shiny moment – -but then I could come back to *normal* life where nobody gave a fuck about any of that. Around town, I was still 'that guy I grew up with,' or 'oh yeah, that ankle-biter.'

Then there was a moment, somewhere along the road of all these different awards and all the books selling, when the local papers started to do some stories on me. Suddenly, enough things had accumulated that people were like, 'Wow, you're successful!'

"I remember going to this one Thanksgiving dinner, and it felt very different: like I was actually in my 'author' role, not just another one of the people in the room, because I was talking about the same things I do with fans at conventions: the process to get published, the things you do, what it's like to go to these awards ceremonies. It felt a little like holding court, and it was very uncomfortable – like, 'I just lost my home.'

"Soon you're playing this role everywhere. If you sit down at a coffeehouse, somebody is going to say, 'Oh, I read your book!' It's really sweet, and some of that is what you crave as a writer – I won't say that I don't want to be appreciated for my books, because I really am grateful for it. But at some point, where did the anonymity go? And when it's gone, it really feels like it's gone. Now I feel most like a normal person when I go to a big city. I think the biggest spike in that came when **Ship Breaker**'s nomination for the National Book Award happened. Now, half a year later, the novelty of having that success as a writer is wearing off, and life is starting to feel more normal again. It's sort of a relief, being just another human being, as opposed to, 'Ooh, shiny!'

"When we last talked at Worldcon in Montreal, I was in a really strange period of transition. Moving from short story writer to novel writer, and also trying to figure out what my place in science fiction was supposed to be. A lot of that crystalized around the mix of experiences I had at that Worldcon.

Continued on page 54

Nick Mamatas & Olivia Flint (2011)

Patrick Ness (2007)

Katherine MacLean (2011)

Kevin J. Anderson (2009)

Milestones

GEORGE R.R. MARTIN's long-awaited **A Dance with Dragons**, fifth in his Song of Ice and Fire epic fantasy series, sold 298,000 copies on its release, more first-day sales any other book published in the US and Canada so far in 2011.

NICK MAMATAS & **OLIVIA FLINT** were married July 1, 2011 in Blue Point New York at St. John's Orthodox Church

Awards

PATRICK NESS's **Monsters of Men** won the 2011 Carnegie Medal for best children's book. Previous books in the series, **The Knife of Never Letting Go** and **The Ask and the Answer**, were also nominees, the first time an entire series has made the Carnegie shortlist.

KATHERINE MacLEAN received the 2011 Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery Award, announced at Readercon in Burlington MA, July 2011.

Books Sold

ROBERT SILVERBERG sold **Tales of Majipoor**, gathering all the uncollected stories in that setting, to Ginjer Buchanan at Roc via Chris Lotts. Silverberg's crime thriller **Blood on the Mink** will be published by Charles Ardai of Hard Case Crime. This is the first publication since its original appearance in *Trapped* (1962) as **Too Much Blood on the Mink** under the name Ray McKensie.

NEIL GAIMAN will write children's book **Chu's Day**, about a sneezing panda, with illustrations by **ADAM REX**, for Elise Howard at Harper Children's via Merrilee Heifetz at Writers House for Gaiman and Steven Malk of Writers House for Rex.

KEVIN J. ANDERSON will write an original SF novella for Arc Manor. He sold trilogy The Saga of Shadows, in his Seven Suns universe to Pat LoBrutto at Tor via Trident Media Group. Simon & Schuster will publish in the UK. Anderson & **BRIAN HERBERT** delivered **Sisterhood of Dune** to Tor and Simon & Schuster UK.

JAMES P. BLAYLOCK sold YA **Zeuglodon** to Subterranean Press via John Berlyne of Zeno Literary Agency.

GREGORY MAGUIRE's **Out of Oz**, the final novel in his Wicked Years series, went to Cassie Jones at William Morrow. Headline will publish in the UK.

James P. Blaylock (2009)

MIKE SHEPHERD's tenth, eleventh, and twelfth Kris Longknife novels went to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

KAREN LORD sold SF novel **The Best of All Possible Worlds** and a second book to Betsy Mitchell at Del Rey and Jo Fletcher at Jo Fletcher Books in the UK, at auction, via Sally Harding of the Cooke Agency.

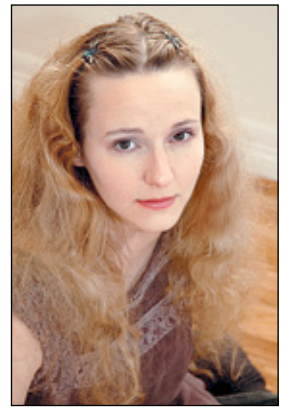
WESTON OCHSE will write **Seal Team 666** for Brendan Deneen and Peter Joseph of Thomas Dunne Books, based on a concept the latter two created.

STEVE PERRY sold three books in the Cutter's Wars military SF series to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace via Jennifer Weltz of the Jean Nagger Agency.

KARINA COOPER sold **Black Cherry** and another book to Esi Sogah at Avon via Laura Bradford of Bradford Literary Agency.

WALTER GREATSHELL sold **Enormity** to Ross Lockhart at Night Shade Books via Laurie McLean of Larsen/Pomada Literary Agents.

SEAN FERRELL's time travel novel **The Man in the Empty Suit** sold to Juliet Grames at Soho Press via Janet Reid at FinePrint.



Brenna Yovanoff (2010)

ALEX HUGHES sold two books in a dystopian thriller series to Jesse Feldman at Roc via Alexandra Machinist of Janklow & Nesbit.

MADELINE ASHBY sold **The Von Neumann Sisters** and another book to Marc Gascoigne at Angry Robot via Monica Pacheco of Anne McDermid & Associates.

SUSAN BETH PFEFFER sold **The Shade of the Moon**, fourth in the series begun with **Life As We Knew It**, to Karen Grove at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Children's via Susan Cohen at Writers House.

MARGARET STOHL sold two books in her new Icon science fiction series to Julie Schiena at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers via Sarah Burnes of the Gernert Company.

JACKSON PEARCE sold **Fathomless**, a modern retelling of ''The Little Mermaid'', for Julie Scheina at Little, Brown Children's via Jim McCarthy of Dystel & Goderich Literary Management.

K.D. McENTIRE sold YA novels **Reaper** and **Lost**, and books two and three in the paranormal romance trilogy begun with **Lightbringer**, to Lou Anders at Pyr via Joe Monti of the Barry Goldblatt Literary Agency.

BRENNA YOVANOFF sold ghost story **Paper Valentine** and another book to Ben Schrank & Jocelyn Davies at Razorbill via Sarah Davies of the Greenhouse Literary Agency.

SAUNDRA MITCHELL's **Mistwalker** and **Aetherborne** sold to Julie Tibbott at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt via Jim McCarthy of Dystel & Goderich Literary Management.

KAREN MAHONEY's YA **Beautiful Ghosts** went to Annie Eaton and Jessica Clarke at Random House Children's UK via Miriam

Kriss of the Irene Goodman Agency.

CECIL CASTELLUCCI sold duology **The Tin Star** and **A Stone in the Sky** – ***Casablanca*** set on a space station – to Nancy Mercado at Roaring Brook Press via Kirby Kim of William Morris Endeavor.

JOHN OTTE sold **Failstate**, about a superhero reality show, to Jeff Gerke at Marcher Lord Press via Amanda Luedeke of MacGregor Literary.

CLAUDIA GABEL & **CHERYL KLAM** sold futuristic thrillers **Elusion** and **Etherworld** to Katherine Tegen and Sarah Shumway at Katherine Tegen Books via Christy Fletcher of Fletcher & Company for Gabel and Esther Newberg of ICM for Klam.

TOM GRIEVES sold **Sleepwalkers** and **Witch** to Jane Wood at Quercus via Jonny Geller of Curtis Brown.

JOHN HORNOR JACOBS sold **The Twelve Fingered Boy** and two more books to Andrew Karre at Carolrhoda Lab via Stacia Decker of the Donald Maass Literary Agency.

ANNA JARZAB's **Tandem** and a second book sold to Francoise Bui at Random House Children's via Joanna MacKenzie of Browne & Miller Literary Associates.

JENNIFER ARMINTROUT sold YA **Cursed** to Kate Kaynak at Spencer Hill Press.

STEVEN ARNTSON sold YA fantasy **The Wrap Up List** and another book to Margaret Raymo at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Children's via Jenni Ferrari-Adler of Brick House.

WENDY HIGGINS sold paranormal YA **Sweet Evil** to Alyson Day at Harper Children's via Neil Salkind of the Salkind Agency.

MARTHA BROCKENBROUGH's **Ten Commandments for the Dead** sold to Arthur Levine at Arthur A. Levine Books in a pre-empt via Jill Corcoran of the Herman Agency.

NALINI SINGH sold **Archangel's Blade** and another Guild Hunter novel to Orion via Whitney Lee of the Fielding Agency on behalf of Elaine Spencer of the Knight Agency. Berkley Sensation will publish in the US.

KATIE REUS sold paranormal romance **Destined Mate** to Anne Leslie Tuttle at Harlequin via Jill Marsal of the Marsal Lyon Literary Agency.

ALYSSA DAY sold the first three in her League of the Black Swan series to Cindy Hwang at Berkley via Jim McCarthy of Dystel & Goderich Literary Management.

NATALIE WHIPPLE sold debut **Transparent** – "X-Men meets ***The Godfather***" – and a second title to Erica Sussman at HarperTeen via Anna Webman of Curtis Brown.

SUZANNE HARTMANN's first novel **The Race That Lies Before Us** sold to Ramona Tucker of Oak Tara via Terry Burns of Hartline Literary Agency.

First novelist **MICHAEL BOCCACINO** sold **Charlotte Markham and the House of Darkling**, described as "**The Turn of the Screw** meets **Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell** meets **Jane Eyre** and the lovechild of Neil Gaiman and Tim Burton," to Rakesh Satyal at Harper Perennial via Sandy Lu of the Lori Perkins Agency.

J. BARTON MITCHELL's first novel, SF **Conquered Earth**, went to Brendan Deneen at Thomas Dunne Books via Rosemary Stimola of Stimola Literary Studio on behalf of Stephenie Gisondi-Little.

EVIE MANIERI sold debut trilogy **Blood's Pride**, **Fortune's Blight**, and **Strife's Bane** to Stacy Hague-Hill at Tor and Jo Fletcher at Jo Fletcher Books in the UK via Becca Stumpf of Prospect Agnency.

MITZI SZERETO sold collection **Red Velvet and Absinthe: Paranormal Erotic Romance** to Brenda Knight at Cleis Press.

DELILAH DEVLIN sold nonfiction **Girls Who Bite: Lesbian Vampire Erotica** to Brenda Knight of Cleis Press.

Books Resold

CHARLES STROSS sold limited edition rights to his novella "Palimpsest" to Subterranean Press, to be published as a standalone. He turned in Laundry Files novel **The Apocalypse Codex** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

Books Delivered

ROBERT J. SAWYER turned in **Triggers** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

MAUREEN F. McHUGH turned in collection **After the Apocalypse** to Gavin J. Grant at Small Beer Press.

S.M. STIRLING handed in **The Tears of the Sun** to Ginjer Buchanan at Roc.

Maureen F. McHugh (2007)

Anthony Cheetham (1985)

Tim Pratt (2011)

SHARON SHINN delivered **Still Life with Shapeshifter** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

SIMON R. GREEN handed in **Live and Let Drood** to Ginjer Buchanan at Roc.

AMBER BENSON turned in **How to Be Death** in her Calliope Reaper-Jones series to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

E.E. KNIGHT delivered **Dragon Fate** to Ginjer Buchanan at Roc.

SUSAN SIZEMORE handed in **Personal Demon** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

MARK LAWRENCE turned in **King of Thorns** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

Publishing

ANTHONY CHEETHAM has left his position as associate publisher and member of the board of directors at Atlantic Books UK. He explains, "There wasn't a huge amount for me to do at Atlantic, and the projects that I had envisaged working on were not really happening because it has been a difficult year for the company." He retains a 7.5% stake in the business.

SARAH ODEDINA (who published all J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter novels) is leaving Bloomsbury Children's Books UK after 14 years. She will become managing director and publisher of a new children's fiction imprint at Bonnier, but plans to remain at Bloomsbury until a successor is found.

Media

Film rights to **POLLY SHULMAN**'s **The Grimm Legacy** were optioned by Dreamworks Animation via Bill Contardi on behalf of Irene Skolnick.

Film rights to **LOIS LOWRY**'s **The Giver** have been optioned by actor Jeff Bridges and producer Nikki Silver of On Screen Entertainment.

JOAN D. VINGE will write the novelization of film ***Cowboys & Aliens*** for Tor.

MARK MORRIS will write a novelization of Hammer horror film ***Vampire Circus*** for Georgina Hawtrey-Woore at Arrow in the UK via John Jarrold.

PETER DAVID turned in **Fable: Blood Ties** to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

TIM PRATT delivered Forgotten Realms novel **Venom in Her Veins** to Fleetwood Robbins at Wizards of the Coast. ■

McDonald and Landis Win Campbell and Sturgeon Awards

Kij Johnson (Judge), Ian McDonald, Nöel Sturgeon, Geoffrey A. Landis, Christopher McKitterick (Director)

Ian McDonald's **The Dervish House** (Gollancz/Pyr) won the 2010 John W. Campbell Memorial Award, and Geoffrey A. Landis's novella "The Sultan of the Clouds" (*Asimov's* 9/10) won the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for best short fiction of 2010. The awards were presented by the Center for the Study of Science Fiction, during the annual Campbell Conference, held July 7-10, 2011 at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. This is McDonald's second award from the Center; he won the Sturgeon Award in 2001 for "Tendeleo's Story".

Runners-up for the Campbell Award were: Second Place: **How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe**, Charles Yu (Pantheon). Third Place: **The Quantum Thief**, Hannu Rajaniemi (Gollancz/Tor).

Sturgeon Award runners-up were: Second Place: "The Maiden Flight of McAuley's *Bellerophon*", Elizabeth Hand (**Stories**). Third Place: "The Things", Peter Watts (*Clarkesworld* 1/10).

The theme of this year's Campbell Conference was "Alternating Currents: Frederik Pohl and Theodore Sturgeon". Special guests included Robin Wayne Bailey, M.C. Chambers, Dale

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Borders To Be Liquidated

Borders, once the nation's second-largest bookstore chain, will be liquidated. With no bidders interested in keeping the bookstore chain as a going concern, Borders chose to cancel the planned July 19 auction, and instead announced plans to submit a liquidation plan from Hilco and Gordon Brothers to the bankruptcy court for approval. Assuming approval goes smoothly, liquidation is set to begin July 22, 2011. The company's remaining 399 stores will close (though some prime locations may be taken over by other booksellers), and 11,000 employees will be let go. Closures are expected to be finished by September 2011. Borders expects to pay vendors for any expenses incurred during the liquidation process.

Hopes that private equity investor Jaham Najafi would purchase the chain were dashed shortly before the auction on July 19, 2011 when Najafi withdrew his offer. He would have purchased the company for $215 million and the assumption of $220 million in liabilities. There was also a provision that he would receive a $6.5 million consideration if another buyer outbid him. The terms gave him permission to continue operating the company or to liquidate it, and creditors balked at that provision, arguing that, if Najafi could break up the company and sell the pieces, they'd be better off accepting an offer of $252 million from a group of liquidators. Najafi reportedly offered to remove

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2010 British Fantasy Awards Finalists

Finalists for the 2010 British Fantasy Awards have been announced. Best Novel (The August Derleth Fantasy Award): **Apartment 16**, Adam Nevill (Pan Macmillan); **Demon Dance**, Sam Stone (The House of Murky Depths); **The Leaping**, Tom Fletcher (Quercus); **Pretty Little Dead Things**, Gary McMahon (Angry Robot); **The Silent Land**, Graham Joyce (Gollancz). Best Novella: "1922", Stephen King (**Full Dark, No Stars**); **Humpty's Bones**, Simon Clark (Telos); **Ponthe Oldenguine**, Andrew Hook (Atomic Fez); **Sparrowhawk**, Paul Finch (Pendragon); **The Thief of Broken Toys**, Tim Lebbon (ChiZine). Best Short Story: **The Beautiful Room**, R.B. Russell (Nightjar); "Fool's Gold", Sam Stone (**The Bitten Word**); "The Lure", Nicholas Royle (**The End of the Line**); "Otterburn", Jan Edwards (*Estronomicon* 12/10). "Something for Nothing", Joe Essid (**Catastrophia**); Best Collection: **Full Dark, No Stars**, Stephen King (Hodder & Stoughton); **The Gravedigger's Tale**: **Fables of Fear**, Simon Clark (Robert Hale); **Last Exit for the Lost**, Tim Lebbon (Cemetery Dance); **One Monster Is Not Enough**, Paul Finch (Gray Friar); **Walkers in the Dark**, Paul Finch (Ash-Tree). Best Anthology: **Back From the Dead**: **The Legacy of the Pan Book of Horror Stories**, Johnny Mains, ed. (Noose & Gibbet); **The End of the Line**, Jonathan Oliver, ed. (Solaris); **The Mammoth Book of Best New Horror Volume 21**, Stephen Jones, ed. (Robinson); **Never Again**, Allyson Bird & Joel Lane, eds. (Gray Friar); **Zombie Apocalypse!**, Stephen Jones, ed. (Robinson). Best Non-Fiction: Vincent Chong, **Altered Visions**: **The Art of Vincent Chong** (Telos);

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Shirley Jackson Awards Winners

Winners, Finalists, and Accepters: Richard Butner, Ellen Datlow, Nick Kaufman, Scott Edelman, Peter Straub, Caitlín Kiernan, Peter Dubé, Neil Clarke, Neil Gaiman

The 2010 Shirley Jackson Awards were presented July 17, 2011 at Readercon 22 in Burlington MA. The awards are presented for outstanding achievement in horror, psychological suspense, and dark fantasy fiction. Novel: **Mr. Shivers**, Robert Jackson Bennett (Orbit). Novella: "Mysterium Tremendum", Laird Barron (**Occultation**). Novelette: "Truth Is a Cave in the Black Mountains", Neil Gaiman (**Stories**). Short Story: "The Things", Peter Watts (*Clarkesworld* 1/10). Collection: **Occultation**, Laird Barron (Night Shade). Anthology: **Stories**, Neil Gaiman & Al Sarrantonio, eds. (Morrow). Joyce Carol Oates received a Board of Directors Special Award. ■

Readercon 2011 • Readercon 22, "The conference on imaginative literature," was held July 14-17, 2011 at the Burlington Marriott in Burlington MA. This year's guests of honor were Geoff Ryman and Gardner Dozois, with Mark Twain as memorial guest of honor. The convention included the usual array of panels, author readings, kaffeeklatsches, autograph sessions, talks, and discussions, plus various awards presentations, notably the Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery Award for a neglected author (Katherine MacLean), the Rhysling Awards for science fiction/fantasy poetry, and the Shirley Jackson Awards for dark fantasy and psychological suspense. Check back next month for photos and a report on this year's Readercon. For more: <http://readercon.org>.

Night Shade Probation Update • SFWA has released an update on the status of the Night Shade Books probation. The board "believes that Night Shade Books has met the following conditions for it to remain on the qualifying list after its probation period": it is no longer selling fiction in formats to which it has no rights and has paid authors whose rights were violated; it has instituted procedures and hired staff to ensure accurate accounting and recordkeeping; and there have been no cases of contractual violations with authors signed on since the probationary period began.

The final benchmark to end the probation requires Night Shade to fulfill "its contractual and financial obligations to the authors it has already published, including full and accurate accounting of royalties per contract, with payment of any royalties outstanding." SFWA acknowledged reports that Night Shade is making "great strides" in that direction, but notes that "through no fault of Night Shade Books, the initial probationary period ended before the publishing industry's July royalty statements are due.... The Board of Directors of SFWA discussed this with Night Shade and decided to grant the publisher an extension on their probationary period to give them time to send the July royalty statements." The extension will last until October 8, 2011, or until all statements have been sent, whichever comes first.

Once probation is lifted, fiction contracted during the probationary period will be retroactively qualify authors for SFWA membership. SFWA notes that, "Through this entire process, Night Shade Books has been open and communicative with SFWA, responding swiftly to any concerns that were brought to their attention. We look forward to their continued cooperation and hope to see them restored to full qualifying status in the future."

2011 Mythopoeic Awards Winners • The 2011 Mythopoeic Awards winners were announced during Mythcon XLII, held July 15-18, 2011 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Adult Literature: **Redemption in Indigo**, Karen Lord (Small Beer). Mythopoeic Fantasy Award, Children's Literature: The Queen's Thief series, Megan Whalen Turner, consisting of **The Thief**, **The Queen of Attolia**, **The King of Attolia**, and **A Conspiracy of Kings** (Greenwillow). Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies: **Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis**, Michael Ward (Oxford, 2008). Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies: **The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale**, Caroline Sumpter (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). For more: <www.mythsoc.org/awards.html>.

Free Encyclopedia of SF • The third edition of the **Encyclopedia of Science Fiction** will be published free online at <www.sf-encyclopedia.com> in association with British SF publisher Gollancz. The "beta" version will be launched in conjunction with Gollancz's 50th anniversary celebrations later this year, with the final text expected to be ready by the end of 2012. The beta version will run to some three million words – more than twice the length of the **Encyclopedia**'s second edition – with around 12,000 entries, to be extensively hyperlinked. This volume is edited by John Clute and David Langford, with Peter Nicholls as editor emeritus and Graham Sleight as managing editor, and various SF luminaries and scholars as contributing editors.

The first edition, edited by Peter Nicholls, appeared in 1979. The second edition, edited by Nicholls and John Clute, appeared in 1993. Both won Hugo Awards.

Malcolm Edwards of Gollancz's parent company Orion says, "We're delighted to have been able to facilitate the online publication of this monumental and definitive work – more than ever the single, reliable reference source which anyone interested in SF needs. As a contributing editor to that long-ago first edition, it's a particular pleasure to me to have been able to play a part in making this happen."

Amazon News • Amazon has made a deal to purchase rival British online bookseller The Book Depository for an undisclosed sum. The Book Depository saw profits of £2.3 million last year, with sales of £69 million as of June 2010. Amazon's VP of European retail, Greg Greeley, welcomed the Book Deposity "to the Amazon family," though the deal is still waiting for regulatory approval. The Book Depository expects to "continue to operate independently," but customers have worried online that prices might increase, or that The Book Depository's much-loved free shipping program will end.

In the US, Amazon has dropped their Amazon Associates program in another state. This time California associates (essentially third-party booksellers who operate via Amazon.com) got the axe, after a law was passed requiring Amazon and other online retailers with affiliates or subsidiaries in the state to collect sales tax. Amazon responded by launching plans to collect the 500,000 signatures necessary for a ballot referendum to repeal the law, though some legislators say the plan is unconstitutional. In the meantime, California joins Colorado, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island as states where Amazon won't do business with associates due to sales tax reforms. There's similar legislation being considered or pending in Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, New Mexico, Vermont, and Virginia as well.

Amazon will open a new packing warehouse in Rugeley, Staffordshire, UK, creating more than 900 new jobs, starting in September 2011. This is their seventh UK shipping facility.

Doctorow's *Little Brother* Adapted for Stage • Freelance director Josh Costello adapted Cory Doctorow's novel **Little Brother** for the stage and is about to start production for a show that will run in January and February 2012 at the Custom Made Theatre Co. in San Francisco CA. This is the second adaptation of Doctorow's novel, and it is unrelated to the production that ran in Chicago in 2009. Costello has written his version for a cast of three actors and plans to create an interactive relationship with the play's audience. He says: "At some point, I realized that the first-person narrative structure of the novel would allow for a stage adaptation in which the lead actor could speak directly to the audience, breaking the fourth wall.... I like this style of theatre – the point is not to fool the audience into forgetting that there are only three actors, it's to encourage the audience to use their own imaginations to actively participate in the telling of the story." Costello will be writing about the ongoing development of the production on his blog, Little Brother Live, at <https://littlebrotherlive.wordpress.com/>.

Sturgeon Papers to University of Kansas • The University of Kansas received a collection of Theodore Sturgeon's private letters, manuscripts, and other papers as a gift from the late writer's daughter, Nöel Sturgeon. Highlights from the collection include the original manuscript and multiple film script treatments of **More Than Human**, his notes and outline for one of the ***Star Trek*** episodes he wrote, and personal documents, correspondence, and story ideas and drafts shared with other major figures of 20th-century science fiction. The papers will become part of a definitive Theodore Sturgeon collection, to be established at the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas. KU is also home to the Center for the Study of Science Fiction, which presents the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for the best short science fiction at its annual Campbell Conference.

Book Exports Rise • According to the US Commerce Department, book exports increased by 1.2% in 2010, up to $2 billion. Imports increased by nearly 6%, to $1.85 billion. Exports to Canada went up by nearly 3%, to $960.3 million, and Canada remains the largest foreign market for US books. Imports from Canada dropped 14.3% to $201 million, while imports from Britain went up 8.6% to $212.5 million, making the UK number one for imports, after being in second place last year. Due to budget

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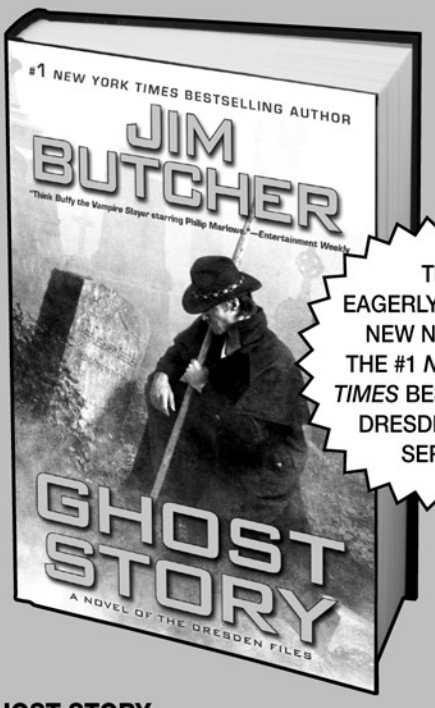

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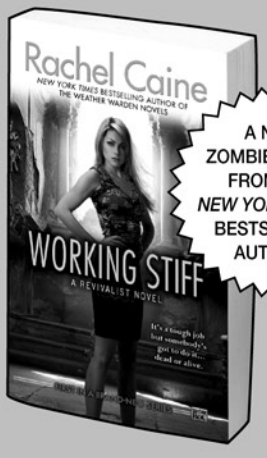

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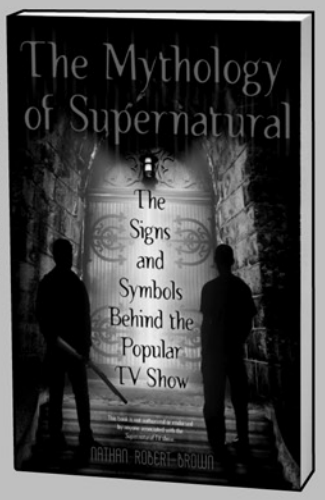

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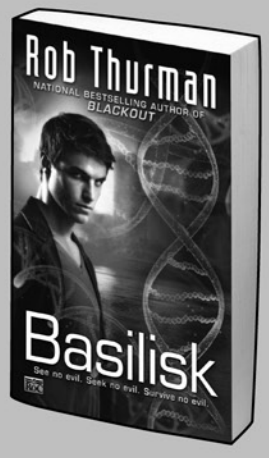

BASILISK
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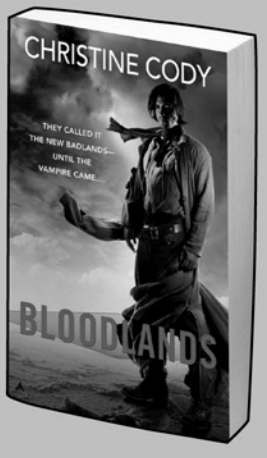

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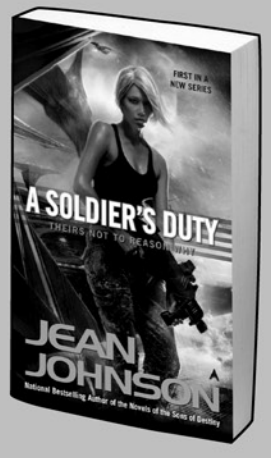

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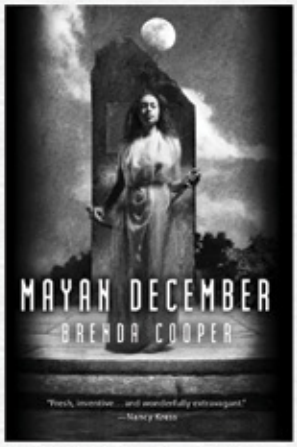

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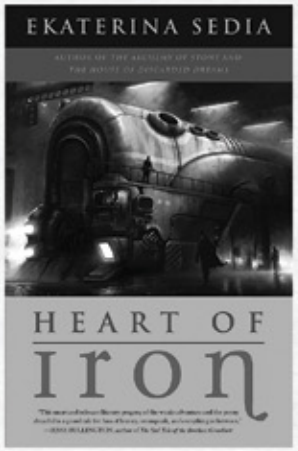

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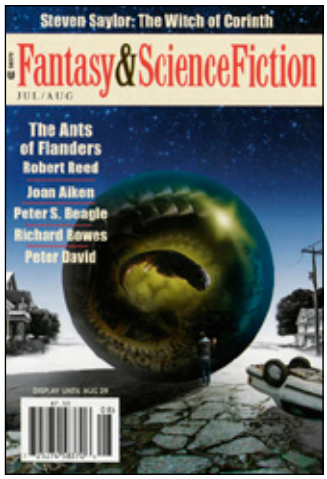
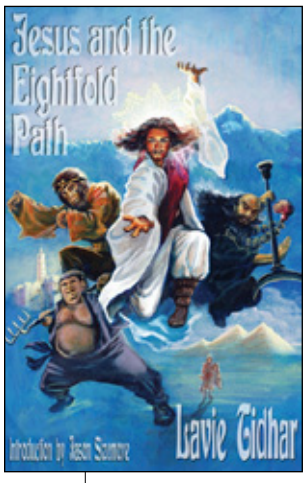
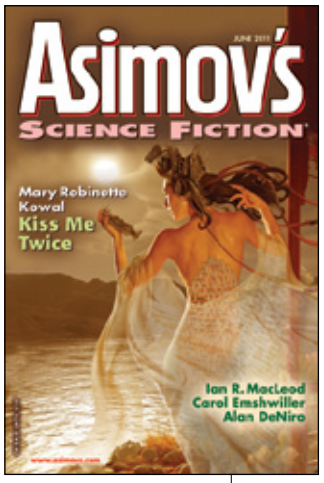
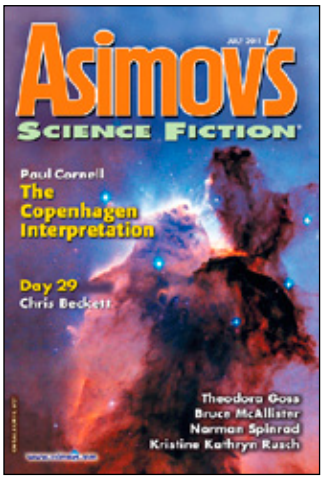








F&SF 7-8/11

Jesus and the Eightfold Path, Lavie Tidhar (Immersion Press) August 2011.

Asimov's 6/11
Asimov's 7/11

The July/August *F&SF* is a strong issue, after a couple of weak ones. The best story here, the best SF story *F&SF* has published all year, and perhaps the best story of any sort, is **Robert Reed**'s complex and inventive novella, "**The Ants of Flanders**". This is an alien invasion story, but a much more imaginative and conceptually daring one than the standard-issue ones like ***Independence Day*** or ***Battle: Los Angeles***, with vast and vastly strange cosmic forces battling it out on an Earth they hardly notice, and where humans are no more important to the outcome, or any more able to change it, than the ants caught in the middle of a WWI battlefield referenced in the title. The protagonist is a boy caught up in the battle and bizarrely transformed by accident, although even before his transformation, he is a most unusual boy with a strange psychological mindset – almost already an alien himself in some ways. The accidental process that totally remakes his body doesn't change that mindset, but only deepens his calm logic and detachment. It wouldn't surprise me at all to see this one on award ballots next year.

Also excellent is **Peter S. Beagle**'s loving homage to the late Avram Davidson, "**The Way It Works Out and All**", which features a closely observed and affectionately drawn Davidson as one of the protagonists (the other being Beagle himself), and which draws upon the mythology of one of Davidson's best novels, **Masters of the Maze**, where all of time and space is connected by strange subspace tunnels that can be blundered into anywhere, even on a New York City street, even in the Men's Room at Grand Central Station. Great fun. Fans of **Steven Saylor**'s long series of historical mysteries about the adventures of Gordianus the Finder, who investigates murder and mayhem in Ancient Rome, will be pleased to see Saylor back in the pages of *F&SF* for the first time since 1986 with "**The Witch of Corinth**", a story that sends a young Gordianus to the war-ravaged, haunted ruins of Corinth in 92 B.C. to unravel a deadly mystery. The fantastic element here is almost subliminal, but Saylor fans, among whom I number myself, will be pleased enough to see a new Gordianus story to excuse that, especially as the story is suspenseful and thick with historical atmosphere and local color. **Rob Chilson** contributes an autumnal story, "**Less Stately Mansions**", about an embattled farmer who struggles to hold on to his farm and keep it in the family as the world changes around him, especially as his presumptive heirs show no interest in taking it over and clearly will sell it as soon as he's gone. It's a story that could easily be taking place right now, but which is made science fictional by Chilson's effective use of a near-future setting.

Nothing else in the issue is of this level of quality, but there is some solid stuff. **Richard Bowes** takes us inside the enchanted realm where King Arthur sleeps, waiting to wake again, in "**Sir Morgravain Speaks of Night Dragons and Other Things**"; **Michael Alexander** tells a competent but somewhat routine time-travel story in "**Someone Like You**"; and **K.J. Kabza** threads a similar kind of interdimensional maze to the one in Beagle's story in "**The Ramshead Algorithm**", although the Kabza is occasionally confusing and the story is hard to really get into until at least a third of the way through. There's also a posthumous story by **Joan Aiken**, "**Hair**", which is creepy but has an even more subliminal fantastic element than some of the other stories here with subliminal fantastic elements.

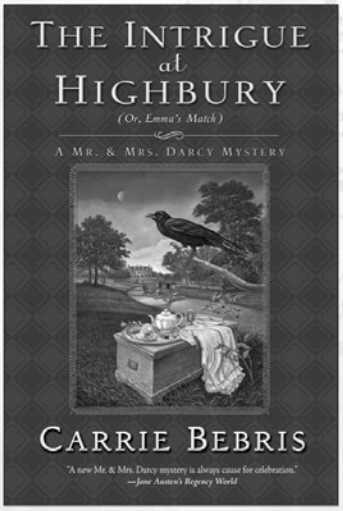
Lavie Tidhar is one of the most interesting new writers to enter the genre in some time, and his novella **Jesus and the Eightfold Path** (originally serialized online by Apex Publications in 2010, now a chapbook from Immersion Press) is another major work, although even harder to pin down by genre than is his usual work. A vivid and gonzo reimagining of the life of Jesus, it's less sacrilegious and more respectful than you would think a story whose working title was "Kung Fu Jesus" would be. Jesus does get to use his martial arts skills, learned under the tutelage of the Eastern Masters who taught him to follow the Eightfold Path, to beat up the moneylenders as he casts them from the Temple, defeat some attacking mummies, and so forth. Although all this would probably have been enough to get Tidhar burnt at the stake during the Middle Ages, he actually treats Jesus with a fair degree of reverence, as a man who really has been touched by the Divine (although *what* Divine remains open to question) and possesses immense preternatural abilities. Much of the gonzo humor, and much of the entertainment value, is carried by the Three Wise Men, here reimagined as former kings, wizards, and minor gods impressed into service by a superior supernatural force, and called Sandy, Monkey, and Pigsy; they get many of the best lines. There's also a supporting role for the slippery Jewish historian, Josephus Flavius. Perhaps what this reminds me the most of is the movie ***Big Trouble in Little China***, if the filmmakers had decided to tackle the Gospels as well as Chinese mythology. Although some of the more pious may be offended, most readers will probably find this hugely entertaining.

Asimov's has been having a good year, and the June issue is another strong one. The best stories here, although very different in tone, are both fundamentally similar in premise. They are both stories about the persistence of identity and what, beyond physical hardware, really makes a human a human. **Ian R. MacLeod**'s "**The Cold Step Beyond**" takes us to a far, far future where, in Arthur C. Clarke's famous phrase, the technology is so advanced as to be indistinguishable from magic, for an SF story that reads like high fantasy. It's a rather melancholy study of a bioengineered warrior sent to fight a monster who ultimately turns out to be not at all what she expected it to be. **Mary Robinette Kowal**'s novella "**Kiss Me Twice**" follows a detective in a high-tech future who is trying to solve a grisly murder with the aid of his AI partner Metta, a case complicated by the kidnapping (AInapping?) of the AI by persons unknown, and by the subsequent creation of an emergency backup AI, which soon raises the question of which is the "real" Metta. Although the Kowal, a futuristic police procedural, couldn't be more different in tone from the MacLeod, they both raise similar questions of identity – how do you determine who's a "real" person and who isn't in a world where humans co-exist with equally intelligent AIs, and with sentient but artificially created beings of all sorts, even ones with whom you share memories? How do

⏭ p. 44

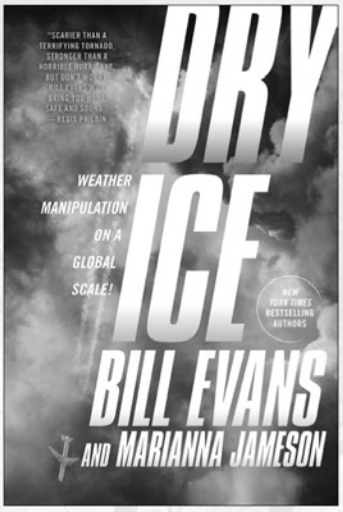
ADVENTURES FOR ALL

New from Tor



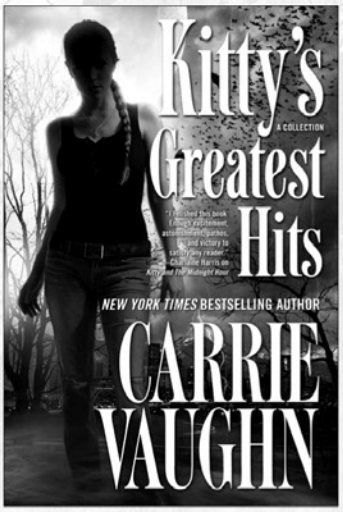
Mr. and Mrs. Darcy are looking forward to relaxing when their carriage is hailed by a damsel-in-distress. When the Darcys leave the carriage to aid the woman, their servants are knocked unconscious and precious family heirlooms are stolen. The Damsel has vanished into the night. With the help of friends, the Darcys realize that the theft may be connected to a murder, and they must act before they become victim to more than thieving.

"Of the many writers dabbling in the world of Austen's novels, Bebris is one of the best, and readers will be thoroughly hooked by her latest whodunit." —*Booklist*



In Antarctica sits TESLA, a secret weather "research" station designed by Greg Simpson for Flint Agro-Chemical. Only a few people know that TESLA is creating weather all over the globe, granting Flint huge harvests and punishing the company's rivals with hailstorms and drought. But when Greg is replaced, an encrypted program activates, sending fatal weather across the globe.

"A superb thriller. Suspenseful and shocking."
—Clive Cussler,
New York Times bestselling author, on *Category 7*



Kitty Norville, star of a *New York Times* bestselling series, is everybody's favorite werewolf DJ and out-of-the-closet supernatural creature. Over the course of eight books she's fought evil vampires, were-creatures, and some serious black magic. She's done it all with a sharp wit and the help of a memorable cast of werewolf hunters, psychics, and if-not-good-then-neutral vampires by her side. *Kitty's Greatest Hits* not only gives readers some of Kitty's further adventures, it offers longtime fans a window into the origins of some of their favorite characters.

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In theaters July 29, 2011 starring Daniel Craig and Harrison Ford.

1875. New Mexico Territory. A stranger (Craig) with no memory of his past stumbles into the hard desert town of Absolution. The only hint to his history is a mysterious shackle that encircles one wrist. What he discovers is that the people of Absolution don't welcome strangers, and nobody makes a move on its streets unless ordered to do so by the iron-fisted Colonel Dolarhyde (Ford). It's a town that lives in fear.

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Now, the stranger they rejected is their only hope for salvation. United against a common enemy, they will prepare for an epic showdown for survival.

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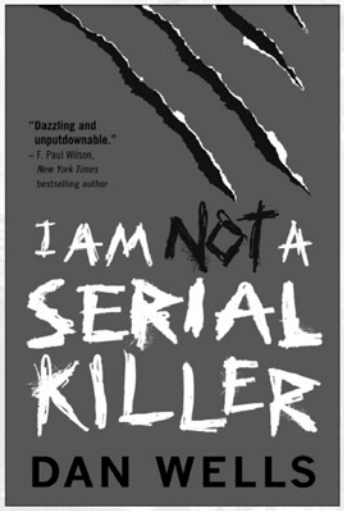

John Wayne Cleaver is dangerous, and he knows it. He's obsessed with serial killers, but really doesn't want to become one, and he works hard every day to be a good, normal person. Now, for the first time, John will have to confront a danger *outside* himself, a threat he can't control, a menace to everything and everyone he would love, if only he could.

★ **"An unabashedly gory gem."**
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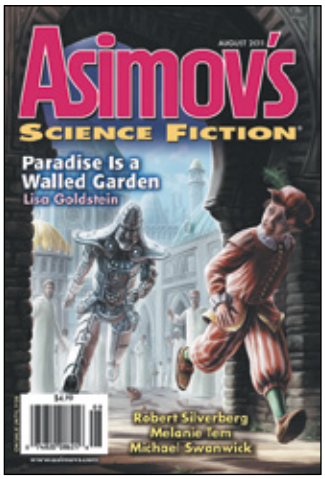
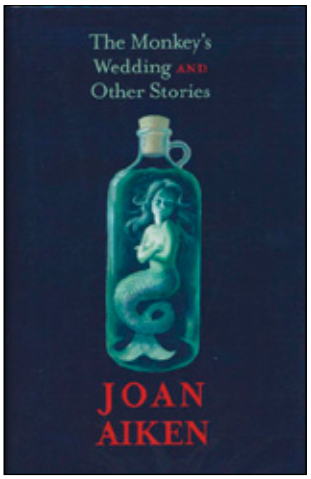
LOCUS LOOKS AT SHORT FICTION: RICH HORTON





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The Monkey's Wedding and Other Stories, Joan Aiken (Small Beer). April 2011

The cover story at *F&SF* for July/August is a strange SF piece from **Robert Reed**, "**The Ants of Flanders**". It's an alien invasion story, with a high school boy at the center of it, told in Reed's somewhat distanced and ironic voice. One side of the Earth is almost instantly subdued by an alien force, and the other side is more subtly invaded. The boy, Simon Bloch, a key participant, is witness to the original crash of an alien spaceship, and eventually more intimately involved with the invaders. Bloch is a well-realized character, and the ideas behind the story are intriguing – but somehow it never quite connected for me. Solid work, even strong work, but not a story that I could really love.

Peter S. Beagle's "**The Way It Works Out and All**" is a quite a different thing. It's an *homage*, a love letter almost, to Avram Davidson, with Beagle depicting a series of strange postcards from Davidson sent from implausibly widely-separated places, then a meeting in which Davidson shows Beagle the rather scary way he has learned to get around. I can't say for sure if you need to already be a fan of both writers to like this story, but I am, and I did. I also enjoyed **Peter David**'s "**Bronsky's Dates with Death**", in which a retired salesman, and compulsive talker, annoys Death when he starts compulsively talking about his upcoming demise. Somehow this puts Death off his game, and he can't take Bronsky when he should. The story is mostly amusing, but with somewhat dark overtones, as Bronsky is finally pushed to accept his fate.

But I think the best story this issue is from a less familiar name, **K.J. Kabza**. "**The Ramshead Algorithm**" is about a dysfunctional family drama at heart. Ramshead is outwardly a lazy playboy and, as such, the despair of his very rich father and his brother, the heir apparent to the father's empire. He's also perhaps a less-than-perfect role model for their rackety younger sister. But in reality, Ramshead's life on Earth conceals a more important job in something like the multiverse, which he accesses via a gate of sorts on his father's property. The story, though, isn't about the multiverse or even, very much, about the gate, but about the working out of the tensions between the children, their father, and their memories of the long absent mother. A bit mundane perhaps, but quite effective.

Best in the August *Asimov's* is "**For I Have Lain Me Down on the Stone of Loneliness and I'll Not Get Up Again**", which may be the longest title yet from **Michael Swanwick**, who has had a few pretty long titles before. It's about an American of Irish descent visiting the Old Sod, in a future in which aliens have brought prosperity and peace to Earth – at a cost, no doubt. He's about to head to the stars when he visits Ireland, and there he falls for a beautiful singer. He's almost ready to toss his future away and stay with her – when he learns that she's a member of a terrorist group aimed at pushing the aliens off Earth. She asks him to help… He's left with a harsh choice, not to mention the question of whether her love is real or aimed at manipulating him. The resolution makes sense, and the story really does work.

I really wanted to love **Lisa Goldstein**'s "**Paradise is a Walled Garden**", which is an alternate history set around the time of Elizabeth I in which the Moors kept control of Spain and developed a very advanced technological society. The heroine is Tip, a girl disguised as a boy, working in an English factory using "homunculi": essentially robots. The homunculi seem to rebel one day and, because Tip shows some understanding of them, she is included in the group Elizabeth sends to Al Andalus, from whom they have bought the homunculi, to try to understand what went wrong. There Tip learns a great deal, particularly about how hidebound her country is, even as she recognizes (a bit casually) that women in Al Andalus are not allowed much freedom or learning. She also gets involved in a treacherous plot involving agents of the rump state of Christian Spain, who apparently seek war against Al Andalus. It's quite exciting and fascinating stuff at first blush, but by the end I realized I didn't believe a word of it; not the implausibly advanced 16th-century technology, the portrayed geopolitics, characters like Elizabeth I, and especially not the contrived plot machinations. I'd happily forgive (to an extent) the first three (all of those failings are endemic to alternate history, often more egregiously so than here), but the failure of the workings of the story's plot really bothered me, despite Tip herself being a nice character I really rooted for. Indeed, what I've written seems overly negative – I liked reading the story a lot – but still – it simply doesn't convince.

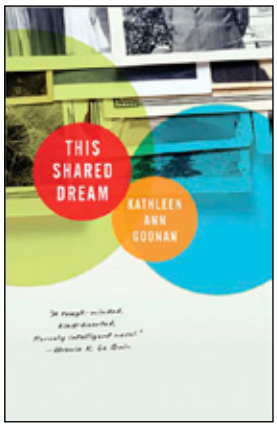
This issue also features an enjoyable Majipoor story from **Robert Silverberg**, "**The End of the Line**", in which a loyal assistant to the Coronal investigates the issue of Majipoor's native sentient species, the shapeshifting Metamorphs, in hopes of avoiding war; and "**Corn Teeth**" by **Melanie Tem**, a moving look at a young girl hoping to be adopted by her foster parents, who are aliens. The problem is, the girl's expectations are rather excessive.

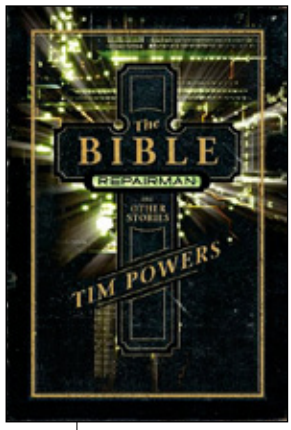
Interzone's May-June issue features a solid **Jon Ingold** story, "**Sleepers**", in which a priest's interviews with the dying grandson of one of the returned colonists from a failed expedition to Alpha Centauri slowly reveal a potential menace arising from the expedition. It's a quiet story with a hint of danger to it – or perhaps it simply portrays paranoia. I also enjoyed **Jason Sanford**'s story, wild as usual: "**Her Scientifiction, Far Future, Medieval Fantasy**", in which a young woman is trapped in a simulated world run by an AI that might be mad, and must chart a path between her duty to her father's memory, her duty to her long dead mother, and her desires for an independent life – to say nothing of the rights of the AI.

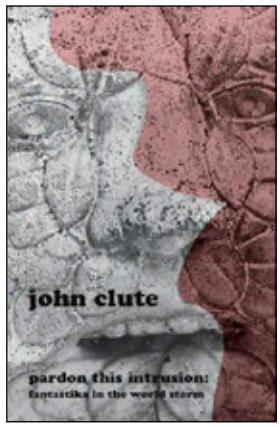
⏭ *p. 44*

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

August 9, 2032. K-2 falls to ATV. Brunei sportsman Abu Wadi summits the world's second highest mountain in a 599cc Kawasaki "Sherpa." The 8600 meter Himalayan peak is the highest yet conquered by an all-terrain vehicle.







This Shared Dream, Kathleen Ann Goonan (Tor 978-07653-1354-6, $25.99, 368pp, hc) July 2011.

The Bible Repairman and Other Stories, Tim Powers (Tachyon 978-1616960476, $14.95, 240pp, tp) September 2011. [Order from Tachyon, 1459 18th Street #139, San Francisco CA 94107; <www.tachyonpublications.com>.]

Paradise Tales and Other Stories, Geoff Ryman (Small Beer 978-1931520645, $16.00, 320pp, tp) July 2011. [Order from Small Beer Press, 150 Pleasant St. #306, Easthampton, MA 01027; <www.smallbeerpress.com>.]

Pardon This Intrusion: Fantastika in the World Storm, John Clute (Beccon 978-1-870824-60-6, £16.00, 370pp, tp) May 2011**.** [Order from Beccon, 75 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG, United Kingdom.]

I can think of few recent SF novels that more literally embody H.G. Well's old saw (from the closing pages of **The Outline of History**, but memorialized in a thousand commencement speeches) that "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe" than Kathleen Ann Goonan's **This Shared Dream**. It even offers a Wellsian title (think of **Men Like Gods** or **World Brain**) and a Wellsian passion for morally determined globalization. Yet Goonan's title – a deliberate counterpoint to her 2007 **In War Times**, to which this is a more or less direct sequel – is a quite literal description of the process by which her ambiguously utopian alternate history comes into being and is sustained. That process, embodied in a bold and unlikely combination of nanotech, brain physiology, and memory research called the Hadntz Device, was first introduced to us during WWII in **In War Times**, in which a hapless soldier and aspiring jazzman named Sam Dance encounters the mysterious gypsy scientist Eliana Hadntz, who had conceived of the device after a brilliant career that had brought her in contact with the great theoretical physicists of the 1920s and 1930s. Unbeknownst to him, Eliana has already recruited his future wife Bette to the cause of her invention (during Kristallnacht, we now learn) – which among other things has the capacity to split the world into alternate timelines. As that novel ended in 1970, Sam and Bette's eldest daughter Jill, radicalized by the violence and upheaval of the '60s, decided to use the device to return to Dallas in 1963 and prevent the Kennedy assassination, believing it would set the world on a better path.

Turns out it did, apparently. **This Shared Dream** takes place mostly in a 1991 in which Kennedy and Khruschev reached a disarmament agreement in 1964, the escalation of the war in Vietnam and the assassinations of King and Bobby Kennedy never happened, and the free exchange of scientific research led to the early development of the Q-phone, a nearly universal kind of super iPad based on quantum computing. But Q, as it's called for short, is also an outgrowth of the self-evolving Hadntz device, which is now up to something like its 50th iteration since WWII, even mysteriously showing up in breakfast-cereal toys during the 1960s. This utopian scenario exacts a price from the Dance family, however. As the novel opens, Jill – now a 41-year-old doctoral student who manages a bookstore and does work for the World Bank in DC – is haunted by memories of that other, more violent history when, for one example, her younger brother Brian was killed in a bombing mission over Cambodia during the Vietnam War. Brian, now a construction engineer, and the other younger sibling Megan, a memory researcher, were too young to remember the switch, but they are occasionally plagued by dreams which encode phantom memories of that other world.

Increasingly distressed by her dual memories – and by the unexplained disappearance of both their parents decades earlier – Jill tries to break into the now-abandoned family home, Halcyon House, convinced there are clues hidden there, but is injured and hospitalized, where she is diagnosed as suffering from PTSD and possibly even schizophrenia. This brings Brian and Megan to her support, but alienates her from her husband Elmore – an old SDS boyfriend from the '60s, now turned into a stuffy lawyer, like Tom Hayden gone Tea Party. Eventually Jill separates from him and moves into the house with her five-year-old son Stevie, who has taken to calling himself Whens, in a kind of prefiguring of his eventual role in the tale. It's not long before odd things begin to happen: an enigmatic man in a hat who seems to be shadowing the house, a bookstore client with an unusual interest in the family, the possibility that someone else is hiding out in the huge house along with Jill and Whens, even an attempted arson and kidnapping. Meanwhile, we learn that both Bette and Eliana Hadntz have learned to travel among various timestreams and eras, Bette as a kind of Wonder Woman (even with a magical Q-plane that seems to shift realities) and Eliana herself functioning something very much like a ***Doctor Who***vian Time Lord, manipulating history from various times and places.

This Shared Dream is packed with provocative ideas ranging from the value of Montessori education to nanotechnology, the nature of memory, and the possibility of controlled evolution, and Goonan structures her novel to ensure that these ideas get center stage, even at times at the expense of overcomplicating her plot, which has to juggle nearly a dozen major characters between multiple timestreams, two continents, and various historical periods from 1938 to 1991. The tight suspense that builds in the final chapters, when Jill and Whens are directly in peril, might have even provided the opening hook for a novelist less interested in ideas, with the backstory unfolding as a web of conspiracies (and there *are* conspiracy theories here, including the Kennedy assassination itself). Goonan, I think, is after bigger fish, raising the central ethical question of whether a controlled history, or an entire population unwittingly exposed to mind-altering technologies, is a worthwhile tradeoff to avoid our own catastrophic history. Goonan is careful not to present her altered 1991 as a prescriptive utopia, but she doesn't hesitate to convincingly portray our own past half-century as dystopian, and this is where her Wellsian, Montessorian educator sometimes takes over. Early on, Eliana, aided by "the vast computational power of Q," foresees that history is leading toward "global environmental disaster, increased proliferation of nuclear weapons and the will to use them, financial disasters of great magnitude, and widespread, willful ignorance of scientific education." That last may sound a bit like an anticlimax in such an apocalyptic list, but it's what Goonan is most passionate about in this passionate and moving novel. I'm not entirely convinced that Montessori schools can do that

much to save the world, but Goonan makes an intriguing case that something might, and the result is a rare novel that combines a darkly realistic vision of history with a dose of classic SF optimism about the fixability of the future.

For a field in which short fiction gets a higher profile than almost anywhere else, it's sometimes surprising to find how seldom some of the field's leading novelists visit this form. When Tim Powers's first Tachyon collection **Strange Itineraries** appeared in 2005, claiming to be ''comprehensive,'' it covered more than two decades of his career, yet featured just nine stories, including the now-classic ''Pat Moore'', later enshrined in Peter Straub's Library of America anthology **American Fantastic Tales**. His second Tachyon collection, **The Bible Repairman and Other Stories**, at first seems equally sparse with only six stories, but when you realize that they all originally appeared within the last five years, it begins to look as though, by his past standards, Powers is practically out of control with this short fiction thing. While the copyright page in this edition indicates that two of the stories, ''A Journey of Only Two Paces'' and ''A Time to Cast Away Stones,'' are published here for the first time, in fact the former appeared in shorter form in the 2009 Eastercon program book and the latter in a wildly expensive Charnel House edition last year. Two others, ''The Bible Repairman'' and ''A Soul in a Bottle'', appeared as standalones from Subterranean Press. It does seem fair to claim, then, that this book represents the first time these stories are widely available to all but the most devoted Powers collectors.

While it's again a rather slim volume, it's especially worth noting that, for the many admirers of the crypto-historical fantasies that Powers had commandeered as his own turf long before steampunk chugged into view, it features a major novella that revisits, and is a kind of sequel to, his award-winning fugue on the secret lives of the Romantic poets **The Stress of Her Regard** (1989). Since that's one of my own favorite Powers novels, I was particularly interested in ''A Time to Cast Away Stones'', which at first sounds like a generic Ecclesiastes title until you discover that it's quite literally what the plot entails, and that the stones aren't just any stones. The setting is 1824, after the deaths of Shelley and Byron, and the protagonist is Edward John Trelawney, a comparatively minor adventurer/poet (and apparently chronic liar) who accompanied Byron to join the fight for Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire. The facts of Trelawny's life (at least those he didn't make up from whole cloth) form the framework of the plot: his alliance with the freedom fighter Odysseas Androutsos, whose teenage sister he married; his harrowing survival, without medical care, of an assassination attempt, and most importantly his work in establishing and arming a mountain fortress in an almost inaccessible cave. This is all classic Powers material, and he makes the most of it, seamlessly inserting a supernatural plot in which the power-hungry Trelawny seeks out some of the same ancient forces that in the earlier novel haunted Byron and Shelley, both of whom sort of make appearances here (if you count Shelley's jawbone and Byron's toe). Trelawny, portrayed as obsessed, utterly foolish, and almost inadvertently heroic, is a brilliant choice of protagonist, and lends the story a kind of antiheroic complexity that actually deepens the vividly realized world of revolutionary Greece from **The Stress of Her Regard**, and is far more than a simple afterword to that novel.

The other five tales are largely variations on ghost stories. The title character Torrez in ''The Bible Repairman'', set in an alternate present in which ghosts are subject to kidnapping and terrifying ransom demands, makes his living burning out passages from Bibles whose owners don't want to be constrained by particular moral edicts involving such things as greed or adultery. But his former profession was that of a freelance ghost-kidnapping hostage negotiator, and he finds himself called out of retirement by a rare case in which a living girl has been kidnapped. While the selective morality implied in the story's title makes for rather blunt satire, its real power derives from its odd blend of horror, pathos, and comedy. Torrez's own deceased daughter is haunting his answering machine and arguing with callers, while we learn that those who give in to ransom demands will ''have lost a lot of memories, and be unable to feel affection, and never again dream at night.'' Two of the stories are set in Powers's particular version of a haunted LA: Hollywood in the case of ''A Soul in a Bottle'', a story whose protagonist meets a young girl at Grauman's Chinese Theater who turns out to be the ghost of a famous poet, possibly murdered by her sister; and one of those hidden-away streets disguising mysterious mansions in ''A Journey of Only Two Paces'', in which an executor of a friend's will finds himself taken to such a house to face a bizarre ritual. Interestingly, both of these main characters are book dealers, giving us a glimpse into another of Powers's passions.

The most elegant of these stories in terms of classic ghost story form, besides ''A Soul in a Bottle'', is ''Parallel Lines'', in which an aging woman finds herself at loose ends after her twin sister dies – until the sister begins sending ominous messages by directing her handwriting and enlisting the aid of a neighbor girl who had run errands for the sisters. Powers recognizes that ghosts may be as much a product of grief as of supernatural forces, and the story sensitively literalizes the need to overcome the temptations of grief while recognizing the need for self-preservation, and the ending is utterly satisfying. The ghosts in ''The Hour of Babel'' are actually time travelers trying to figure out what important event took place in a particular pizza joint in 1975 – a variation on the ''unremembered event'' mystery that has provided tantalizing plots for writers from Arthur Machen to M. John Harrison to Peter Straub – but the story is somewhat cluttered by the parodic SF machinery Powers introduces, with its hand waving references to ''charged tachyons'' and ''Lorentzian ether headwind.'' The pizza parlor is as evocative as any of Powers's magical settings, and the story features his familiar astutely observed vignettes of everyday life, such as a homeless girl who sneaks in to eat leftover pizza slices before they're thrown out, so in the end it's a satisfying tale, even if it lacks the clean lines of ''Parallel Lines'' or the epic sweep of ''A Time to Cast Away Stones''. Powers knows the ways we get haunted – by ambition, greed, loss, and heartbreak – and you finish reading this handful of beautifully crafted tales wishing he'd tell us more.

Like Powers, Geoff Ryman's short fiction has seemed so distinctive, and has been so often award nominated over the past couple of decades, that it comes as something of a surprise to realize there's so little of it, or that the sixteen stories in his new collection **Paradise Tales** – his first since the four novellas gathered in **Unconquered Countries** way back in 1994 – comprise all but a handful of the stories he's published since. Some of Ryman's high profile may come from his generous presence at conventions, and some may derive from his association with movements such as Mundane SF or the genre's growing multicultural sensibility (a trend he shares with writers as diverse as Ian McDonald and Nnedi Okorafor), but for the most part, as these stories make evident, what is most distinctive is the passionate, lyrical, sometimes sardonic voice of one of the most deeply committed writers the field has seen in a generation.

Ryman's reputation as a multiculturalist – one of the first SF writers to persistently remind us that futures are not confined to the familiar Anglo-American axis – is most often associated with Cambodia, a recurrent inspiration for his fiction from the early **The Unconquered Country** (1986) to his most recent novel **The King's Last Song** (2006), and Cambodia inevitably shows up here as well, most notably in the masterful (if somewhat controversial) ghost story ''Pol Pot's Beautiful Daughter'' – here retitled from its original appearance as ''Pol Pot's Beautiful Daughter (Fantasy)'', which re-imagines the real-life daughter (a rather sad figure, by most accounts) as a glamorous party girl determinedly oblivious of her father's crimes until her computer printer begins spewing out images of his myriad victims. While the narrator repeatedly reminds us that ''This is a completely untrue story about someone who must exist'' (rendering that parenthesis in the original title a bit redundant), the story disturbed

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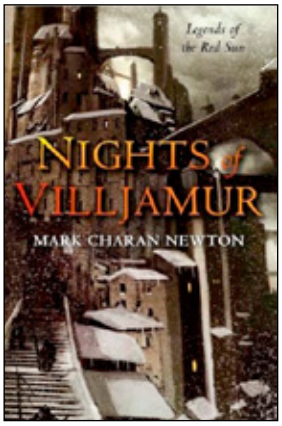
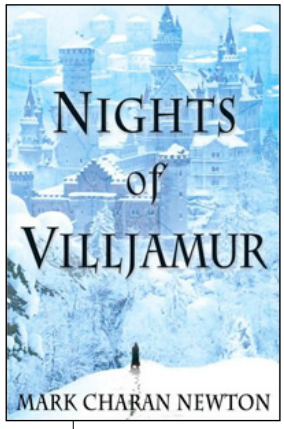
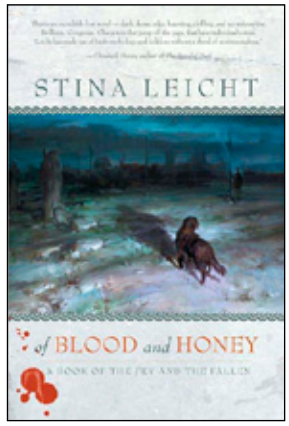
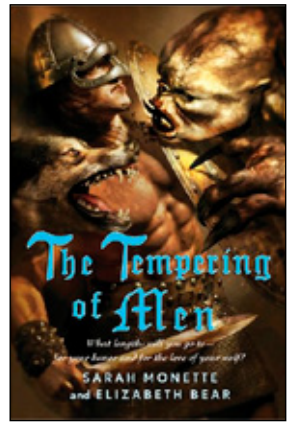
THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

August 3, 2076. New Veterans Day. Invoking her powers as Commander-in-Chief, President Junni inducts 228 million "draftees" into the National Guard. Their honorable discharge in 24 hours will guarantee medical care for all Americans through the Veterans Administration.









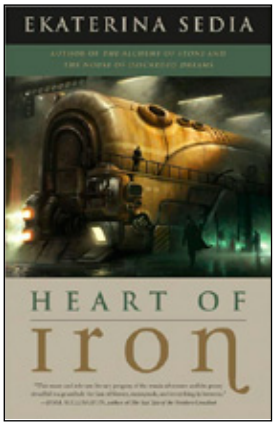
Nights of Villjamur, Mark Charan Newton (Macmillan/Tor UK 978-0-230-71258-4, £16.99, 451pp, hc) June 2009. (Ballantine Spectra 978-0-345-52084-5, $26.00, 437pp, hc) June 2010. Cover by David Stevenson.

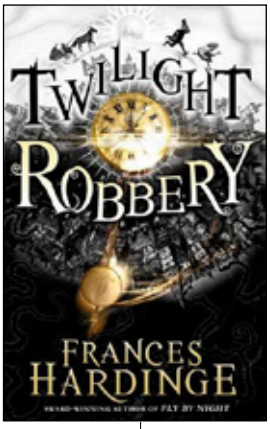
Of Blood and Honey, Stina Leicht (Night Shade Books 978-1-59780-213-0, $14.99, 300pp, tp) February 2011. Cover by Min Yum. [Order from Night Shade Books, 1661 Tennessee St. #3H, San Francisco CA 94107; <www.nightshade-books.com>.]

The Tempering of Men, Sarah Monette & Elizabeth Bear (Tor 978-0-7653-2470-2, $25.99, 304pp, hc) August 2011.

Heart of Iron, Ekaterina Sedia (Prime 978-1-60701-257-3, $14.95, 312pp, tp) August 2011. Cover by Marcin Jakubowski. [Order from Prime Books, PO Box 83464, Gaithersburg MD 20883; <prime@prime-books.com>.]

Twilight Robbery, Frances Hardinge (Macmillan UK Children's Books 978-1-4050-5539-0, £9.99, 525pp, tp) March 2011. Cover by James Fraser.] As **Fly Trap**, Frances Hardinge (HarperCollins 0-06-088044-6, $16.99, 584pp, tp) June 2011.





Whether published now or appearing previously and only just brought to my attention, all of these books should provide a forthright antidote to the heat and the mindless spirit of late summer. Prepare to explore harsh domains!

Mark Charan Newton's **Nights of Villjamur** seems to have slipped under my radar last year, but this excellent novel finally reached me in advance of sequel **City of Ruin**, which I plan to review next month. This time, I'll join the enthusiastic chorus for a work that deserves all the favorable notice it can get. It may not be a first novel as the promos say (*that* was **The Deep**, from 2008), but it's set in the same world and begins a trilogy whose hybrid SFnal/fantastic planet pays tribute to Jack Vance's tales of the Dying Earth as well as even more seminal genre fiction, interwoven with myths that could date back millennia.

On a distant world where the two moons have different sizes, the sun is long past its prime, and the urban architecture sports sophisticated relics from an age where other creatures ruled, humans may hold the obvious power now. Still, some exotic beasties linger in plain sight, like the man/bird hybrid *garuda* which currently kills felons, and *banshees* whose cry announces each sentient being's death (figures inspired by Asian and Irish lore, respectively). As the capital city of a once-voracious empire, Villjamur seems threatened on all sides: from probable inner treachery, preliminary raids by outside forces, as well as the early stages of a planet-wide ice age known as The Freeze.

In the prologue, elite military group The Night Guard is ambushed while on an expedition to a bleak northern island; few will return to try to figure out what hit them. Due to the worsening weather, refugees from the north are flocking into refugee camps that surround the city while its ruling Council debates what to do with them. Under the guise of potential sanctuary, devious and ruthless private schemes are being hatched. And, on the even more intimate level of scenes in Chapter One, a politician's lusty affair with a local woman (an unusual combination of whore and visual artist) soon leads to his murder.

Amid the interplay of investigations, ranging from a Guard's quiet pursuit of traitors to that murder mystery (probed by something like a private eye), Newton gradually reveals an extraordinary city and realm during a time of accelerating change. He gives some insights into a prehuman past touched with the stuff of fantasy, and provides more than simple black and white motives for an expanding cast of "villains" – one with what may be a noble motive, others outright bad guys, and even a scientist/techno-magician who bears some resemblance to Doctor Victor Frankenstein.

For all the unearthly aspects of the tale, the sordid mess of city life and politics helps drive some of its plots. At times Villjamur seem more urban than fantastic, like one discreetly sleazy district whose shops are "high-end purveyors of drugs and erotica, where you could apparently find 'love potions' conducive to controlled rape." Inspector Jeryd reflects that "as long as you had enough money you could get whatever you wanted... wander these streets and become defined by your fetishes."

While **Nights of Villjamur** narrowly averts its escalating threats of chaos and disaster, more dangers clearly await in sequel **City of Ruin** and another volume to come. I look forward to whatever Mark Charan Newton has to offer, for he's already a master of the SF/fantasy hybrid.

Of Blood and Honey, a debut which appeared earlier this year, begins A Book of the Fey and the Fallen with uncompromising force: literally so in the first chapter when teenage protagonist Liam gets caught up in a street riot in Londonderry/Derry, Northern Ireland in 1971, as relations between England and Northern Ireland are rapidly deteriorating, and he's hauled off to prison camp. The terrible experiences he undergoes there have the harsh ring of truth, even if their results are supernatural.

In Stina Leicht's alternate history, Irish struggles between pro- and anti-Brits, Protestants and Catholics, are only the most public signs of conflict. The Inquisition still pursues a deadlier foe: uncanny creatures collectively known as the Fallen. Whatever distinctions old folklore may have introduced have been lost, and the Church simply regards all sentient nonhuman beings as

demonic. But Liam's unknown and long-absent father is one of the Fey (AKA Fair Folk), and in this baffled, typically profane teen stress awakens an inherited ability to shapechange. He becomes a ferocious Pooka – nothing at all cutesy about this maddened, deadly man-beast.

Liam survives several stints in prison, marries and gets a job as a cab driver whose occasional jobs for the IRA aren't surprising, considering what he's been through *and* the era – still the '70s. **Of Blood and Honey** evokes the grungy hopes and pleasures of a blue-collar twenty-something in the Belfast of those times, in casual scenes like one where he waits in line with his young wife outside a pub/music club to see band The MacMillan Five and reflects, "Supposedly, the drummer had once played with Bad Company, but Liam often heard talk like that from musicians and most of it was shite."

Unlike the typical half-Fey whose Talent gradually manifests and develops, often with links to royalty and intimations of some great Task ahead, he doesn't really understand the nature of the "red anger" that occasionally grips him. He just knows that it comes from being the bastard son to something that's not human. (Like Jekyll after episodes as Hyde, he tends not to recall what he's done or in what form.) But Liam's childhood in the Catholic confessional makes him feel guilty enough when a midbook stint as driver for an IRA robbery leads to an unplanned murder. A community priest sympathizes with his woes and doubts, and is militant enough to find justifications for the violence.

On the grander level (both spatial and temporal) of war against the Fallen, another priest views Liam as potentially useful for his own quasi-political project, as an example of the difference between Fey and Fallen, which the Church has largely forgotten, even though *both* forms of "monster" can be found in Belfast, and only the skulking Fallen pursue a dark agenda. Such amnesia about supernatural distinctions may seem a bit unlikely, unless some continental Party of Dante ruthlessly suppressed mere Celtic folklorists centuries ago, but when the narrative briefly strays to a conclave in Paris this man's bold revisionist spirit is perfect for the era.

Lyrics from "Johnny Appleseed" by Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros, lauding Martin Luther King and "the chimes of freedom," serve as a kind of coda to the novel – and by that point we can see why. Although Liam is no Rosa Parks, he's drawn into more than one great cause. **Of Blood and Honey** is a dark, sardonic Irish take on several kinds of conflict, mingled with a bit of hope.

In **The Tempering of Men**, which follows **A Companion to Wolves** (reviewed in #561), Sarah Monette and Elizabeth Bear continue their saga of a returning ice age in harsh regions where a few humans touched by magic bond with giant wolves, as men war with Trolls and other groups of men. Despite the host of medievalesque Nordic names and terms, the prose has the crisp eloquence of this early battle scene:

> A cry went up from the back of the press, the howl of wolves and the bellow of men, the horrid ecstatic clatter of axes on bucklers and breastplates. The rearguard was in place. The clamor swept forward, and as the cry reached Vethulf he took it up, head thrown back, Kjaran howling beside him, the press of trellwolf and wolfcarl bodies on each side rocking forward and back in abrupt eagerness. The waiting wore men down, made their bones ache with anxiety, until the splashing terror of open war could come as a relief.

The writing does not lag during an extended interval of peace, when a new settlement rises from the ashes of the old, man-wolf pairs break and form again, and a subgroup splits off for an expedition south with no plans for later invasion. Even readers avid for more warfare should find all of this absorbing (both with and without fantasy), as threats and marvels arise in alternating plotlines.

Men can also be tempered – alloyed, improved, made sharper in various ways – by non-military experience of strange cultures. These include both contemporaries from far places and Others much more old and alien, not all of them the vicious "Trolls" they've been mistaken for. Even among humans, ideas of life expectancy differ widely between this book's equivalents of Norse and Romans: a discovery that opens *some* minds to a more complex world, while bigots who favor their own pantheon just rant about witches in control of monstrous beasts and want to burn them all.

At the very beginning, we're informed "Vethulf and Skjaldwulf did not get along." These co-leaders (under one general) of the little band whose magic can turn as violent as the love for their animals is strong have very different personalities, aims, and ways of pursuing them. After each goes through his own unique trials and forms of education – some quite rough – we can see how they've changed, even as their world and its clashing faiths, cultures and forms of sentience change in our understanding.

Since **The Tempering of Men** is a middle book, there's bound to be more violence, magical and otherwise, but even in the wilds of an increasingly frozen North, bloodshed need not be the only response to changing times.

Compared to last year's powerful **The House of Discarded Dreams**, Ekaterina Sedia seems mainly to be having fun in the steampunk adventure/novel of manners **Heart of Iron**, whose alternate-historical Russian setting also has no evident connection to the mad post-Soviet world in **The Secret History of Moscow** (2008). A relatively benign revolution has introduced progress to this land without clamping down on the social life of its well-to-do as it exchanged tsar for emperor. Even though the action moves from the icy streets of St. Petersburg through bleak wilds on the way to China (via the railway known as the Heart), the mood is very different from that of the books discussed above.

First-person narrator Sasha sets the tone of her "memoir" at the outset: "I have been blessed by several good fortunes, and I have no doubt that it is this constellation of luck and circumstance – at least in part – that allows me to write these words." Though orphaned and raised by her aunt Eugenia, at the age of 18 she is scheduled for both her social debut at a ball and entry into university as one of the first female students in an unsettling world of men, "Most... not noble, only sons of merchants and engineers."

As one kind of outsider she falls in with another, a small group of Chinese, only to have some of them "disappear." Both Sasha's schooling and her somewhat reluctant entry into Society give way before her quest to find out just what's going on as she gets caught up in the schemes of two Brits: Jack (a fellow student who *may* by a gallant spy) and the alarming Dame Florence Nightingale (a major player in these foreigners' Secret Service).

With its young, insecure heroine learning about both herself and her not-entirely-mundane world in the midst of travels and perils, this doesn't have the tongue-in-cheek assurance of Gail Carriger's "Parasole Protectorate" fantasies. But it evokes the feminine perspective of past times with its own special eloquence. Here's Sasha on choosing the fabrics for a gown, opting for

> a silver-gray taffeta, with just a hint of pearly sheen. I never understood how people could become so enchanted by fabric until that day – looking at that taffeta was like looking into the autumn sky over St. Petersburg, at clouds so low they tore on the cathedral crosses and the Admiralty spire.... I asked for white lace, to remind me of the frothy water whipped by the rising submarine hulls.

Yes, submarines (as noted, there's steampunk here). Her aunt comments, "A good color for you – it reminds me of a sword blade."

After the tale really takes off, I had some problems with a plot that keeps the enigmatic Jack absent for much of the later chapters and then crams together its climactic events with a rather unseemly haste. (Sasha lacks the flair for pacing of her favorite novelist, James Fennimore Cooper.) But **Heart of Iron** does bring an appealing combination of eloquence and action to an alternate-historical novel set in northern climes.

In YA novel **Fly Trap** (UK title **Twilight Robbery**), Frances Hardinge provides a sequel to **Fly By Night**. This is another adventure novel of sociopolitical circumstance and potential change in a city that could belong to Britain in the age of Samuel Johnson – if that country had never adopted the familiar Christian religions or embarked on imperialist ventures far beyond its borders, preferring to look inward, developing quirky beliefs and folk customs from earlier times into the unique system of "name days," while granting substantial powers to its surviving guilds.

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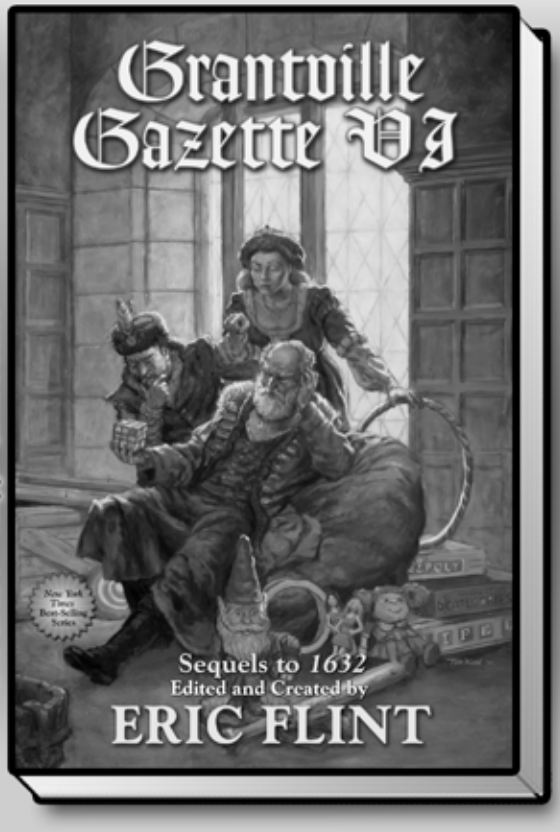
THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

August 23, 2112. Yellow grass tops Donner Pass. Alarmed biologists fear that the mutant graminoid, which has been spreading west from Yucca Mountain since the repository was reopened in April, will cover the Central Valley within a year.



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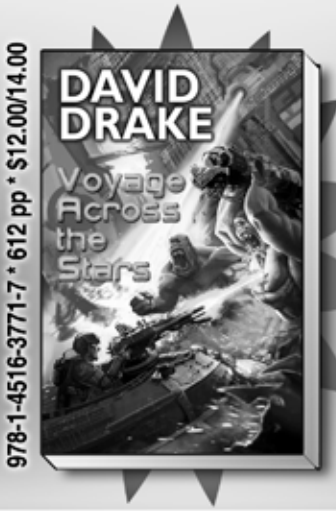

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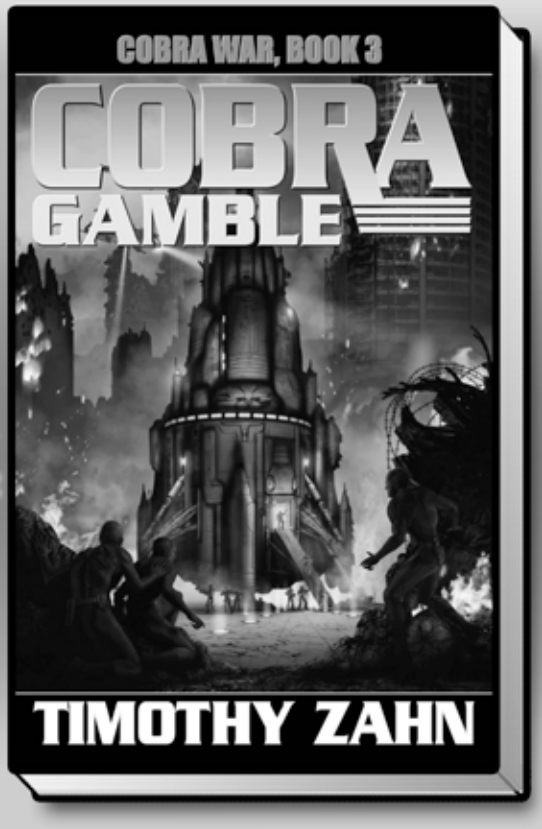

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This Shared Dream, Kathleen Ann Goonan (Tor 978-0-7653-1354-6, $25.99, 367pp, hc) July 2011.

Rule 34, Charles Stross (Ace 978-0-441-02034-8, $25.95, 356pp, hc) July 2011.

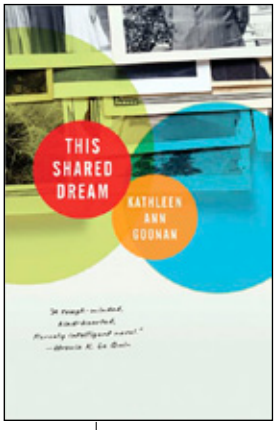
SHORT TAKE

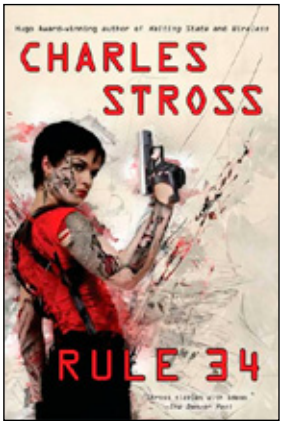
Angel of Europa, Allen Steele (Subterranean Press 978-1-59606-412-6, $35.00, 90pp, hc) August 2011. Cover by Ron Miller.

Kathleen Ann Goonan's **This Shared Dream** is a direct sequel to **In War Times** (reviewed in June 2007), if we understand that in the complex universe(s) of its setting calculating a value for ''direct'' is a tricky business. The first book took us through WWII and its aftermath, up to the early 1960s, as experienced by engineer/soldier Sam Dance, his friend Wink, and eventually Sam's wife Bette (OSS, then CIA, and never fully deactivated), and the Dance children. What made the story of Sam, Wink, and Bette more than an ordinary war story (as though such a creature could exist) is what happened when Hungarian polymath Eliani Hadntz got them to activate her Device, which was meant to remake history and somehow create a timeline in which wars and Holocausts could not occur and human nature itself would be transformed.

The new volume is mostly the story of the Dance children and grandchildren and the worlds spun out by the Hadntz Device. The 20th century is full of hinge events: Berlin was taken by the Soviets, or by the Allies; John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated, or not; the Cuban Missile Crisis led to nuclear disarmament, or nuclear war. Eliani Hadntz and Bette and Sam Dance and Wink move through and across this complex of histories, while the Dance children do or do not harbor memories of strange pasts and adjust accordingly – or don't. Multiple viewpoints thread the interwoven (not to say tangled) plotlines, but if there is a central protagonist it is eldest daughter Jill, who knows the most about the multiplicity of histories (since she participated in some of the multiplying). She is also the one most damaged by the stresses of hanging on to a sense of self in a world from which her parents have vanished and which does not always seem to be metaphysically stable.

In a 1991 that is not ours, Jill is 41, married, a mother, a former comix artist, an international banking executive, a bookstore owner, a doctoral candidate, and on the verge of a breakdown and a divorce. When the breakdown does come and lands her in a mental hospital, she is visited by her parents (who have hurried in from a fancy party across the Atlantic in another timestream via an impossible Underground) and then by another mysterious figure. When Jill gets better and moves back into her old family home, Halcyon House, there's a Walking Man who seems to be watching the neighborhood. There's a (metaphorical) ''werewolf'' whose relationship to familial and overarching histories is even more troubled than Jill's. There are break-ins and stalkings and arson. Eventually, she and we discover who is shadowing her and her siblings, what they're up to, and the answers to various Mysterious Goings On.





But melodrama and conspiracy are not really at the center of this novel, even if the Goings On are of considerable significance. When they were young, Jill, her brother Brian (who died in the Vietnam War in our timestream but not in this one), and her sister Megan (now an expert on and researcher into the nature of memory) played with a version of the Hadntz Device configured as the Infinite Gameboard – and changed history. Now that Jill has moved back to Halcyon House, the Board resurfaces, as do other manifestations of the Device. But the Dance grandkids – especially fearless, perceptive Stevie (who renames himself Whens) and preternaturally musical Zoe – hardly need direct contact with a Device to express their special natures and talents, and their sections of the book are particularly charming and indicative of where the whole process is heading.

The label ''alternate history'' does not quite do justice to the book's plot, let alone its thematics or its science fictional operations. The Hadntz Device, like most time/probability machines, is a black-box enabling device, in this case generating a whole series of second chances for the bloody 20th century. But it is not merely a time-tinkering widget, nor is it the only black-box technology operating in Jill's 1991. The quantum-computational/communications network called Q fills the niches of cell phone and Internet and not only constitutes an artificial intelligence, but is somehow tied to the Device, and thus the neuroplasticity that sister Megan sees as the way out of humanity's deeply embedded irrationalities. Combine it with black-box nanotechnology and you have a magician's hat full of miracles out of which pops Jill's answer to how to save the world: the self-growing, adaptive, more-than-Montessori pod school. *This* is the central Idea of the novel, a mechanism designed to foster and preserve the child's ability to learn and change, to make a world full of Whens and Zoes. If only, Goonan's characters reason, we could not only provide traditional and Montessorian moral education to children, but somehow trigger in adults the ability to re-form their interior intellectual and emotional environments, we would be free to tackle our problems in a rational manner rather than with the old tools of tribalism and violence. Think of them as the Montessori Schools of Isher.

But the novel is not a tract, nor does time spent with it feel like time spent in a classroom. The characters (especially the children) offer interesting internal environments to wander, and there is a wonderful sense of physical and cultural place: various Washingtons, a Havana unscathed by Cold War conflicts, and especially the aptly named Halcyon House, an embodiment of the Dance-family personality and practically a character itself:

> Zoe sat cross-legged on the old floral rug in the Halcyon House living room, a comfortable, sprawling, square room of deep chairs and couches flanked by an eclectic mix of tables and reading lamps, the upright piano, and a fireplace centered on the back wall. The wall was filled with deep, spacious shelves, and opened, on one side, through French doors, onto the house-long screened-in porch.

The house is untidy but rich, crammed with books and music, with an attic full of memories and a set of secret doors and passages that only Sam and Bette know about. I want to live there. The book is generous and hopeful in the face of all the evidence of humankind's capacity for folly, tribalism, violence, destruction, and general badassery, and I would like to live there, too.

Charles Stross has made a career (or a chunk of one) out of mixing elements of science fiction/fantasy and the mystery/thriller traditions that satisfy the expectations and demands of both genre families. While the crime-syndicate and spy-thriller aspects of the Merchant Princes and Laundry series are arguably subordinated to their SF/F machineries, **Rule 34** is a full-on, fully integrated science-fictional police procedural. Set some dozen years hence in an evolving but still recognizable Edinburgh, it is reminiscent of a recent work by another Scot with a fondness for cross-genre exploration: Ken MacLeod's **The Night Sessions** (reviewed in December 2008). I also thought of yet another Scot, Christopher Brookmyre, whose potty-mouthed, grotesquery-studded thrillers feel like a non-SF version of what Stross is up to here. (Brookmyre is invading the fantastic from the thriller side, but that's another discussion.) If you want a Yankocentric blurb line, think of Carl Hiaasen and Charles Willeford on a collision course with William Gibson and Bruce Sterling.

Multiple viewpoints are established and plot machineries set in motion with minimal expository

⏭ p. 46

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

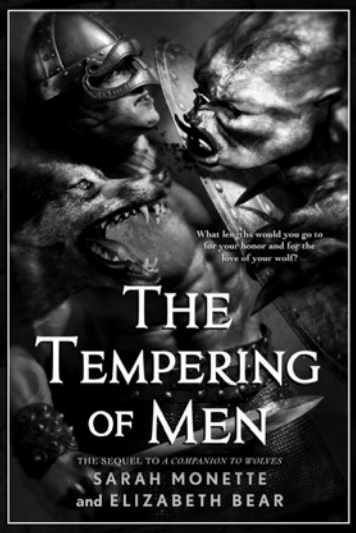
August 13, 2233. Comet ignites. Harley-Wu 4 ("Lady Kerosene") lights up the heavens for a two week solar transit, inspiring poets and prospectors as the Oort Cloud Oil Rush gets underway.

A Few Ancient Evils

In Iskryne, the war against the Trollish invasion has been won, and the lands of men are safe again…at least for a while. Isolfr and his sister have established their own wolfhaell. But she has taken two mates, and so the human pack has two war leaders. And in the way of the pack, they must come to terms with each other, must become brothers instead of rivals.

"A saga of warriors whose love for their wolves and for one other serves to bind them together into a band of fierce protectors."

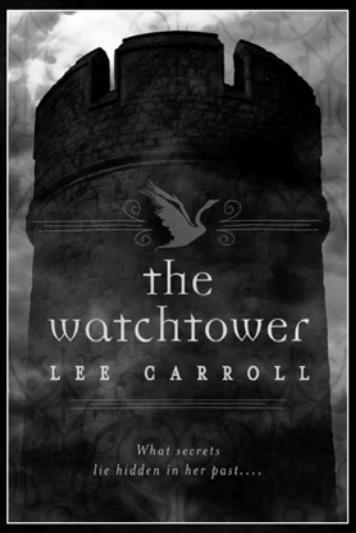
—Library Journal on *A Companion to Wolves*



Garet James is still coming to terms with the astounding revelation that she is the last in a long line of women sworn to protect the world from evil. Now she has received a sign from Will Hughes, a 400-year-old vampire. Hughes has asked her to join him on a his quest to rid himself of his curse of vampirism. As Garet struggles to understand her family legacy and find Hughes, each answer only leads to more questions—and to more danger.…

"Fans of Charles de Lint and Mercedes Lackey should enjoy this vibrant addition to the urban fantasy genre."

—Library Journal on *Black Swan Rising*



In a world where one's magical prowess is determined by one's skill with words and ability to spell, Nicodemus is a wizardly apprentice afflicted by a curse that causes him to misspell magical texts. But more is at stake than his apprenticeship. For an evil that has awakened is a power so dread and vast that if unleashed it will destroy Nicodemus...and the world.

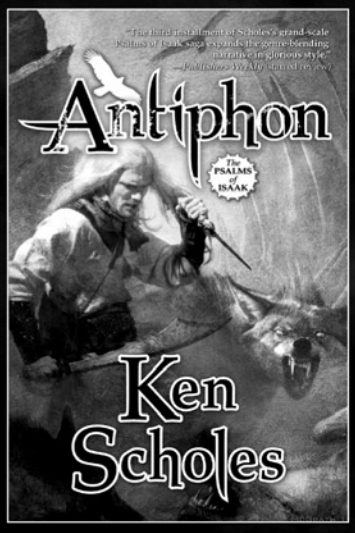
★ "A refreshingly new look at magic and the power of words. Nicodemus is a strong protagonist, but the supporting cast is equally as memorable. This series opener [will] resonate in the reader's mind. Highly recommended."

—Library Journal, starred review

Antiphon is the third installment in the Psalms of Isaak. The Crimson Empress is on her way, and her evangelists swear that Jin Li Tam's son Jakob is the child of promise foretold in their gospels.

★"Not only is Scholes a capable world-builder, he ably handles the tough task of keeping the series momentum going, intensifying the mystery so deftly that even if readers can't foresee where the story's going, it's clear that the author knows exactly what he's doing."

—Kirkus Reviews, starred review on *Canticle*



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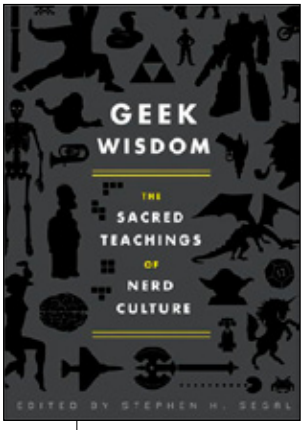

The Magician King, Lev Grossman (Viking 978-0-670-02231-1, $26.95, 448pp, hc) August 2011.

Geek Wisdom: The Sacred Teachings of Nerd Culture, Stephen H. Segal, ed. (Quirk 978-1-59474-527-0, $14.95, 224pp, hc) August 2011.

No Hero, Jonathan Wood (Night Shade 978-1-59780-282-6, $14.99, 318pp, tp) July 2011. Cover by E.M. Gist. [Order from Night Shade Books, 1661 Tennessee St. #3H, San Francisco CA 94107; <www.nightshadebooks.com>.]

Ready Player One, Ernest Cline (Crown 978-0-307-88743-6, $24, 376pp, hc) August 2011.

Recently, I found myself in a discussion about Stephen Sondheim's ***Into the Woods***, his fairytale musical. By the end of the first act all the main characters, like Little Red Riding Hood and Cinderella, have gotten everything they have ever wanted. Happy endings abound. The first act is a fluffy (if bloody, at times) confection.

But the second act is where the meal is. All of the choices the characters made to achieve their ends in the first act comes back to bite them in their behinds. Characters die, even the good ones who did everything right. Actions have consequences here, much like they do in actual life. As a teen and twentysomething, I loved the first act. Now, only the second act satisfies.

I can say the same for Lev Grossman's **The Magician King**. The first act, **The Magicians**, was a good read, one that continuously subverted your expectations of a Narnia-influenced story. The main character, Quentin, wasn't heroic. His motives weren't pure. And the story wasn't linear; there was no clean and easy quest narrative there. While I loved reading **The Magicians** and couldn't wait to see what Grossman would do next, something always seemed off about it. At its heart, the book felt aloof and bitter, like it was trying to cover up its desire to be liked with hipster poses, much like its narrator does.

The Magicians doesn't have a happy-happy ending like ***Into the Woods*** does, but Quentin and a few other characters get what they want despite what they've done to get it. Costs are something that other people have to pay. And in the second act, **The Magician King**, the other shoe drops.

Grossman opens with Quentin, Julia, Janet, and Eliot – crowned the two kings and two queens of Fillory at **The Magicians**' end – off on a trip to find the Seeing Hare. It's not a quest, really, just a lark in order to pass the time. But then they make a discovery out in the woods and Quentin talks himself into a long journey, which, as journeys can in these sorts of stories, ends up being much longer than he'd anticipated. Like in C.S. Lewis' **Voyage of the *Dawn Treader***, there is a boat involved, as well as fantastic islands and talking animals.

Despite the title, **The Magician King** isn't just about Quentin. Grossman also weaves in Julia's story about how she learned magic outside of Brakebills, the Ivy League college of the craft that educated the rest of the gang. Julia's story almost reads like a cautionary tale warning against addiction, Ivy League colleges, and high IQs. It plays against Quentin's struggles – both with outside forces and inner ones – brilliantly. Each makes the other more intense.

Grossman's gift for plots that feel organic rather than outlined shines here, too. Like Sondheim, he's folded our expectations into a new topography. All the right bits are there, yes, just not in the places that you'd expect them. Quentin does wind up on a quest, just like a hero should, only the reward isn't quite what he believed it to be. Instead, he grows up. What's so satisfying about **The Magician King** is how he gets there.

Steven H. Segal's **Geek Wisdom** is perfectly primed to be the go-to gift book for non-SF/F readers to give to people who are SF/F readers – and I wouldn't be at all surprised if it wound up on an endcap near the genre section when the holiday season rolls around. It's the perfect size, which is slight but not too slight, and has a great price point. Plus, the book's title implies a promise: We take the geek seriously in these easily digestible pages, which feature a famous nerd quote coupled with a paragraph of breezy explanation, but not that seriously. After all, we're geeks too.

The usual suspects show up: Yoda, ***The Simpsons***'s Comic Book Guy, Nicola Tesla, and Neal Stephenson all make an appearance. There are some unexpected sources as well, like the LOL Cats and Henri Poincaré. While the quotes are fun, it doesn't seem like there ought to be enough here to move the title beyond novelty status.

But what's buried within some of these proposed sacred teachings isn't light-hearted gift material at all. Sometimes, writers Zaki Hasan, N.K. Jemisin, Eric San Juan, and Genevieve Valentine, along with editor Stephen H. Segal, hit upon nuggets that do resemble real wisdom. Like the break-down of Yoda's advice about fear leading to anger; anger to hate and hate to suffering, which is explored like a mini dissertation on US race relations and name checks George Washington Carver. Or the thesis the writers explore about the doggedness of the proletariat that is spun out of a Super Mario Brothers' quote.

Yes, **Geek Wisdom** has its misses as well as it hits, yet there feels like there might be the seeds of something great within what first appears too fluffy to think about. Segal might be on to something when he writes:

> If geek culture can offer fresh, new alternative paths to all the eternal truths that religion and philosophy have managed to discover over the past few thousand years – paths that welcome those who've been turned away from the more traditional routes – then I say, let there be geekery.

I spent the first 40 pages of Jonathan Wood's **No Hero** playing "spot the influence." The early set-up is very much borrowed from ***Men in Black***, where a cop is drafted into a shadowy government agency in order to fight things not of this world. The vibe, however, is less slapstick comedy and more ***Torchwood***y, given that **No Hero** is set in Oxford. The Progeny, the quasi-aliens that the team is fighting, are Lovecraftian, tentacled, and evil beasties from another dimension who want to lay their eggs in your brain.

The same game can be played with the characters. The most badass fighter on the team, Kayla, is Angel's spiritual twin, in that both have shadowy pasts, might be evil, and are of few words. Clyde sounds like the Doctor; Tabitha looks like ***NCIS***'s Abby. And **No Hero**'s hero, Arthur Wallace, is a classic man of inaction whose befuddlement eases the reader into a very odd world *à la* another British Arthur, the one who hitch-hiked.

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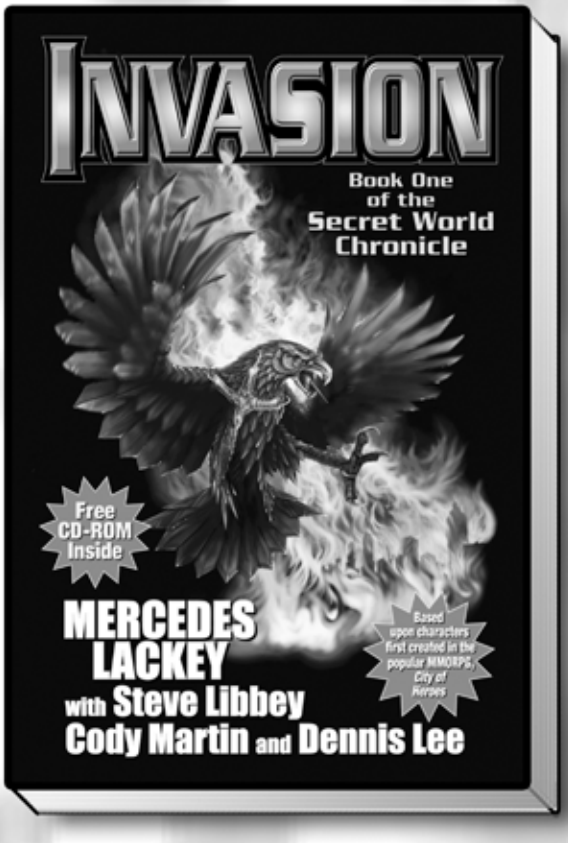

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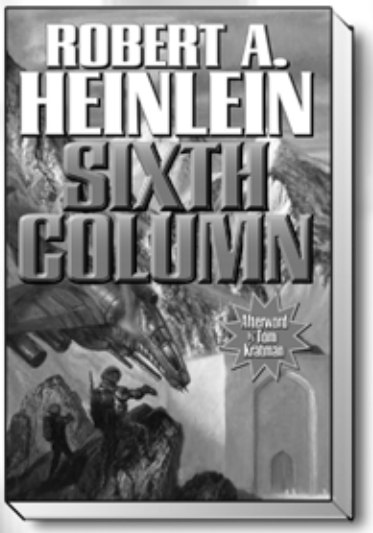

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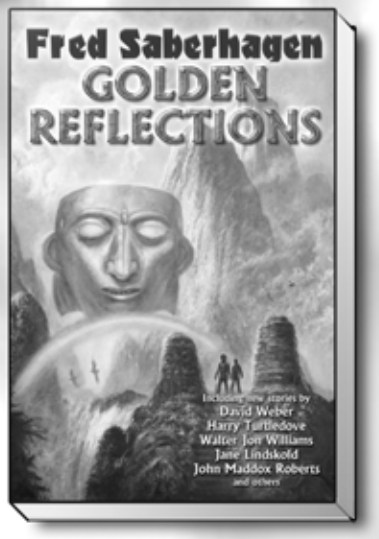

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978-1-4516-3773-1 * 416pp * $7.99/9.99

Shoot for the Moon!

"[E]xplodes with inventive action." —*Publishers Weekly* on Travis S. Taylor's *The Quantum Connection*

Kowabunga! The space race is back on between NASA, a private company, and China. But something goes horribly wrong, and now the astronauts must put differences aside and prove that exploration and adventure in space is our species' destiny! A crackling thriller of intrigue and courage from idea-master Travis S. Taylor (NASA and DOD consultant) and Les Johnson, Deputy Manager for the Advanced Concepts Office at NASA.

Jenn Bennett, **Kindling the Moon** (Pocket 978-1-4516-2052-8, $7.99, 358pp, pb) July 2011. Cover by Tony Mauro.

Bennett's first novel is a solid start to a hot new urban fantasy series. Arcadia ''Cady'' Bell is part-owner and bartender at Tamuku Tiki Lounge, a place friendly to Earthbound demons, but she's also secretly the daughter of two occultists wanted for serial murders. A powerful occult group decides it wants vengeance for the past killings – and they'll take Cady's life if they can't get her parents'. Cady has two weeks to prove her parents innocent, and her only lead is the unknown demon that was used to do the killings. So she turns to demonologist Lon Butler, an obnoxious fellow who starts to grow on her as their search for the demon grows increasingly dangerous. The take on demons is unusual; Earthbound demons, descended from demons forced into human bodies centuries before, possess only minor powers and mix mostly undetected with the human population. Other demons, summoned bodily from other planes, are the powerful creatures of legend. Cady's uncertain powers are also intriguing, and her awkward romance entertaining. The mystery of her parents and the murders is less successful in its resolution, but overall I definitely find myself looking forward to the next book in the series.

Rae Carson, **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** (Greenwillow 978-0-06-202648-4, $17.99, 422pp, hc) September 2011.

A princess marked by God tries to find her path in this young-adult fantasy novel, the first book in the Fire and Thorns trilogy, and a first novel. On her 16th birthday, Princess Lucero-Elisa de Riquesa of Orovallo marries King Alejandro of Joya d'Arena. She's never met him before; he's marrying her as part of a treaty to get military assistance from her father. Elisa was chosen for Service by God (signaled by the blue gem that appeared in her navel at her christening) but has no idea what that service is to be, and her new country is the land her ancestors fled in a religious schism. Elisa knows she's not an ideal princess; she's fat and clumsy and more scholarly than sociable. Still, she's determined to learn as much as possible and figure out what it is she's supposed to do, but then she's kidnapped and carried off into the desert, a transformative ordeal that sets her on a path to save the kingdom from invasion. Elisa's religiosity is extreme, but reasonable under the circumstances, and her willingness to learn and question her beliefs and her strength under the divine burden she bears make her admirable. As a result though, much of the conflict in the novel is internal, making it a bit static, but still extremely promising both as a first novel and as the start to a trilogy.

Phil Foglio & Kaja Foglio, **Girl Genius Book Ten: Agatha Heterodyne and the Guardian Muse** (Airship Entertainment 978-1-890856-53-3, $22.95, 151pp, tp; -54-0, $48.95, hc) July 2011. Cover by Phil Foglio.

Our girl genius, Agatha Heterodyne, entered her ancestral home Castle Heterodyne on the last page of volume seven in this ''Gaslamp Fantasy'' steampunk graphic novel series (and webcomic). She's still in the Castle at the end of this volume, still trying to repair that huge, insane deathtrap and prove her identity. Fortunately, the Castle is a fascinating place built by generations of mad scientists and currently full of a rather mind-boggling bunch of characters including artificial intelligences, mad scientists, minions, heroes, villains, and unwelcome relatives. (Several characters fall into multiple categories.) The main crisis at this point involves curing Agatha, Prince Tarvek, and Gilgamesh Wulfenbach of a deadly disease by killing and then reviving them – a hectic, thrill-filled process that starts to resemble the stateroom scene in the Marx Brothers' ***A Night at the Opera***. Big secrets are revealed and new questions raised, and the laughs just keep coming – even the Hugo thank-you is hilarious – nicely conveyed through Phil's lively and expressive art (embellished by colorist Cheyenne Wright). Little is resolved this time out, but fans will be delighted anyway (the seraglio scene alone is worth the price of admission). New readers are enthusiastically advised to start at the beginning, rather than try to follow the convoluted plot at this point.

Kevin Hearne, **Hexed** (Del Rey 978-0-345-52249-8, $7.99, 294pp, pb) June 2011. Cover by Gene Mollica.

Ancient Druid Atticus O'Sullivan makes a grand entrance to the urban fantasy scene with the first three volumes of his Iron Druid Chronicles, released in consecutive months. Atticus, the very last of the real Druids, has lived for over 2,000 years, but still manages to look like a college student. He's currently living as an herbalist bookseller in Tempe, Arizona, but it's not the quiet life he was hoping for. In **Hounded**, he kills a god that's been harassing him for ages; now in **Hexed**, it seems like all the gods want to stay on his good side – and get him to kill someone else. The most popular target is Thor – the original Norse thunder god, not the Marvel comics version, who also exists. In fact, this world has an amusing superabundance of gods: any person (or thing, real or imagined) who gets enough belief can be a god. Atticus is disinclined to go slaying any more gods; he's more concerned about attacks from new witches in town, a fallen angel feeding on high school kids, an invasion of Bacchantes, and some overzealous witch hunters. There's an amusing mix here of urban fantasy (Atticus has vampire and werewolf lawyers), heroic myth, and fairy tale, with a strong streak of Trickster lore – Coyote (the Navaho one) plays a significant role this time out. Atticus is a bit of a trickster himself, but he's also one of those heroes who seems hugely powerful one moment and strangely vulnerable the next, and his adventures (and tongue-in-cheek attitude) run perilously close to going over-the-top – but that's a large part of the fun.

Stacey Jay, **Dead on the Delta** (Pocket 978-1-4391-8986-3, $7.99, 389pp, pb) June 2011. Cover by Elena Dudina.

Stacey Jay shifts from YA paranormals to grown-up urban fantasy (small-town Southern style) set in a post-apocalyptic world where the cause of the apocalypse was fairies – lots and lots of nasty little blood-sucking fairies. Annabelle Lee is one of the rare immunes, able to go outside the iron-warded towns without protection. She works for Fairy Containment and Control, running scientific tests in the bayous to monitor fairy activity. When a girl's body is discovered just outside the small town of Donaldson, Annabelle is called in to help investigate, and finds herself mixed up in a complicated case involving small-town scandal, murder, drugs, and an ex-boyfriend turned FBI fairy forensics specialist. Annabelle's an arresting character – smart, stubborn, and troubled, barely keeping her job when once she seemed destined for so much more, her past revealed in tantalizing drips and drabs. It's a great mystery and an excellent start for a new series, with some very interesting developments still to be explored.

Lyda Morehouse, **Resurrection Code** (Mad Norwegian Press 978-1-935234-09-8, $14.95, 189pp, tp) March 2011.

Morehouse, more recently better known as Tate Hallaway, returns to the futuristic science fantasy world of her AngeLINK series begun in **Archangel Protocol**, with a new, somewhat standalone volume, primarily a prequel telling the story of Mouse, and how he went from a boy surviving in the flooded ruins of Cairo to creator of the revolutionary mouse.net. There's also a frame story involving Mouse some 50 years later, returning to Cairo to try to find out what happened to a friend he abandoned long ago. Instead, Mouse finds Morningstar (Satan), who provides an alternating viewpoint (both past and present). The mix of times and voices is occasionally disconcerting, but intriguingly interwound, and the tart/ironic/sardonic voices of both narrators keep things fun, while Mouse's AI Page/Strife provides some amusing footnotes. It's a treat fans of the series won't want to miss.

Kat Richardson, **Downpour** (Roc 978-0-451-46398-2, $24.95, 356pp, hc) August 2011.

Coming off the intense, multi-volume plot line wrapped up in **Labyrinth**, it's a bit of a relief to find this sixth volume in the Greywalker series a relatively self-contained, relatively simple supernatural mystery (with an authorial nod to Dashiell Hammett). Harper's doing some routine investigation out on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State when she spots a ghost in a burning car who declares, ''Not an accident.'' Harper has learned not to ignore such apparitions, but her seemingly simple murder investigation quickly grows complicated as she discovers that this remote area has more than its share of mages, all squabbling over a huge magical power source that's about to go critical if Harper can't figure out how to stop it. Add a nice development in Harper's love life (she's really about due) and this is a treat for fans, while

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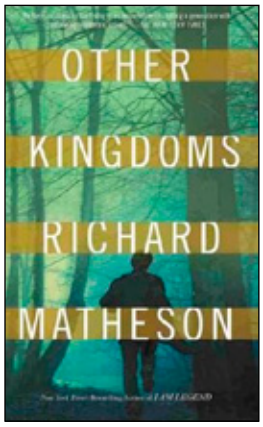

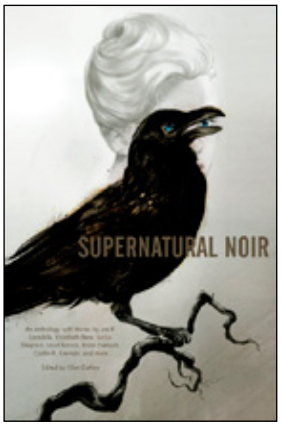

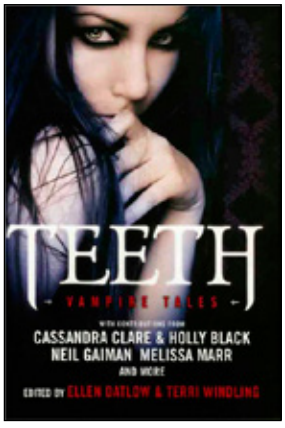

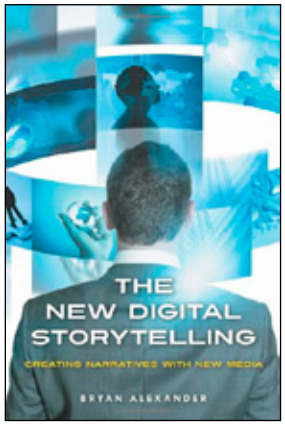

STEFAN DZIEMIANOWICZ

Other Kingdoms, Richard Matheson (Tor 978-0-7653-2768-0, $24.99, 316pp, hc) March 2011.

Readers who know Richard Matheson as an author of macabre tales in which the uncanny subtly discomposes the workings of the everyday world will find his latest novel a little unusual. It's a darkish fantasy with one foot in the familiar ordinary world and the other firmly planted in the faerie realm.

The story is presented as the narrative of Alexander White who, under the pseudonym Arthur Black, has made a living as a writer of potboiler horror novels. It's 1982, and in the manner of a man who is setting the record straight in his final days, the 82-year-old Alex recounts an incident from 64 years before that he swears, no matter how incredible it may seem, is true.

At the age of 18, to spite his abusive, career-Navy officer father, Alex enlists in the army at the height of World War I. In the trenches in Europe, he befriends Harold Lightfoot, a British soldier who waxes effusively about the beauties of his hometown, Gatford. Badly wounded by the same shell blast that takes Harold's life, Alex promises his dying friend that he will visit Gatford. He does, decides to stay, and almost immediately things turn weird. A lump of gold given to him by Harold turns to dust when he sells it to the local jeweler. Straying from the path that a local handyman tells him to stick to in the woods, Alex feels a palpable sense of menace that, he is later informed, is a weapon of the ''wee-folk,'' who are hostile toward human beings. A second trip into the woods has a similar effect, and this time Alex escapes with his life only through the intervention of Magda Variel, a Wiccan whom the locals detest but who presents herself to Alex as the friendly counterbalance to the evil faerie folk.

Matheson often presents supernatural events in his stories as manifestations of genuine occult forces at large in our world, and this novel is no exception. Alex becomes Magda's lover and Magda uses their relationship as a way to educate the naive young man about the mysteries of her craft. Presumably, a lot of the instruction Magda gives Alex regarding scrying, herbal medicine, a form of psychic surgery that heals his war injury, and other Wiccan practices are supported by the texts Matheson lists in the bibliography at the back of the book.

Although Alex is happy, his relationship with Magda is far from idyllic. She is old enough to be his mother – in fact, she lost a son Alex's age in the war – and during their lovemaking, certain passionate phrases that slip from her mouth suggest her love for her son was somewhat unsavory. Small wonder that Alex is easily enticed back to the woods where he crosses paths with Ruthana, a three-foot tall faerie nymph who enchants him and instantly steals his heart. When Alex decides to leave Magda for Ruthana, he finds himself in a battle between warring sides as ruthless as any he experienced in the trenches.

Magda and Ruthana both blame the other for psychic attacks that leave Alex mentally and physically wracked, and for a while Matheson tantalizes readers with the paranoid uncertainty of determining who Alex's real antagonist is and whether leaving Magda for Ruthana is a potentially fatal mistake. That kind of uncertainty has served as the linchpin of some of Matheson's best and most unsettling fiction, but it is very quickly resolved here. Alex's time among the faerie folk in their Middle Kingdom comes to seem a little like a sojourn in a Disney theme park, rather than the brush with the Machenesque dark side of fairy lore that the novel seemed to be preparing us for.

Though set 18 years after the start of the 20th century, the novel is narrated in retrospect from 18 years before its end, and Alex's contemporary voice and modern turns of phrase seem anachronistic and jarring. What's more, he is given to frequent parenthetical asides that disrupt the narrative flow of the story. **Other Kingdoms** is unquestionably one of Matheson's least characteristic and more unpredictable stories, but it has an unfinished feel to it, as though it's a working draft of a story the author intended to eventually refine. Given the finesse that Matheson's best work displays, it leaves the reader hoping for a more polished effort from him next time out.

–Stefan Dziemianowicz

GWENDA BOND

The Name of the Star, Maureen Johnson (Putnam Juvenile 978-0399256608, $16.99, 384pp, hc) September 2011.

Maureen Johnson's work is already familiar

to many fans of contemporary realistic YA fiction, the author having established herself as a go-to author for smart, romantic, and, yes, fun novels like **Suite Scarlett**, **The Bermudez Triangle**, and **Thirteen Little Blue Envelopes**. While Johnson has dipped a toe in the waters of fantasy previously with 2006's **Devilish**, a deal-with-the-devil tale complete with cupcakes, the first installment of her Shades of London trilogy, **The Name of the Star**, sees her diving into the deep end. Luckily, it turns out the water's just fine.

Devilish demonstrated that Johnson could balance frothy fantasy with sharp, contemporary humor, but in **The Name of the Star** the mixture is far different, and more complex. There is no froth to this fantasy, though thankfully humor is in ample supply. Rory Deveaux is from a small Louisiana town, and though her home definitely informs her character in a major way, the story begins with her departure from that familiar hothouse environment. Country girl Rory is headed off to the big city, across the ocean to London boarding school Wexford, for senior year. Her arrival there just so happens to coincide with the first in a series of murders styled after Jack the Ripper's kills, and her school is located near Jack's old stomping grounds.

What follows is an introduction to Rory's life at Wexford that shows off Johnson's attention to detail – she has clearly done her homework on English boarding schools (and on the eccentricities of the small-town South, for that matter). More than that, Johnson has made the wise choice to focus as much on drawing a fully realized, believable reality for Rory as on developing the story's fantasy elements. From Rory's (woeful) assignment to girls' hockey to the more demanding schoolwork that sends her to the library, Johnson does a fabulous job of showing how Rory settles into school, building a friendship with her very English roommate Jazza and a flirtation with fellow student and aspiring journalist Jerome. Johnson spends more time than many native fantasy authors might be comfortable with setting up Rory's life abroad. She introduces the school and the cast, while staying connected to the Ripper plot mainly through Jerome's endearing obsession with the historical and recent murders and brief cutaways to show views from the extensive network of security cameras and characters whose lives intersect with the killings in one way or another. And yet, the delay works. It allows us to feel the normalcy of Rory's new life being established, making its disruption all the more potent.

When Jerome takes Jazza and Rory out to the site of one of the murders, Rory spots a strange man whom police ultimately suspect of being the killer – and she is the only one who does. As the case progresses, with the entire city gripped by ''Rippermania,'' she learns the secrets of London's most elite police unit – so elite, it consists of only three people at the moment, all of whom can see ghosts and two of whom hardly seem like police at all. Johnson deftly executes all the twists and turns required by this type of cat-and-mouse thriller plot and, best of all, she does it with plenty of laughs. The humor springs effortlessly from Rory's point of view and from the rest of the characters' personalities in a way that never feels forced, and which only makes us want all the more to see these characters working together, and for them to make it through, free from the Ripper's clutches. The book ends with an excellent set-up for the second installment, leaving Rory on the threshold of a major personal development.

There's a ***Dr. Who***-ish quality to the book – in both its technology and its tone – that feels completely intentional and appealingly fresh to the YA genre, but Johnson's biggest achievement is in having written a book that will appeal to fans of her earlier work, but also please SF/F readers.

Faerie Winter, Janni Lee Simner (Random House Books for Young Readers 978-0375866715, $16.99, 288pp, hc) April 2011.

In 2009's **Bones of Faerie**, Janni Lee Simner took on two of YA's hottest trends: post-apocalyptic milieus and faeries. These are two areas which don't crossover much, and it would be perfectly understandable to wonder if there's a not a good reason why. Perfectly understandable, but wrong in the case of Simner's work. This reader is personally *over* faeries unless they are incredibly well done – such as in the recent **Welcome to Bordertown** revival anthology or in Malinda Lo's work – but the post-apocalyptic half of **Bones of Faerie**'s premise and Simner's excellent short form track record convinced me to give it a chance. That novel proved to more than live up to the challenge presented by combining two such seemingly disparate elements, an unusual and post-apocalyptic successful fantasy.

When we first encountered 15-year-old Liza in that book, it was in a world still devastated from a war between humans and Faerie that took place two decades before. Each side, it seems, used the nuclear option, leaving the humans to a world where magical fall-out has created murderous trees and stones filled with cold fire. It is also a world where any human who shows signs of magic must immediately be cast out or put to death – Liza's father leaves her baby sister on a hillside to die when she's born with the clear hair of the faeries, and Liza's mother disappears. After Liza's own magic forces her to leave town, she travels the treacherous post-apocalyptic landscape with her friend Matthew, who can shape shift into a wolf, to find out what happened to her mother and ultimately to begin to heal the rift between realms and the festering wounds left by war.

Now Simner returns with **Faerie Winter**, a direct sequel that carries on the terrifying, lyrical story of Liza and her world. Liza is learning to use her magical powers – she is a Summoner, able to control the living and the dead through voice commands, even to the point of calling back living entities from death, in some cases – as are the other ''After'' children whose magic has previously been hidden. Some people in town aren't so comfortable with magic's new status out in the open, and even more are uncomfortable with the long winter that has settled over the previously ever-green and treacherous forest. The trees are no longer trying to kill them, but they won't be able to grow any food if the winter doesn't depart soon. The people who remember the time before the war say that this is natural, but others wonder if this winter isn't permanent. As in the first book, a dead child launches the story – in this case a burned boy that Liza and Matthew find on the outskirts of town. They soon find another, live boy with out-of-control fire-starting powers who seems to be responsible. After he nearly immolates himself, causing Liza to use her own powers to keep her mother from rushing into a burning house, Matthew sets off on a journey to get healing help. He doesn't come back. When Liza follows, she – like Matthew – becomes ensnared by bad faeries along the route. As Liza fights (or doesn't, at times) to get free, we begin to learn more about Liza's mother's role in the war between humans and faerie. Ultimately, Liza and her friends and family must battle the Lady, a powerful faerie with the talent for casting ruthless glamours. Nothing less than permanent winter, the death of the world, is at stake.

As I mentioned earlier, faeries are extremely difficult to make work these days, weighed down as they are with such well-established trappings. Simner's faeries *do* feel like the classical dangerous specimens – they more or less conform to expectations about cruel, beautiful faeries. But, once again, Simner is able to bring nuance and complexity that elevates her story above the usual. Her faeries can also be good, or at least reformed. She isn't afraid to paint the race with as much complexity as she does humans. Which isn't to say that she shies away from making them as terrifying as the murderous woods their magic created; she doesn't. She explores deeply the true horror of glamour, of having choice removed, and of the responsibility that wielding the power to shape reality creates. And, notably, Simner does all this using remarkable restraint in terms of page count. A story richer than its slender volume would indicate, Simner's reimagining of the aftermath of a fantasy war continues to enchant as effectively as any glamour.

–Gwenda Bond

RICH HORTON

Naked City, Ellen Datlow, ed. (St. Martin's Griffin 978-0312385248, $15.99, 560pp, tp) July 2011.

Supernatural Noir, Ellen Datlow, ed. (Dark Horse 978-1595825469, $19.99, 336pp, tp) June 2011.

Teeth, Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling, eds. (HarperCollins, 978-0061935152, $17.99, 480pp, hc) April 2011.

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The dominant form of fantastical fiction on bookshelves currently is surely ''urban fantasy,'' a subgenre that includes the nearly ubiquitous contemporary thrillers about sexy werewolves and vampires and such, as well as the subcategory of the romance genre called ''paranormal,'' as well as much horror. As such it seems interesting to consider together three new anthologies from Ellen Datlow, the leading anthology editor in the fields of fantasy and horror. These books include one that seems to fit near to the center of the current urban fantasy field (**Naked City**), another that covers much the same ground with a considerably starker focus on horror (**Supernatural Noir**), and a third (**Teeth**) that is more narrowly focused in a couple of ways: it is all about vampires, and it is a young adult book, but the stories qualify as urban fantasy. **Teeth** of course is different for another reason; it is co-edited with Terri Windling and, as such, perhaps is more directly in a line of descent with their earlier YA anthologies such as 2010's **The Beastly Bride**.

One easy thing to look for is Datlow's ''regulars'' – Lucius Shepard and Jeffrey Ford appear in all three books, while Richard Bowes, Delia Sherman, Melissa Marr, Ellen Kushner, Caitlín R. Kiernan, Peter S. Beagle, Holly Black, and Nathan Ballingrud each appear twice. You have to admit, if you're going to have a ''stable'' of authors, that's a nice group to start with! Doubtless that's one secret of Datlow's success (and Windling's too): a group of writers distinguished by the ability to respond with fresh work on a wide variety of themes, year after year.

As I've confessed before, horror isn't usually my thing, and to be honest, **Supernatural Noir** doesn't at first blush present itself as horror. Datlow's introduction quotes Paul Duncan on noir: ''used to describe any work, usually involving crime that is notably dark, brooding, cynical, complex, and pessimistic.'' She does de-emphasize the common association with detective fiction, though there are a few of those here. So, noir stories with a supernatural element? No necessity of ''horror'' here, but by the end, that's how it felt to me. For instance, there's the opening story, one of the best in the book, ''The Dingus'' by Gregory Frost. Noir? Definitely: it concerns an old boxing trainer investigating the horrible killing of one of his old fighters, who had been working for a mobster, and there's plenty of mean streets and prostitutes and cynical cops, etc., to go around. But it's definitely horror, as the protagonist ends up finding a quite terrifying creature behind the killings. Don't get me wrong, though – this is a fine dark story.

Other stories from **Supernatural Noir** that stuck with me include Melanie Tem's ''Little Shit'', about a little person with telepathic powers who impersonates children in order to track down pedophiles, and who finds one that hits her rather too close to home. Also Jeffrey Ford's ''The Last Triangle'', in which a drug addict is ''saved'' by an old woman, but she has uses for him involving her magical abilities and those of a dangerous wizard. It's warmer than most of the rest of the book, noir in many particulars, it seems to me, but not in feel. And Brian Evenson's ''The Absent Eye'' is an effective pure horror story, with a nice slant detective aspect growing out of it, about a boy who loses an eye and learns to see different things in its absence. Finally, Caitlín R. Kiernan's ''The Maltese Unicorn'', which is as stylishly noir as any story here, is about a used bookstore owner who is friendly with a mysterious brothel owner, and thus ends up trying to track down a strange object – a dildo – for her, and gets involved, to her distress, with a beautiful and untrustworthy woman mixed up in the whole business. I thought this the best story in the book, and the story that most perfectly, to my taste, matched the theme.

Naked City is billed as more an anthology of urban fantasy, and Datlow in her introduction depicts the broadness of the category, mentioning particularly the noir-flavored sort and the paranormal romance subgenre. It opens with a Harry Dresden story from Jim Butcher, ''Curses'', which, on the face of it, is a standard ''supernatural noir'' story, featuring a detective encountering the supernatural, but that fits the book's remit. The story itself is a minor piece, about the famous curse on the Chicago Cubs.

The book faithfully fulfills the editorial promise – a selection of stories showcasing the sheer variety of contemporary urban fantasy, and emphasizing its urban settings. Immediately following Butcher's story are two set in New York. Delia Sherman's ''How the Pooka Came to New York City'' is a very enjoyable piece in which a pooka newly come to America in the 19th century finds himself reluctantly in debt to a human, another Irish immigrant. The pooka quickly finds his way to the magical underground, as it were, and potentially more obligations. Richard Bowes's ''On the Slide'' tells of a moderately successful actor whose life is not going all that well, desperately looking for a way out to a New York he remembers more fondly. Kit Reed's ''Weston Walks'' takes quite a different look at New York; it's about a rich orphan whose only contact with the rest of the world seems to be unusual tours he gives of the city – until an odd young woman tries to get to him.

Peter S. Beagle has a failed professor encounter an unexpectedly dangerous troll in Seattle, in ''Underbridge'', and in ''Noble Rot'' Holly Black makes a ghoul in an unspecified city sympathetic, as she comes to know a fading rock star. Nathan Ballingrud's ''The Way Station'' is about post-Katrina New Orleans, and a man's relationship with his daughter.

A different kind of urban fantasy is set in imaginary cities, and some of the best of this the past few decades has been Ellen Kushner's **Swordspoint** and its sequels (one written with Delia Sherman), so it is a delight to get a very early look at Richard St. Vier and Alec Campion, from a different point of view, in ''The Duke of Riverside'', which is a Riverside dweller's view of Alec's arrival, on the point of despair, in that dangerous part of town.

In ''The Bricks of Gelecek'' Matthew Kressel also takes on a fantastic city – or several disappeared cities in the desert, victims of creatures something like djinn, one of whom falls for a girl in one such city. And Melissa Marr sets ''Guns for the Dead'' in a Western-like city where, it seems, the dead (or some of them) go when they die, while Jeffrey Ford's fantastical city is taken over by a very strange boy who is invaded by a spider, in ''Daddy Longlegs of the Evening''.

Another strong story comes from Patricia Briggs, who sets ''Fairy Gifts'' in a much smaller city, Butte, Montana, and tells of Thomas, a Chinese immigrant's son who is made a vampire, and returns decades later to deal with a problem in the fae community involving Finnish magic, an old friend of Thomas's, and the old mines. There's a nice cold twist to this one. The American West, and mines, are also central to another strong Caitlín R. Kiernan story, ''The Colliers' Venus (1893)'', in which a museum curator investigates a captured woman – a woman found encased in rock – while dealing as well with his own abortive relationship. Finally, Elizabeth Bear returns to Las Vegas in a story about the city's genii loci, memory (or the loss of it, for a city as well as a person), ghosts, and a nasty Las Vegas powerbroker, in ''King Pole, Gallows Pole, Bottle Tree''.

More light-hearted are stories like Naomi Novik's ''Priced to Sell'', about various problems a real estate agent deals with in selling to the magical community – slight, to be sure, but fun. And John Crowley's ''And Go Like This'' is a delightful fantasia on an idea by Buckminster Fuller – that the entire population of the world could fit in New York City.

Foreign cities get a look, too: London in Christopher Fowler's ''Oblivion by Calvin Klein'', a satire on shopping; Mexico City in Lucius Shepard's ''The Skinny Girl'', in which a photographer encounters a girl who has become, somehow, Death, and Berlin and Haifa in two of the collection's best stories. Pat Cadigan's ''Picking Up the Pieces'' is told by one of five sisters, about the youngest (by a wide margin), named Quinn. Quinn falls in love with a German man, but has her heart broken when he leaves her as the Wall is about to come down in late 1989. Quinn follows him, her sister follows her, and they learn something striking about her erstwhile boyfriend's family. My favorite story in the book is ''The Projected Girl'' by Lavie Tidhar. Danny is a ten-year-old boy, being raised by his widowed father. He's intrigued by magic and by detective novels, and stumbles across a magician's journal from the '40s, and thus into a mystery about a magician and his assistant, who really disappeared one day, and about a strange image of a young woman on a wall – all tied up with the complexities of Palestine in WWII.

Teeth has a different feel, mostly because it is a young-adult book, but it is still quite a fine anthology. As usual with the Datlow/Windling books, Windling contributes a long opening

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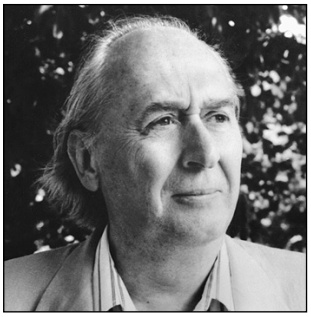
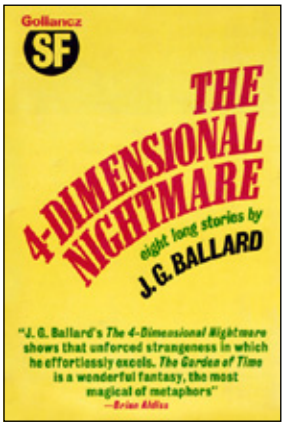
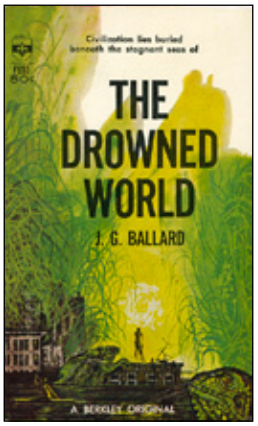
Yesterday's Tomorrows

by Graham Sleight



J.G. Ballard (1995)





The 4-Dimensional Nightmare, J.G. Ballard (Gollancz, 197pp, hc) 1974. Reissued as **Voices of Time** (Gollancz, 197pp, hc) 1985.

The Drowned World, J.G. Ballard (Berkley Medallion, 158pp, pb) 1962.

Concrete Island, J.G. Ballard (Jonathan Cape, 176pp, hc) 1974.

Super-Cannes, J.G. Ballard (Flamingo 0-00-225847-1, 392pp, hc) 2000.

By most orthodox standards, J.G. Ballard is not a very good writer. His characters are ciphers, his plots are straightforward and one book is often very similar to the next. It's easy to see, also, why the SF community often had problems with his work: he was profoundly unconcerned with human efforts to understand or shape the universe. Indeed, if he said anything about such matters, it was that the universe was unknowable, incomprehensible, mysterious. So it was understandable – if a gross oversimplification – that his work was often labelled "pessimistic" or "dystopian." And yet even those who accept all these criticisms would have also to accept that there was *something* about his work. Right from the start, he was a writer of absolute, transfixing certainty. Here, for instance, is the famous opening of his story "The Voices of Time" (1960):

> Later Powers often thought of Whitby, and the strange grooves the biologist had cut, apparently at random, all over the floor of the empty swimming pool. An inch deep and twenty feet long, interlocking to form an elaborate ideogram like a Chinese character, they had taken him all summer to complete, and he had obviously thought about little else, working away tirelessly through the long desert afternoons.

One wouldn't expect such things to be explained at the start of a story – though in this case, they're not even explained by the end of the story. But what's most distinctive about them is the sense that this is a world the writer knows utterly. He has chosen to show us this particular sight very deliberately. Why a drained swimming pool? Who knows: symbols in Ballard are often deliberately surreal, echoing Dali or Magritte more obviously than any logical schema. Yet one might suggest that a drained swimming pool is a useful emblem for some of Ballard's obsessions: an achievement of money and "civilisation" now rendered obsolete and useless, being refitted for new and obscure purposes. As a short story, "The Voices of Time" resolutely refuses to make "sense." Indeed, this kind of refusal – bordering on stubbornness – regarding orthodox narrative pleasures is one of Ballard's hallmarks. Instead, we're shown a series of other mysterious vignettes: a set of experiments into human genetics, a scrawled countdown towards zero, a series of gnomic proverbs. So far as anything unites them, it's the idea that the universe is running down, or at least running out of human control. The most that any observer can do is watch and listen to "the myriad deaths of the cosmos."

"The Voices of Time" can now be found in the vast **The Complete Short Stories of J.G. Ballard** (2009), but I prefer approaching Ballard's stories through the collections in which they originally appeared. Partly, I admit, it's because I get increasingly grumpy at huge volumes that are physically too big to read comfortably. But partly, also, a volume like **The Four-Dimensional Nightmare** is arranged with a great deal of care so that one story leads into the next. So "The Voices of Time" opens the book and is followed by "The Sound-Sweep" (1960) – which, as the title suggests, is also concerned with what might be tolerable and intolerable to hear, though in a very different context. There is also a clutch of stories about enclaves under threat, like "The Garden of Time" (1962), as well as "The Cage of Sand" (1960), one of Ballard's first attempts to fit the space programme into his metaphysic.

Although their formal experimentation seems mild in comparison to much later Ballard, these stories seem utterly distinct from any other SF that was being written around this time, at least within the walls of genre publishing. As I've said, one could subject them to symbolic analysis, to try to tease out what each one "means." But Ballard stories, I find, are mostly lessened by this kind of thinking. One needs instead to ask more general questions. What is the world-view of the person writing this story? How does he want me to see the things around me? How much am I convinced by the way of seeing he offers? It's a very different set of questions from those prompted by, say, Heinlein or even Sturgeon.

The Drowned World was Ballard's second novel, though he does not seem to have been keen on its predecessor, **The Wind from Nowhere** (1961). Certainly, **The Drowned World** was the first book fully to announce the kind of writer Ballard was going to become. And it foregrounds even more than the early short stories one of Ballard's central concerns: *landscape*. The setting is London, but a London flooded and subject to tropical heat. Were the book published now, there would be obvious questions about whether it was meant to be a dire warning about climate change. Instead, it reads as a reaction against the "cosy catastrophe" books that at that time were prominent in British SF. The first chapter title, "On the beach at the Ritz" signals the kind of displacement from the norm that we're going to see. The explanation for the increased temperature is offhand and beside the point: a "succession of gigantic geophysical upheavals" such as solar flares. What matters is the kind of place that London has become, and what Ballard's protagonist Kerans can do about it.

As a writer of landscape, and as a seer of transformation in the everyday, Ballard is very likely unmatched. He's peculiarly attentive to effects of light and colour, and some of the set-pieces in **The Drowned World**, such as the exploration of a flooded planetarium, are simply stunning. The story itself is perhaps more conventional, a series of squabbles between the inhabitants of the drowned London, but the overall affect is something new. It's not merely that Kerans and his associates can do nothing to restore the old world. It's that the landscape *wins*. Not in the sense of wiping out the humans, but in the sense that Kerans ultimately becomes a part of it. He ends up journeying south, "through the increasing rain and heat," not because he will find anything new there but because of how completely he has ended up seeing. This is a world orchestrated by Ballard into symbols – the sun, especially, seems a constant presence throughout the novel. The protagonist, by definition, is the person who experiences most of them, and in a Ballard book, to experience the symbols is to want to become closer to them. (To engrave them on the floor of

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2011 Locus Survey Results

Welcome to the 39th annual Locus Survey. We use the resulting statistics to let advertisers, publishers, bookstores, etc. know what our readers are like, and let us keep up with changes in our readership. this is the ninth year all results were entered into Mark Kelly's online program. Because of the slightly different counting methods, some results from before 2002 may not be comparable with later results.

BALLOTS RECEIVED:

year	ballots	circ.	% ballots returned
2001	609	4700	13
2002	759	4800	16
2003	575	4700	12
2004	625	4800	13
2005	913	4700	19
2006	962	4500	21
2007	1006	4300	23
2008	1029	4100	25
2009	662	3900	17
2010	680	3600	19
2011	785	3700	21

The circulation figure given is for paid circulation. We received 785 ballots with at least one response to this survey, up from 680 last year. We got 28 by mail, 4% of the ballots returned, down from 36 (5%) last year. The percentage of ballots "returned" was more relevant back when all the ballots were paper, mailed out with the magazine, but still gives an indication of response.

ARE YOU A CURRENT SUBSCRIBER?
%Yes 41%

IF NOT, HAVE YOU SUBSCRIBED IN THE PAST?
%Yes 22%

Less than half of respondents are subscribers, at 41% down significantly from 47% last year, and 56% the year before. Of those who indicated they are not now subscribers, 22% (13% of all respondents) were past subscribers, down from 26% last year. That leaves 44% who were never subscribers.

SEX:

year	% male	% female
2001	74	26
2002	71	29
2003	74	26
2004	72	28
2005	66	34
2006	65	35
2007	68	32
2008	65	35
2009	68	32
2010	60	40
2011	57	43

Females reached a new high the second year in a row. When we started counting in 1971, our readers were only 19% female. As usual, we got a few non-standard responses, including one somewhat perplexing "Dalek".

AGE:

year	under 21	21-30	31-40	41-50	over 50	avg.	med.	mode
2001	0	9	28	37	25	44	44	48
2002	2	13	30	32	24	42	42	49
2003	1	9	29	33	28	44	44	48/50
2004	2	14	28	27	29	43	43	33
2005	2	15	29	28	26	42	42	40
2006	3	16	29	27	26	42	42	40
2007	2	14	30	26	28	43	42	37
2008	2	17	30	24	27	42	41	40
2009	2	11	22	26	38	46	45	42
2010	1	15	24	26	34	45	44	41/43
2011	2	15	22	24	36	44	44	42

Respondents shifted slightly to either extreme, with the youngest up 1% and the oldest up 2%, with corresponding drops in those 31-40 and 41-50. The average was 44, down one from last year. The median was 44, the same as last year. The mode, or most common, age was 42, right between last year's 41/43. The youngest respondent was 15 and the oldest 86 (not counting one claim of 300 years, discarded as statistically improbable.)

% MARITAL STATUS:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
Married	53	53	56	54	54	53	54	54	54	52
Single	33	32	31	33	31	34	34	32	34	38
Formerly Married	8	9	8	6	9	7	7	9	8	7
Other	6	6	4	7	6	6	5	5	3	3

The majority of respondents remain married, holding steady at 53%. Singles were up 1%, while the formerly married dropped 1%.

% HAVE CHILDREN:

'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01
39	39	41	38	39	39	41	39	40	37	39

No change.

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME:

(in 1000s)	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Over $150	13	12	14	12	11	9	9	7	8
$100-$150	16	15	16	18	16	15	14	15	15
$75-$100	16	17	16	19	18	17	19	13	16
$50-$75	15	18	20	17	19	19	20	22	22
$40-$50	11	11	10	9	9	12	9	11	10
$20-$40	16	17	15	17	18	17	21	20	19
$0-$20	12	9	8	8	9	10	8	11	10

The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The two highest income brackets were each up 1%. The 75-100 group dropped 1%, as did the 20-40 group. The biggest drop was in the middle, with those making 50,000-75,000 down 3% to a new low since we split this bracket out in 1985. The biggest gain was in those in the lowest bracket, earning $20,000 or less, up 3% to their highest level since 1994.

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

	High school	Some college	AA	BA	Some grad	MA	PhD	Law/ MD
2001	4	14	2	28	10	26	11	7
2002	4	16	2	31	9	24	9	5
2003	3	13	2	33	9	22	11	7
2004	3	17	1	31	8	24	10	5
2005	4	15	2	34	8	22	8	5
2006	5	15	3	32	8	23	8	6
2007	5	15	3	33	9	23	7	6
2008	3	15	3	31	11	25	7	5
2009	3	12	5	30	10	24	9	8
2010	4	14	3	32	9	25	8	4
2011	4	12	2	33	9	23	9	6

	% Attended college	College graduate	Advanced degree
2001	96	82	43
2002	96	80	38
2003	97	82	40
2004	97	80	39
2005	96	81	36
2006	95	79	37
2007	95	81	36
2008	97	82	37
2009	97	87	42
2010	96	82	38
2011	96	83	39

Overall, we saw a shift towards more advanced degrees. High school graduates held steady, but those with some college dropped 2% and AA degrees fell 1%, while Bachelor's degrees rose 1%. Master's degrees dropped 2%, but the highest degrees both rose, PhDs up 1% and Law/ MD up 2%. Those who attended college at all held steady at 96% of respondents, but those who got a degree were up 1%; advanced degrees also rose 1%.

PRIMARY OCCUPATION:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Professional	22	22	24	22	23	21	21	20	20
Writer/Ed.	14	21	13	13	15	15	14	14	15
Education	11	9	11	11	9	10	9	10	9
Retired	10	9	11	7	6	7	7	8	7
Computer	10	8	9	11	13	10	11	10	11
Student	7	5	5	7	6	7	7	6	4
Office	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	4	4
Technical	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	6
Civil Serv.	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4
Business	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	5	5
Arts	2	3	2	3	5	3	3	2	3
Blue Collar	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2
Misc./Unkn.	11	11	10	11	10	10	9	11	10

Professional held steady in first place; Writer/Editor returned in second place, despite a 7% drop. Education, up 2%, moved up a notch into third, knocking Retired (up 1%) back a notch to fourth, where it tied with Computer (up 2%). Other occupations named included animator, organic farmer, cognitive systems engineer, game designer, and miner.

SECONDARY OCCUPATION:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Writer/Ed.	42	41	40	40	39	41	45	41	43
Arts	8	10	7	9	8	7	9	9	5
Education	7	8	10	8	9	7	8	7	7
Professional	7	5	5	5	5	8	6	7	7
Computer	6	6	7	8	8	6	6	7	7
Student	6	5	5	5	7	6	4	6	3
Technical	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3
Office	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	4	2
Business	2	3	3	3	3	4	3	1	3
Civil Service	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1
Blue Collar	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Misc.	11	10	13	12	12	15	13	14	16

Just over half (51%) of respondents gave a secondary occupation, the same as last year. Writer/Editor remains the top job by a large margin, up 1%. Arts held onto second place, despite a 2% drop. Education (down 1%) remained in third; Professional (up 2%) moved up a notch into fourth, followed by Computer (no change) in fifth, tied with Student (up 1%). Miscellaneous was up 1%; other occupations named included chicken farmer, bagpiper, barista, and genealogist. Our Little League Score Keeper is still on hiatus, waiting hopefully with a 1½-year-old granddaughter (and another on the way).

HOUSING:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
% Own home	64	61	68	60	62	63	64	64	66
Rent hse./apt.	25	29	23	31	29	28	27	27	24
Live w/relative	7	5	6	6	6	6	5	4	6
Share hse./apt.	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	3
Other	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	2

Home owners rose 3% while renters dropped 4% – which sounds like a sign of an improving economy – but those living with relatives were up 2%, to their highest level since 1998. Shared housing dropped 1%, while other held steady.

POSSESSIONS:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'02
Computer	73	73	79	79	83	86	86	84	85
Laptop	70	70	67	61	61	54	53	39	37
Digital Camera	70	70	71	73	71	63	60	43	34
Car	68	67	73	71	78	76	79	76	81
Cell Phone	62	66	72	79	78	75	70	58	54
iPod/MP3	58	60	55	59	52	39	32	18	10
Plasma/HDTV	44	38	35	26	18	-	-	-	-
e-Book Reader	37	18	9	5	-	-	-	-	-
TiVo/DVR	30	29	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
NextGen	31	29	24	20	11	-	-	-	-
Smartphone/ iPhone	31	24	13	4	-	-	-	-	-

Personal computer's remain the top possessions, holding steady with just under three-quarters (73%) of respondents. (That figure may be somewhat misleading; at least 135 of those not owning personal computers did own laptops, so 90% of respondents have at least one or the other.) The top seven possessions held their relative positions. Laptop and Digital Camera held steady, tied at 70%. Cars were up 1% in fourth place, owned by just over two-thirds (68%) of respondents. Cell phones remain in fifth place despite a 4% drop, down 4% in their third straight year of decline, probably because many people are switching to Smartphones, up 7% to a new high, though still down in 10th place on this list. The only other category to decline was iPod/MP3 player, down 2% (again possibly because of the increase in Smartphones). Also at new highs were Plasma/HDTVs, up 6%; e-book readers, up a whopping 19%; and Next Generation Gaming Consoles (Wii, PS3, etc.), up 2%. Dropping to the bottom of the list – despite being up 1% – are TiVo/DVR systems; in another case of overlap, some next generation gaming consoles work as DVD and MP3 players, and downloadable/streaming video on the Internet is replacing TVs for some users.

TYPE OF COMPUTER:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
PC	97	95	96	94	90	89	88	88	86
Macintosh	39	41	32	31	31	25	27	18	22
Linux	13	13	14	12	12	-	-	-	-
Other	3	3	2	3	4	5	4	4	4

Percentages are based on the number of those owning computers. IBM PCs and compatibles went up 2% to a new high. Macintosh remains second, down 2%. Linux users held steady in third place. Other computers held steady at 3%; the most common type named was iPad, with a grand total of three votes.

HOW MANY COMPUTERS OWNED?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07
1	29	28	32	35	33
2	28	29	38	33	30
3-5	33	33	36	32	32
6-10	4	4	5	5	3
11+	1	1	1	1	0

Figures for the 2011 and 2010 are based on the number owning personal computers and/or laptops; prior years' figures were based on the number just claiming to own personal computers, and aren't truly compatible. Those owning only one computer went up 1%, with a comparable decrease in those owning two; otherwise, figures held steady. Less than a third of respondents (29%) own only one computer, while a full third have 3-5. The most computers claimed was 12, down from last year's impressive 27.

ONLINE HOURS PER WEEK:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
1-2	1	2	2	1	2	3	3	7	5
3-5	5	6	7	7	8	9	8	12	16
6-9	8	10	16	13	13	15	14	20	18
10-19	29	27	25	28	26	29	27	24	29
20+	55	54	49	49	50	43	46	36	29

Respondents are spending more time than ever online.

Those spending no time online, a slim 1%, held steady. The next three groups all dropped, those online only 3-5 and 6-9 hours both reaching new lows since we started counting in 1997. Corresponding increases were in the two highest groups, the 10-19 hour group up 2% and the 20+ hour group up 1% to a new high.

DO YOU HAVE:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
DSL/Cable	91	90	88	91	86	77	68	53	47
Web page	44	46	43	45	49	40	42	35	32
Blog	46	49	41	48	45	34	26	14	-

Results were mixed. DSL/Cable connections were remain popular, up 1% to 91% of respondents. On the other hand, web pages were down 2% and blogs down 3%.

DO YOU:	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07
Get your news online	83	82	81	85	82
Look at YouTube	82	79	69	75	63
Use social networking sites	70	67	47	43	29
Twitter	37	38	19	-	-
Use peer-to-peer filesharing	21	22	22	33	24
Game online/play MMORPGs	17	15	10	16	13

Getting news online remains the most popular of these Internet pastimes, up 1% to 83%, but watching YouTube is hot on its heels with 82%, up 3% to a new high. Social Networking (Facebook, MySpace, etc.) sites also rose 3% to a new high, at 70% of respondents. Twitter lost a little ground, down 1%, but is still used by over a third (37%) of respondents. Peer-to-peer filesharing also dropped 1%, used by just over one-fifth (21%) of respondents. Gaming Online/MMORPGs was up 2%, but still trails the pack with only 17%.

HAVE YOU PURCHASED ANYTHING ONLINE?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
%Yes	97	96	96	95	95	95	96	88	87

Up 1% to a new high.

HAVE YOU PAID FOR DOWNLOADED MUSIC?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04
%Yes	67	61	57	63	52	41	34	15

Just over two-thirds (67%) of respondents have paid for downloaded music, up 6% to a new high.

DO YOU LISTEN TO PODCASTS REGULARLY?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06
%Yes	32	32	29	30	25	18

No change.

DO YOU READ ONLINE?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07
Fiction	67	65	62	63	61
Short Stories	71	70	66	67	64
Novels	26	23	22	24	25

More respondents are reading online; all three categories reached new highs. Fiction in general was up 2%, now read by just over two-thirds (67%) of respondents. Once again, we got more respondents reading short fiction online than read fiction online, with Short Stories up 1% to 71%. Novels saw the biggest increase, up 3%, but still trail, read online by just over a quarter (26%) of respondents.

HAVE YOU PAID FOR E-BOOKS/E-STORIES?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
%Yes	62	50	41	40	40	33	32	24	20

More respondents than ever have paid for e-fiction, up an impressive 12% to a new high.

E-BOOK READERS: READ WHAT?

	'11	'10	'09	'08
Books	38	19	9	7
Magazines	13	4	3	3
Other	6	4	3	1

Once again, more people use e-readers to read books (297) than claim to own e-readers (290). Books were far and away the most popular use for the readers, read by 38% of all respondents, up 19% to a new high. Magazines are read by 13% of respondents, up 9% to another new high. Other was up 2%; the most common items named were manuscripts, downloaded web pages and blogs, newspapers, and short fiction.

DO YOU READ *LOCUS* ONLINE?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
%Yes	56	68	66	63	66	67	72	70	70

DO YOU READ OTHER ONLINE PUBS?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
%Yes	66	72	67	68	66	66	68	60	51

Fewer respondents are reading online publications. *Locus* Online readers were down 12% to their lowest point since 2000. Those reading other online publications were down 6% to two-thirds of respondents. (Our online site tracking gives us an average of about 69,000 unique visitors per month, down from 88,000 last year.)

ONLINE PUBLICATIONS READ:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04
Tor.com	69	63	53	-	-	-	-	-
Strange Horizons	38	38	30	39	39	33	29	24
Clarkesworld	36	34	22	19	-	-	-	-
SF Site	32	36	39	39	43	42	46	47
Subterranean	32	32	28	26	-	-	-	-
Ansible	22	31	33	33	39	36	33	33
Fantasy	18	20	11	13	-	-	-	-
SFRevu	14	17	17	20	20	15	-	-
Baen's Universe	12	9	17	19	19	-	-	-
Abyss & Apex	9	9	5	7	-	-	-	-
Intergalactic Medicine Show	6	6	5	7	7	-	-	-
Internet Rev. of SF	6	22	23	18	25	24	-	-
Blastr	5	21+	32+	38+	38+	42+	44+	41+
io9	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lightspeed	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beneath Ceaseless Skies	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hub	3	4	2	-	-	-	-	-
SF Signal	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tangent Online	3	6	4	9	15	17	14	13
Other	23	31	21	-	-	-	-	-

+figures for *SciFi Wire* and *SF Weekly*

Tor.com remains the most popular online publication, followed by over two thirds (69%) of respondents. It had the biggest increase in percentage, up 6%, increasing its already hefty lead over returning second place *Strange Horizons*, which held steady at 38%. *Clarkesworld*, up 2% to 36%, moved up a notch into third place, while *SF Site*, down 4%, moved down to fourth. *Subterranean* held steady in fifth place with 32%; *Ansible* held onto sixth place despite being down 9% to 22%. Below that there was considerable shifting around. The defunct *Baen's Universe* actually managed to move up with a 3% increase, while the also-defunct *Internet Review of Science Fiction (IRoSF)* dropped 16%. Syfy's *Blastr* didn't have the excuse of being defunct; the renamed incarnation of *Sci Fi Wire* (which merged with *SF Weekly* in 2009) was down 16% compared to last year's figure for *Sci Fi Wire*. Breaking out of the Other pack this year were *io9*, *Lightspeed*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, and *SF Signal*. There were 69 publications (magazines, blogs, etc.) named, down from 75 last year. Runners-up this year, read by over 1% of respondents, were *Apex*, *Daily SF*, and *Ideomancer*.

HAVE YOU EVER DONATED TO AN ONLINE PUBLICATION?

%Yes	'11	'10	'09
	65	58	38

This figure is based on those who said they read online publications; of those almost two thirds (65%) have donated to them at some point, up from 58% last year.

DOES SF FORM THE MAJOR PART OF YOUR PLEASURE READING?

%Yes	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
	81	82	81	82	80	81	81	83	80	80

Down 1%.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN READING SF REGULARLY?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
1 yr/less	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
2-5 yrs	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3
6-10 yrs	5	4	4	6	5	6	5	5	5	6
11-20 yrs	15	14	9	15	13	14	13	14	11	15
21-30 yrs	17	20	21	24	25	27	28	26	29	30
31+ yrs	58	59	63	51	53	49	50	52	54	45

Long-time SF readers dropped a bit, the 31+ group down 1% and the 21-30 year group down 3% to a new low. The next three groups each saw 1% increases; the lowest group held steady.

DO YOU LIKE (IN %):

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
SF	84	79	85	86	90	87	82	84	87	87
Fantasy	73	69	69	74	77	75	72	69	67	69
Horror	47	47	45	50	50	47	45	40	46	45
Other	12	14	12	13	18	14	13	13	15	15

SF and fantasy both gained in popularity, SF up 5% and fantasy up 4%. Horror held steady, while Other dropped 2%. The only Other item getting more than 1% was Urban Fantasy.

TYPE OF SF:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Social Sci.	59	60	66	63	63	57	59	59	64
Hard Science	47	47	62	55	57	55	55	56	57
Adventure	31	60	66	63	63	62	59	58	61

Social Science was the clear leader in popularity, despite a 1% drop. Hard SF held steady. Adventure, tied for the lead for the last four years, took a nosedive, down 29% to a new low.

TYPE OF FANTASY:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
High/Heroic	53	47	52	54	52	54	50	50	50
Humorous	46	43	45	48	47	46	46	43	41
Romantic	25	20	20	22	21	22	23	18	16

All types of fantasy saw increases, High/Heroic fantasy up 6%, Humorous up 3%, and Romantic up 5% to a new high.

TYPE OF HORROR:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Supernatural	40	40	37	41	41	39	35	32	36
Psychological	32	36	33	35	34	33	31	30	34
Splatter	8	7	6	8	7	9	8	8	9

Supernatural remains the most popular kind of horror, holding steady at 40%. Psychological horror was second, down 4%. Splatter trails well back at 8%, up 1%.

ARE YOU A BOOK COLLECTOR?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
%Yes	67	66	70	71	71	71	70	76	75	76

TYPE OF MATERIAL COLLECTED:

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Hardcovers	46	43	50	45	44	44	45	46	51
Everything	41	45	38	44	44	44	43	38	35
Paperbacks	39	29	38	33	36	32	32	35	34
Magazines	6	4	6	6	7	5	5	6	9
Other	6	5	3	4	4	2	3	4	4

Collectors were up 1% to just over two-thirds of respondents. Fewer collectors are collecting Everything, down 4%, but the rest of the categories are all up, with Paperback collectors up a whopping 10%. The most common Other item named was e-books, at 3%; Comics, until this year the usual leader, got a slim 1%.

HOW MANY NEW HARDCOVER BOOKS DO YOU BUY PER MONTH?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	36	31	28	28	26	23	25	25	25	25
1	27	26	26	26	30	31	28	27	26	30
2-4	28	34	36	34	34	34	35	34	35	32
5-10	7	7	8	10	9	10	10	11	11	10
11+	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2

Hardcover buying is down again, with those buying none per month up 5% to their highest point since 1980. Those buying one a month were up 1%, while those buying 2-4 dropped 6%. The biggest buyers in the top two groups held steady, however.

PER YEAR?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	8	5	5	3	4	4	4	4	3	5
1	5	5	4	4	6	4	4	4	4	3
2-4	23	24	16	22	18	18	17	19	17	16
5-10	24	23	23	23	23	25	24	21	23	25
11+	40	44	51	48	50	49	50	52	53	51

The drop in hardcover buying shows again here, with those buying none up 3% to their highest level since 1982; the biggest buyers were down 4%, to their lowest point since 1979. In between there were only minor changes.

HOW MANY NEW TRADE PAPERBACK BOOKS DO YOU BUY PER MONTH?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	33	26	27	26	29	29	31	31	34	32
1	30	30	32	31	28	29	28	32	31	32
2-4	29	34	33	33	33	33	30	30	28	27
5-10	6	7	6	7	7	7	8	5	5	7
11+	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2

Trade paperback buying also declined, with those buying none up 7% to a full third (33%) of respondents. Those buying one a month held steady, but those buying 2-4 dropped 5% and those buying 5-10 fell 1%. The biggest buyers held steady.

PER YEAR?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	9	7	7	6	6	8	8	8	6	8
1	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	6	4
2-4	21	18	18	21	21	22	21	19	24	26
5-10	28	27	27	27	24	27	25	32	30	27
11+	40	45	45	44	45	41	42	36	34	36

Those buying no trade paperbacks per year went up 2% to a new high, while those buying only one held steady, and the next two groups went up, the 2-4 group up 3% and the 5-10 group up 1%. Still, those buying 11+ per year dropped 5%.

HOW MANY NEW PAPERBACK BOOKS DO YOU BUY PER MONTH?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	27	25	22	18	20	19	20	17	20	17
1	27	24	25	29	23	25	21	21	21	22
2-4	33	35	38	38	38	41	42	44	41	39
5-10	10	11	12	12	15	13	12	12	14	17
11+	4	5	3	3	4	3	5	5	4	6

Paperback buying shows a definite decline as well, ⏭

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with those buying none per month up 2%. Those buying only one also rose, up 3%. Those buying 2-4 dropped 2% and those buying 5-10 dropped 1%, both hitting new lows; the 11+ group dropped 1% as well.

PER YEAR?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
None	8	7	7	4	5	5	4	4	4	4
1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
2-4	15	12	12	12	12	11	14	13	12	12
5-10	24	24	19	24	19	22	21	18	21	19
11+	51	54	59	58	62	59	60	63	61	64

Again, buying is down, those buying none up 1% to a new high, and those buying the most down 3% to a new low at 51%. In between, those buying just one dropped 1%, the 2-4 group went up 3% to a new high, and the 5-10 group held steady.

IS MOST OF THE SF YOU BUY NEW OR USED?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
New	63	57	62	61	61	64	59	67	65	63
Used	9	9	10	9	10	8	9	7	7	8
50/50	28	35	28	31	30	29	32	27	28	28

New book buying may be down in total, but respondents aren't making up for it by buying used: those buying mostly new books went up 6%, with a corresponding 7% drop in those who buy about equally new and used. Mostly used book buyers held steady. Either respondents aren't reading as much these days, or e-books are seriously starting to affect new book purchases.

WHERE DO YOU BUY MOST OF YOUR SF?

	'11	10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
Online	78	69	68	69	64	61	62	51	48	45
General	29	30	29	31	31	32	27	28	30	32
Chain	28	33	32	35	37	36	35	32	33	36
Specialty	18	23	19	21	24	23	23	23	23	26
Cons	13	17	13	14	16	14	14	9	12	12
Mail	6	7	10	7	9	8	9	10	14	14
Wholsle.	6	4	6	7	7	8	8	5	7	6
Nwstand.	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	2

Online remains the major source of SF, up 9% to a new high at 78%. The only source showing an increase was Wholesale or Discount, up 2%. All the rest were down, General Bookstores down only 1% and moving up a notch to second place; Chain Bookstores dropped 5% to a new low at 28%; Specialty Bookstores were also down 5% to a new low at 18%. Cons dropped 4%. Mail Order only dropped 1%, but also hit a new low. At the bottom of the list, Newsstands barely made 1%, named by only four respondents.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A GENERAL BOOK OR VIDEO CLUB?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
%Yes	12	10	13	12	16	15	16	16	20	20

Up 2%.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
%Yes	16	18	23	18	21	22	24	24	29	28

Down 2% to a new low. When we first asked this in 1973, 62% of respondents were members.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MAGAZINES DO YOU READ REGULARLY?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Asimov's	23	24	28	26	29	28	31	33	35
F&SF	23	28	28	29	34	33	32	33	38
Analog	13	14	18	16	18	20	19	19	22
Realms of F.	9	13	10	13	14	15	16	14	16
Weird Tales	8	12	8	11	7	5	6	6	7
Interzone	6	9	8	10	10	11	10	11	12
NY Rev. of SF	6	9	10	10	10	11	10	10	14
Lady Churchill's R. Wristlet	6	9	8	11	8	-	-	-	-
None	55	53	48	20	55	45	47	48	37

Print magazine readership was down across the board, all but *Weird Tales* reaching new lows. *Asimov's*, down 1%, tied for first with last year's leader *F&SF*, down 5%. The rest of the magazines held onto their relative positions. The number of respondents reading None went up 2%. The closest runners up among the Other magazines named were *Black Gate* and *Cemetery Dance*, each with just under 1%.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN READING *LOCUS*?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
<1 yr	23	19	14	21	21	20	17	10	7	11
1-2 yrs	6	5	8	7	6	7	8	7	6	6
3-5 yrs	10	13	10	12	14	15	13	17	12	16
6-10 yrs	9	12	12	13	13	14	14	13	13	16
11-20	19	15	19	20	20	17	21	24	28	25
21-30	19	21	22	16	18	19	19	21	25	20
31+	12	12	12	8	6	6	6	7	6	4
From first	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

The increase in newer readers continues, not surprising considering the growth in respondents who are not subscribers. Those who have read *Locus* for a year or less went up 4% to a new high since we started asking in 1980. Also increasing were the 1-2 year group (up 1%) and the 11-20 year group (up 4%). The 31+ year group held steady. The rest all decreased, the 6-10 year group down 3% to a new low.

WHERE DID YOU FIRST HEAR OF *LOCUS*?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05
Friend/Word-of-mouth	24	24	21	21	24	20	21
Online	20	14	12	19	17	17	14
Specialty Bookstore	18	21	23	20	23	20	21
Magazine/Fanzine	10	10	11	9	9	10	10
Convention	8	12	9	9	10	10	10
General Bookstore	6	5	7	6	6	5	7
Book Cover Blurb	5	3	4	6	4	4	4
Best of Year Anthology	4	2	4	3	3	4	4
Library	2	2	3	2	2	3	2
SF Club	2	3	2	2	3	2	4
Other	6	7	7	4	5	5	4

Friend/Word of Mouth remains in first place, holding steady with just under a quarter (24%) or respondents. Online, up 6% to a new high, moves up to second place, while Specialty Bookstores, down 2% to a new low, move down a notch to third. Magazine/Fanzine, holding steady with 10% of the vote, moved up a notch to fourth place; in fifth, Convention dropped 4% to a new low. Below that, General Bookstore rose 1% and Cover Blurb and Best of the Year Anthology each picked up 2%. Library held steady, and SF Club dropped 1%. The Other category included a number of websites, blogs, and online magazines, moved in with Online; the top Other items listed were Don't Remember, How-to-write Book, and Writer's Class/Workshop, each with 1%.

HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED A CONVENTION OR WORLDCON?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
Con	68	75	69	67	69	67	70	68	72	65
Worldcon	36	43	41	39	41	40	44	44	49	44

Both Science Fiction Convention and Worldcon saw a 7% drop, Worldcon reaching a new low.

HOW MANY CONVENTIONS, ASIDE FROM THE WORLDCON, DID YOU ATTEND LAST YEAR?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
0	54	46	55	53	52	54	55	57	54	6
1-2	29	32	28	29	30	30	27	29	30	58
3-5	14	16	12	14	15	12	14	11	12	29
6-10	3	6	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	7
11+	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0

With fewer respondents having ever attended a SF convention, it's not surprising that the number of conventions attended last year was down. Those attending none went up 8%, while all the other categories saw declines. None attended 11 or more, down from three last year.

DID YOU ATTEND AUSSIECON 4, THE 2010 WORLDCON? Yes: 6%

Not many respondents made it to Melbourne, Australia in 2010. Worldcon attendence was down considerably from the 17% making it to Anticipation in Montreal in 2009.

DO YOU NOMINATE? VOTE? FOR THE HUGOS?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
Nom.	16	20	15	13	14	15	16	18	20	17
Vote	18	23	19	17	20	20	21	22	23	21

Both down, Hugo nominators dropping 4% and voters 5%.

HOW MANY MOVIES DO YOU SEE EACH MONTH?

Theater	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
0	42	36	39	37	38	30	31	28	29	4
1-2	43	50	49	46	47	54	53	54	53	71
3-5	9	10	10	13	12	12	12	13	15	20
6-10	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	4	3	20
11+	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	4

Movie-going is generally down. Those going out to no movies are up 6%, while those seeing to 1-2 dropped 6%, and those seeing 3-5 fell 1% to a record low. However, serious movie-goers aren't giving up their passtime, with those seeing 6-10 holding steady at 3% of respondents, and those seeing 11+ actually up 1%.

TV/Video	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
0	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	4	3	1
1-2	24	25	26	25	28	25	27	26	28	23
3-5	34	36	34	32	31	33	32	36	34	39
6-10	19	18	20	21	20	23	22	20	21	22
11+	15	16	15	17	15	15	14	13	14	14

The results were more mixed for home movie viewing, with a slight trend towards seeing fewer films. Those seeing none rose 1%, and those watching 11 or more fell 1%. But the next highest group rose 1%, while the 1-2 group fell 1% and the 3-5 group fell 2%.

DO YOU HAVE CABLE OR SATELLITE TV?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02
%Yes	65	66	72	71	69	71	71	68	74	73

DO YOU HAVE NETFLIX?

	'11	'10	'09
%Yes	36	33	30

Cable and Satellite TV fell 1% to another new low, possibly because more and more people are using online sources for their video viewing. Netflix rose 3%.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RELATED SUBJECTS ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?

	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Movies	70	72	72	76	80	78	71	72	73
NF/Science	57	57	64	60	67	63	56	52	56
Comics/Gr.N.	46	48	47	54	52	51	43	41	37
Mystery	43	42	44	41	46	45	43	45	46
Mainstream	40	45	48	48	50	50	50	45	45
Historicals	37	36	39	38	43	39	39	37	31
YA fiction	36	35	37	36	34	31	32	27	25
Dr. Who	34	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Star Trek	33	31	35	32	32	27	29	30	31
Star Wars	29	24	27	28	25	26	26	24	26
Battlestar Galatica	25	25	31	32	30	29	-	-	-
Gaming /RPG	25	21	20	26	25	24	19	15	15
Computer/ Vid. Games	25	21	21	27	27	29	26	23	19
Small Press/ Fanzines	23	31	27	27	31	28	31	29	31
Stargate	17	14	15	15	15	18	18	13	-
Lost	16	21	22	23	23	26	-	-	-
Romance	12	10	9	9	9	11	12	8	7
Heroes	10	11	22	32	31	-	-	-	-

Movies remain the most popular related subject, retaining their hefty lead despite a 2% drop. Non-fiction Science holds steady in second place, followed by Comics/Graphic Novels (down 2%) in third. Ten subjects went up, with the biggest increases were in ***Dr. Who*** and ***Star Wars***, both up 5%. Six subjects went down, Fanzines/Small Press with the largest drop (down 8%); ***Lost*** (down 5%) and ***Heroes*** (down 1%) both reaching new lows. It might be time to drop ***Lost*** and ***Heroes***; TV shows are usually volatile; we didn't add or drop any this year, but expect changes (adding ***Game of Thrones*** for one) next year.

CONCLUSION

One reason we do this survey is to try to keep up with our readers, but we missed the surge in e-books, and the opportunity to get some good data on them. Last year we only got a few comments that we should start tracking e-books; this year we got a flood, with readers saying they are only buying e-books, or replacing their hardcover (or paperback) buying with e-books. So, book buying appears to be down, and the economy could certainly be a factor, but the comments make it clear that e-books played a big part: "I am now exclusively buying e-books." "Big e-book shift this year… the last six months of last year I bought 90% of new reading on the iPad. Ten years from now paper books will have the market share of clay tablets." "A recent tornado warning revealed the shift in family values: I grabbed shoes, a ruana with a hood, my purse (which contained my wallet and my smart phone), and my Kindle, and I was ready to walk away from the ruins if necessary. My husband grabbed his laptop, his phone, his Kindle, and shoes. We spent the scary half hour engaged with technology: my husband watched the radar map of the storm; I played backgammon on my Kindle. Who needs a flying car or a jetpack? I can carry a library's worth of books in my purse! And *Locus*! And games! I love the electronic version of *Locus*, by the way. I find that easier to read on my Kindle as well."

We even have a few e-book collectors (though it's hard to figure out how you can "collect" something as ephemeral as digital information. Paper's bad enough.) Some respondents suggested we should ask which kind of e-book readers are being used. At least our new digital edition of *Locus* got a lot of positive response, particularly from overseas readers tired of waiting so long for their magazines to get to them – or paying a fortune for airmail.

We were also chided for not updating the media items in the Related Subjects question, and for not asking specifically about blogs ("Most of my genre-related reading is various online blogs, which don't quite seem to fit in Online Publications."); podcasts ("I consume 3/4 of my short fiction as audio fiction by subscribing to various short fiction podcasts."), and even webcomics. And several respondents think it's time for another "All-Time Best Novel" question.

We can't cover everything; it's hard enough keeping up with the books. But we definitely need to add e-books, along with the various devices to read them – and then figure out which questions to drop so we have room for the new ones.

–Carolyn Cushman ■