



# nexus

August 2004

Issue #195

## LOCUS AWARDS

### SF NOVEL

**Ilium** by Dan Simmons

### FANTASY NOVEL

**Paladin of Souls**  
by Lois McMaster Bujold

### FIRST NOVEL

**Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom**  
by Cory Doctorow

### YOUNG ADULT NOVEL

**The Wee Free Men** by Terry Pratchett

### NOVELLA

**The Cookie Monster** by Vernor Vinge

### NOVELETTE

**A Study in Emerald** by Neil Gaiman

### SHORT STORY

**Closing Time** by Neil Gaiman

### COLLECTION

**Changing Planes** by Ursula K Le Guin

### ANTHOLOGY

**The Year's Best Science Fiction:  
Twentieth Annual Collection**  
edited by Gardner Dozois

### NON-FICTION / ART

**The Sandman: Endless Nights**  
by Neil Gaiman et al.

### EDITOR

Gardner Dozois

### MAGAZINE

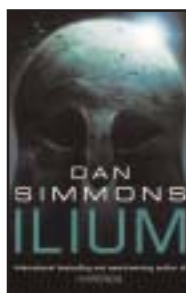
**The Magazine of Fantasy  
& Science Fiction**

### BOOK PUBLISHER

Tor

### ARTIST

Michael Whelan



## THE UNSEEN FORCE: THE FILMS OF SAM RAIMI

JOHN KENNETH MUIR



Sam Raimi exploded onto the movie scene with the audacious, independently-produced horror film *The Evil Dead*. Reigniting the horror genre to such a degree that Wes Craven credited Raimi on-screen in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Raimi went on to direct two *Evil Dead* sequels, his own comic-book superhero, *Darkman*, and a post-modern western, *The Quick and the Dead*. Raimi's influence on other filmmakers continues to be enormous - from the "shaky cam" shots of the Coen brothers to the early oeuvre of *The Lord of the Rings* director Peter Jackson. In 2002, Raimi's *Spider-Man* had the biggest opening weekend in history, earning more than \$114 million at the box office.

This biography also features a look at *Spider-Man 2*. Included are first-person accounts and interviews with the cinematographers, producers, screenwriters, actors, special effects magicians and composers who collaborated to make his films the stuff of legend, earn mainstream success and still be the focus of obsessive cult. Tp \$39.95 342pp

## CAUGHT IN THE WEB: DREAMING UP THE WORLD OF SPIDER-MAN 2

MARK COTTA VAZ



In this journey behind-the-scenes and into the imagination, fans can discover how the myth and magic became real in *Spider-Man 2*, as they plunge deeper into Spider-Man's world to meet the characters, explore the environments and follow the storyline. Packed with production illustrations, prepared by many of the most talented illustrators in Hollywood, this title features original sketches, artwork and doodles that became the inspirations for characters, sets and computer-generated imagery, climactic scenes from the movie as they first appeared in conceptual art, design work used to develop costumes and visual effects, blueprints and architectural drafts used in the construction of both physical and virtual environments and unique insights into the genesis of Doc Ock. Tp \$43.00 157pp

## STARGATE SG-1 BOARDGAME

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# SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY



**ROBIN WAYNE BAILEY**

## **DRAGONKIN**

*Wyvernwood #1.* Wyvernwood is the last known refuge of the majestic dragons that once ruled the skies. With them are most of the remaining mythological and magical creatures of the world. But there is no stopping the gradual encroachment of Men. It is clear to all the creatures of Wyvernwood that if they are to survive, a new home and refuge must be found. Somewhere in the dangerous outer world are three ancient artefacts and when the three are united once again, they will point the way to a new home. Yet who will dare to seek such a place? Harrow, Chan and Luna are triplets - two brothers and a sister. Prophecy says that one of the three will rise to lead the dragons to a new home... Pb \$16.95 357pp

**M A R BARKER**

## **LORDS OF TSAMRA**

*Tekumel #3.* Korrúkka is part of a Tsolyáni mission to find a peaceful solution to the war between the Livyáni and the people of the Tsoléi Archipelago, but the talks break down and the Tsolyáni delegation succumbs to the plague. Waking up on the shores of Livyánu, the remnants of the delegation must find a way to stop the spread of the plague before it destroys all of civilisation. Tp \$38.95 286pp



## **PRINCE OF SKULLS**

*Tekumel #4.* Hársan, linguist and priest of the god of wisdom, is sent on a mission beyond the frontiers of the Empire of the Petal Throne. He and his companions are caught in a skirmish with ferocious foes, both human and alien, and flee in an ancient underground tubeway car in order to save a spoiled and petulant N'lüss princess. Arriving in distant Ghatón, they discover a plan that could change the very future of Tékumel. And this is only the beginning of their adventures... Tp \$38.95 193pp

**PETER BEAGLE**

## **TAMSIN**

Arriving in the English countryside to live with her mother and new stepfather, Jenny has no interest in her surroundings, until she meets Tamsin. Since her death over 300 years ago, Tamsin has haunted the lonely estate without rest, trapped by a hidden trauma she can't remember and a powerful evil even the spirits of night cannot name. To help her, Jenny must delve deeper into the dark world than any human has in hundreds of years and face danger that will change her life forever... Pb \$17.95 335pp

**GREG BEAR**

## **DARWIN'S CHILDREN**

*Darwin #2.* Stella Nova is one of the 'virus children', a generation of genetically enhanced babies born a dozen years before to mothers infected with the SHEVA virus. In fact, the children represent the next great evolutionary leap and a new species of human, Homo sapiens novus, but this is officially denied. They're gentle, charming and persuasive, possessed of remarkable traits. Nevertheless, they are locked up in special schools, quarantined from society, feared and reviled. 'Survival of the fittest' takes on a new dimension as the children reach puberty. Stella is one of the first to find herself attracted to another 'virus child', but the authorities are watching and waiting for the opportunity to strike the next blow in their escalating war to preserve humankind at any cost. Pb \$18.95 473pp

**PAUL BRANDON**

## **THE WILD REEL**

Natasha lives in a small sea village in the far west of Ireland, the perfect place for her work, or at least it was until the dreams came. Starting as merely vague images, the dreams begin to grow. Then they begin to affect her art... and intrude into her real life. When an invitation arrives to attend a wedding in Australia, Natasha seizes the chance to have a vacation, but there is someone else who can also hear her secret music - someone unearthly and dangerous. Someone who covets her. Finvarra, the Faerie King of Connaught. He has decided that she will be his next bride. Tp \$32.95 332pp

**STEVE CASH**

## **THE MEQ**

The Meq are a rare, ancient and enigmatic race who originated in the Basque Pyrenees. While some of them may be hundreds - even thousands - of years old, they retain the physical appearance of 12-year-olds. This is the story of Zianno Zezen - commonly known as Z - and it commences in 1881, on an ill-fated train journey through the Rocky Mountains. Rescued by a bearded stranger, befriended by orphans, beguiled by kin and burdened by revenge, Z begins to quest to understand the Meq, their purpose and their secrets. Pb \$19.95 545pp

**EOIN COLFER**

## **THE ETERNITY CODE**

*Artemis Fowl #3.* Artemis requires the help of the fairy folk once more as he is tricked into handing over the C Cube super computer he has constructed from stolen fairy technology, to Chicago businessman Jon Spiro. This time Butler's life is at stake so Artemis, Butler's sister Juliet and Holly Short travel to Chicago to steal back the Cube and ensure that Spiro is put out of business - permanently! Pb \$14.95 329pp

**PAUL COLLINS**

## **DRAGONFANG**









*Jelindel #2.* The sequel to *Dragonlinks* (Pb \$19.95). Five pentagram gems - two people want them, but only one can have them. Pb \$22.95 342pp

**ADAM CONNELL**

## **COUNTERFEIT KINGS**

Once a bodyguard for the king of the Io colony, Horrocks now toils in one of the brimstone moon's orbiting Furnaces - a network of processing stations that harvest power from Io's continuous volcanic eruptions. His new job is rough and unglamorous, but with his wife expecting their first child, he wants nothing more to do with the kill-or-be-killed life of a king's bodyguard. His hopes for a stable future are shattered when an assassination attempt kills one of the King's sons and forces the King himself into hiding. Civil war looms as many factions compete for control of the leaderless colony. Called back into service by the Queen, Horrocks agrees to spearhead the King's rescue. Now he must track down the Ringers, a new breed of bodyguard surgically altered to mimic the King, who all vanished moments after the attempted assassination. To make matters worse, his wife insists on joining the hunt, plunging herself and their unborn child into the kind of do-or-die danger he had worked so hard to keep them from. Tp \$32.95 382pp



	
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## THE WILD REEL

PAUL BRANDON

Tp \$32.95 332pp

Brandon has created an urban fantasy tale set between Ireland and Brisbane, Australia, that has some of the charm of a De Lint novel, but with a bit more humour, local flavour and loads of pop culture references.

Natasha (Natty) is a 20-something (Irish) artist. She has received more than a little fame for her stunning paintings, mostly Irish land and seascapes. While she paints, she hears music - from wild Irish jigs to instrumentals. What she doesn't realise is that this is more than a little magic. It is this magic that attracts the attention of Finvarra - the Faerie King of Connaught. Finvarra is in need of a bride by All Hallows Eve - and he's decided that Natty is the woman for him.

Gone are the days when he can just take her to be his bride - she must agree to it, so he starts wooing her by invading her dreams - which start out erotic, but end up somewhere else entirely. It begins to affect not only her sleep, but her work as well. When Natty receives an invitation to attend the wedding of an old friend who is now living in Brisbane, she jumps at the chance, thinking the change of scenery will clear her mind and get rid of the dreams that have started to take on sinister overtones.

Finvarra has dabbled in magic to do an exchange with the Brisbane fairy court (the "Colonials"). Apart from a couple of fairies who will stay in their respective homes to act as guides, the two courts swap. Little does he know that Tu'loch (the last of the great enchantresses of the Old World) has literally hitched a ride to Australia on the tails of his magic. If Finvarra doesn't find a bride in time - she will take control of their home.

Much of the humour of the story comes from the more traditional, rural Irish Court trying to deal with being in the Brisbane CBD (their reaction to cricket made me laugh).

In Brisbane, Natty stays with her best friend Gwendolyn during the weeks leading up to Sarah's wedding. It is through Gwendolyn that she meets and falls for Ally, a musician, folklore expert and all-round nice guy (if I do say so myself). Natty's dreams continue to worsen and she eventually confides in Ally, who then plays in pivotal role in helping her.

As mentioned, this has similarities to a De Lint or Emma Bull novel (that's why I picked it up). It doesn't, however, focus on the coexistence of our world with that of the magical - they just do.

Brandon's style is also grittier, with a bit of a naughty sense of humour at times. There are many different types of magical creatures in the story - from boggles to trolls, fairies to phoukas - and not all of them are nice.

Brian Froud would have been the perfect illustrator for all these peripheral characters. Music, art, magic, a little romance and humour - this was a great story. I did feel one character did something a little convenient at the end (which annoyed me for a few minutes), but it didn't take me long to get over it. Lots of fun. - *Stephanie*



## SONGS OF EARTH AND POWER

GREG BEAR

Pb \$19.95 416pp

**Songs of Earth and Power** is an omnibus edition of two novels originally published separately: **The Infinity Concerto** and **The Serpent Mage**. Greg Bear has done his homework, incorporating Gaelic and Celtic cultures into this work, making the story more believable - and his religious, though irreverent, connotations are amusing.

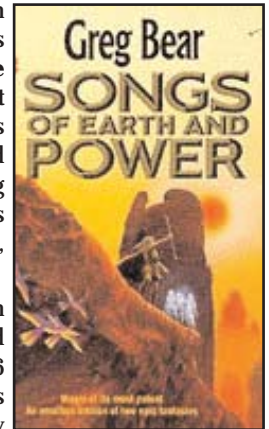
The human race's hero and saviour in this epic is a young man named Michael Perrin, an aspiring poet of 16 years who, after befriendng a famous composer, sets out one evening shortly after the composer's death to discover "what lies between, above or below" his reality and finds himself transported, quite violently, to another dimension - another world - another space in time alternately known as Sidhedark, the land of faerie, or simply, The Realm.

Michael soon finds he must adapt and learn as much as he can about his new surroundings if he is to survive long enough to find his way back to Earth; for The Realm is a harsh and unforgiving place where humans are only tolerated because of a pact between a defeated human sorcerer and the Sidhe, into whose world young Michael Perrin has been thrust.

In part 1 of the epic, **The Infinity Concerto**, we follow young Michael and his accomplishments and failures in his quest to meet The Isomage, the defeated human sorcerer, who is the only one that has the power to return Michael to Earth. There are many twists and turns in the story and you may find yourself going back to reread certain passages, afraid that you may have missed some crucial piece of information that the story needs to progress.

In part 2, **The Serpent Mage**, we find Michael Perrin back on Earth five years later (it only seemed like a few month's time while he was in The Realm); vastly more knowledgeable, but still not sure of the potential he must accomplish to become what he has been destined for. The Serpent Mage, Manus is truly a delightful character who, while imparting his knowledge, oft-times unwittingly, to Michael, sheds light on the creation of man and all the original five races of beings.

Although I found **The Infinity Concerto** to be the stronger of the two books, Bear's ending of **The Serpent Mage** has left this story satisfyingly complete. The door is still open for the author to, perhaps, one day write a third book featuring Michael and Kristine's daughter. - *Adam*



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**ROBERT CONROY** **1901**

The year is 1901. Germany's navy is the second largest in the world; their army, the most powerful. But with the exception of a small piece of Africa and a few minor islands in the Pacific, Germany is without an empire. Kaiser Wilhelm II demands that the United States surrender its newly acquired territories - Guam, Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines. President McKinley refuses. With the honour and economic future of the Reich at stake, the Kaiser launches an invasion of the United States, striking first on Long Island. Now the Americans, with their army largely disbanded, must defend the homeland. Pb \$17.95 404pp

**BERNARD CORNWELL** **HERETIC**

*Grail Quest #3.* In 1347, the English capture Calais and the war with France is suspended by a truce. But for Thomas of Hookton, there is no end to the fighting. He is pursuing the grail, the most sacred of Christendom's relics and is sent to his ancestral homeland, Gascony, to engineer a confrontation with his deadliest enemy, Guy Vexille. Pb \$18.95 435pp

**PETER DAVID** **ONE KNIGHT ONLY**

King Arthur, in his modern incarnation as Arthur Penn, has been elected President of the United States. But with political power comes powerful enemies. An assassination attempt against Arthur puts his beloved wife Gwen in a coma - and her only hope lies in the lost Holy Grail. Pb \$17.95 373pp

**PAUL DI FILIPPO**  **NEUTRINO DRAG**

What do Jayne Mansfield, Pythagoras, Disney imagineers and the Virgin Mary have in common? They are all protagonists in the stories from Paul Di Filippo's newest collection. 20 tales of mental pygmies and product placement, gentle giants and teen witches. Tp \$35.00 492pp

**GARDNER DOZOIS (ED)** **THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION: 21ST ANNUAL COLLECTION**

The stories in this collection take readers far across the universe, into the very core of their beings, to the realm of the Gods and to the moment just after now. Included are the works of masters of the form and the bright new talents of tomorrow. Tp \$43.00 665pp

**DAVID DRAKE**  **CRISIS**

*The Fleet #5.* It's the strangest alliance yet... The Khalians, sworn enemies of humanity for three generations, have joined forces with the Fleet against a common foe - the ruthless and mysterious Syndicate of Families. Pb \$15.95 293pp

**DAVID DRAKE** **THE GODDESS OF THE ICE REALM**

*The Lord of the Isles #5.* As Garric and his retinue reach the island city of Carcosa, the wizard Tenoctris perceives a powerful supernatural assault directed against them. Inna and Chalcus are sent to investigate a magical threat to shipping in the north. Cashel is translated into another world by evil magic and Sharina to another. Pb \$17.95 522pp

**DAVID & LEIGH EDDINGS** **THE TREASURED ONE**

*The Dreamers #2.* Despite the literally earth-shattering climax of **The Elder Gods** (Pb \$19.95), Dahlaine still does not regret having brought the Dreamers into the world of the Elder Gods. He only wishes he'd thought harder about the consequences. His sister Aracia fears the whole world will collapse in on itself if the Dreamers should all wake up and realise where they are. It's bad enough with them dreaming the future, but at least it's a future. The Dreamers give the Elder Gods a chance in the battle against the vicious Ruler of the Wasteland. Then spies of very short stature start cropping up in Veltan's bucolic and peaceful domain. They look like people, or maybe they all look like the same person, but they are more sinister than that. Hb \$59.95 519pp Tp \$29.95 519pp

**JENNIFER FALLON** **WOLFBLADE**

*The Hythrun Chronicles #1.* Marla Wolfblade, princess of Hythria, is determined to restore her family to its former power and glory. But Hythria is a fiercely patriarchal society and Marla knows power may only be gained through a man. Narrowly avoiding an arranged marriage to the King of Fardohnya, she instead marries Laran, Warlord of Dregian Province and gives birth to a son. Damir is named heir to the throne of Hythria by his uncle, the dissolute High Prince. Settling in to life as the wife of a warlord, Marla believes the future of her family is secured, but there are forces in the land that do not want the house of Wolfblade restored. Can Marla protect her son and her family and stop the conspirators? Pb \$18.95 626pp

**BILL FAWCETT****& BRIAN THOMSEN (EDS)** **MASTERS OF FANTASY**

This title presents a roster of some of today's most popular fantasy writers, offering brand new adventures set in their most popular series. Contributors include David Weber, Mercedes Lackey, Mickey Zucker Reichert, David Drake, Andre Norton, Elizabeth Moon, Alan Dean Foster, Michael Resnick, Robert Asprin and Jody Lynn Nye and more. Hb \$54.00 376pp

**JUDE FISHER** **WILD MAGIC**

*Fool's Gold #2.* Magic has returned to Elda, creating all manner of wonders and terrors. None yet know that the source of this magic is the legendary Rosa Eldi, restored to the world, but not yet restored to herself. Unaware of her true nature, she has married King Ravn Asharson of the North and now, with usurpers and assassins circling, she must conceive a child to establish the succession. Pb \$15.95 586pp

**ALAN DEAN FOSTER** **LOST AND FOUND**

Not so long ago, Marcus Walker was just another young commodities trader in Chicago, working hard and playing harder. But that's all in the past, part of a reality that vanished when he was tossed aboard a starship bound for deep space. Now instead of being a rich hotshot at the top of the food chain, Walker is just another amusing novelty, part of a cargo of cute aliens from primitive planets destined to be sold as pets to highly advanced populations in civilised regions of the galaxy. Even if he weren't constantly watched by his captors, Walker has few options. After all, there is no escape from a speeding starship. Another man might resign himself to the inevitable and hope to be sold to a kindly owner, but not Walker. He has no intention of admitting defeat, now or ever. In fact, he's only just begun to fight... Hb \$49.95 248pp

**C S FRIEDMAN** **THE WILDING**

The tribal Braxana were created to become the ultimate warriors. The Azeans were raised to master the power of the mind. Two interstellar civilisations fighting an endless war over a long-forgotten cause. Now after two centuries, the legacy of their greatest military leaders threatens to tear apart both empires. Hb \$54.00 440pp

**KATHLEEN O'NEAL GEAR****& W MICHAEL GEAR** **PEOPLE OF THE OWL**

*People #11.* Young Salamander would much rather catch crickets and watch birds than dabble in the politics of his clan. But when his brother is killed, Salamander becomes the leader of America's first city. He inherits his brother's two wives, who despise him and is forced to marry his mortal enemy's daughter to forge an alliance for the trade goods his people desperately need. Cast adrift in a stark wilderness of political intrigue where assassins are everywhere, young Salamander has no choice but to become a man - and quickly. For his own greatest enemies are closing in, intent upon destroying him and his clan and taking over Sun Town for themselves. Pb \$17.95 609pp

**WILLIAM GIBSON**

 **PATTERN RECOGNITION**

Cayce Pollard owes her living to her pathological sensitivity to logos. In London to consult for the world's coolest ad agency, she finds herself catapulted, via her addiction to a mysterious body of fragmentary film footage, uploaded to the Web by a shadowy auteur, into a global quest for this unknown 'garage Kubrick'. Cayce becomes involved with an eccentric hacker, a vengeful ad executive, a defrocked mathematician, a Tokyo Otaku-coven known as Eye of the Dragon and, eventually, the elusive 'Kubrick' himself. Pb \$22.95 356pp

**CHRISTIE GOLDEN**

 **ON FIRE'S WINGS**

Kevla Bai-sha was born without caste or position in Arukan, a country that prized both. Then a chance encounter led her to a better life, but it also brought her to danger and destiny. Her dreams - looming threats to their land and visions of dragons that had once watched over her people - hold the promise of truth. Now Arukan, shadowed by mountains and myths, might be overcome by eternal darkness. Kevla, together with Jashemikha-Tahmu, rebel prince of the ruling household, would defy all law, all tradition, to embark on a daring quest for the half-forgotten elemental parts that will save the world. And so Kevla must sacrifice everything, only to be reborn in dragon's flames... Tp \$29.95 408pp

**GAELYN GORDON**

 **TRIPSWITCH**

You are not without power, the voice tells them. But what powers do Jocasta, Flora and Cilla have and how can they harness them to escape their Aunt Lureene? The more the three orphaned nieces discover about their cruel aunt, the more secrets they unearth and the more horrified they become. What will happen to them if Lureene's ultimate plan succeeds? Would Lureene really sacrifice her own twin sons for power? And what do the girls possess that Lureene wants so desperately? They must find the answers before it's too late. Pb \$14.95 232pp

**MARTIN H GREENBERG**

**& JOHN HELFERS (EDS)**

 **LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD IN THE BIG BAD CITY**

This is a collection of classic fairy tales made modern by Nini Kiriki Hoffman, Tanya Huff, Jody Lynn Nye and others. From a young girl who rescues her brother when he's magically trapped in a mall, to a guitarist who trades his jacket for magical picks, to a talking cat who proves invaluable to his modern family, here are 17 original modern stories sure to cast a spell... Pb \$15.95 312pp



**RODNEY HALL**

 **THE LAST LOVE STORY** 

After a violent uprising in the near future, a city is divided in two. In City North, a brutal and paranoid regime takes control. Across the Friendship Bridge in City South, the citizens are rich and content and free. Though the border between the two cities is tightly controlled, people from City North still make desperate attempts to smuggle themselves south in search of a better life. In this harsh political environment, a dangerous relationship begins. A man and a woman from opposite sides of the divided city fall in love. Haunting, suspenseful, simple as a fairytale, this is a story about the bonds of love and loyalty. The lovers will be tested in a way that neither of them could have imagined. In the end, only a devastating and selfless act will save them. Pb \$22.00 256pp

**DAVID HARTWELL**

**& KATHRYN CRAMER**

 **THE YEAR'S BEST FANTASY**

#4. Once again, these award-winning editors reap a magnificent crop of superior fantasy short fiction - some of the finest to blossom over the past year. A cornucopia of tales from some of the field's most acclaimed artists including Neil Gaiman, Octavia Butler, Tanith Lee and Michael Swanwick, as well as stunning new works from emerging young talents. Pb \$17.95 481pp

**SIMON HAYNES**

 **JUST DESSERTS** 

*Hal Spacejock #3.* When the Volante lands on Cathuan for urgent repairs, Hal's problems are only just beginning. Power blackouts threaten his cargo, armed forces are commandeering private ships and worst of all, fuel and spares are in short supply. Clunk is still sourcing parts for the Volante when a lucrative cargo job comes in. Undaunted by the lack of a spaceship, Hal takes the job anyway. Now he must deliver a cargo which doesn't exist, using a ship he doesn't own, to people who think they hired someone else. Pb \$17.95 316pp

**ROBERT HOWARD**

  **THE SAVAGE TALES OF SOLOMON KANE**

Collected in this volume, illustrated by award-winning artist Gary Gianni, are all of the stories and poems that make up the saga of the dour and deadly Puritan, Solomon Kane. Together they constitute a sprawling epic of weird fantasy adventure that stretches from 16th century England to remote African jungles where no white man has set foot. This edition also features exclusive story fragments, a biography of the author and H P Lovecraft's moving tribute to his friend and fellow literary genius. Tp \$35.00 414pp

**ROBERT E HOWARD'S CONAN**

 **HARRY TURTLEDOVE**

**CONAN OF VENARIUM**

On the verge of adulthood, Conan lives in a Cimmerian hamlet, working in his father's smithy, yearning after the weaver's daughter next door. Then war comes - an invasion by the Aquilonian Empire. Conan burns to join the fight, but he's deemed too young. Then the Aquilonians smash the Cimmerian defending forces. Soon their heavily garrisoned forts dot the countryside. Their settlers follow after, carving homesteads out of other men's land. Then, intolerably, the Aquilonian commander takes a wholly dishonourable interest in the weaver's daughter - and he's not a man to wait, or even ask permission. Pb \$15.95 269pp

**KIM HUNTER**

 **SCABBARD'S SONG**

*The Red Pavilions #3.* Soldier, now commander of the mercenary army known as the Red Pavilions, meets with his captains outside the walls of the great city to plan their next move. But Soldier has troubles of his own. The memory of his past life, which has been lost to him since his arrival in this strange land, is about to return. For when his sword is reunited with its scabbard, the song it sings will tell him of a feud driven by murder, betrayal and bloodshed - a feud that continues for as long as his enemy stalks him. But just as Soldier has not known his true identity, so his enemy has remained hidden. Now they must meet, to end at last this conflict that has crossed from one world to another and threatens to destroy both. Pb \$19.95 409pp

**JANE JENSEN**

 **DANTE'S EQUATION**

Rabbi Aharon Handalman's expertise with Torah code - rearranging words and letters in the Bible - has uncovered a man's name. Who is Yosef Kobinksi and why did God hide his name in His sacred text? To find the answers, Aharon begins an investigation and discovers that Kobinksi, a Polish rabbi, was not only a mystic, but also a brilliant physicist. In Seattle, Jill Talcott's work with energy wave equations is being linked to Yosef Kobinksi, now deceased, who claimed to discover an actual physical law of good and evil. But when Jill's lab explodes, she is forced to flee for her life, realising her research is far more dangerous than she ever had imagined. Now Jill, her co-researcher and a writer meet Handalman and trace Kobinksi to Auschwitz. They discover that Kobinksi, drawing on his own alchemy of science and the Kabbalah, made himself vanish from the death camp. With intelligence agents hot on their trail, the investigators must follow Kobinksi - to wherever he may have gone... Hb \$29.95 611pp

NAOMI KRITZER

 **FREEDOM'S GATE**

*The Dead Rivers trilogy #1.* Lauria is the favourite aide to Kyros, a powerful military officer. On his authority, she is messenger, observer and spy. But now, she is entrusted with a mission more dangerous than any that have come before. After years of relative peace, word has come to Kyros's compound that the bandit tribe known as the Alashi is planning an offensive. It is up to Lauria to infiltrate the Alashi by posing as an escaped slave - a charge that requires she serve in the household of a neighbouring officer. From there, she will stage an escape and continue on in her guise as a runaway. But posing as a slave may prove the least of her troubles. For even if she does escape and the Alashi do accept her, how can she convince them she's a slave, not a spy? Pb \$15.95 355pp

J ARDIAN LEE

 **SWORD OF KING JAMES**

*Summons of the Sword #3.* Brought back in time to 18th century Scotland, Dylan Matheson became a warrior against British oppression, but he has an even greater enemy in Morrighan, the Goddess of War, who is obsessed with Dylan's knowledge of the future and will stop at nothing to claim him for her own. Pb \$15.95 358pp

TANITH LEE

 **CAST A BRIGHT SHADOW**

*Lionwolf #1.* Saphay, daughter of a subking in the more civilised west, is sent to marry a leader of the barbaric Jafn, not realising that her father has arranged for her to be betrayed and abducted. But, escaping her pursuers on the back of a giant whale, Saphay is discovered, entombed in an ice-pyramid, by her intended husband and the marriage proceeds. But all too soon, she carries a child, causing suspicions regarding the infant's true origins... And as her son grows up, it is soon evident that in him is emerging a hero with a very special destiny. Tp \$30.00 431pp

PAUL LEVINSON

 **THE PIXEL EYE**

*Phil D'Amato.* New York City, the next decade - underground concourses have multiplied because of the sense of security they provide, law enforcement and civil liberties groups clash over the boundary between public safety and personal freedom. That's the tenor of the times when Dr Phil D'Amato is called in to investigate an urgent case - squirrels missing from Central Park! It sounds like a joke, but Phil soon discovers it's anything but. A new technology can put implants into the brains of living squirrels to translate what they see into computer-viewable images. But who's behind this surveillance breakthrough? Federal agencies or terrorists? Tp \$32.95 334pp

PATRICIA MCKILLIP

 **IN THE FORESTS OF SERRE**

Returning from war, Prince Ronan of Serre accidentally tramples a white hen in the road and earns a witch's curse. Her words are meaningless to a man mourning his dead wife and child, but they come to pass all the same. Ronan has not been home a day before his father insists on an arranged second marriage. As he gazes into the forest, desperate for a way out, Ronan glimpses a wonderful firebird perched on a nearby branch. He follows where it leads him - into a sideways world where his father's palace no longer exists. But his intended, the beautiful Princess Sidonie, is on her way to that palace and her fate depends on Ronan's wanting to find his way home... Tp \$29.95 295pp

JOHN MARSDEN

 **WHILE I LIVE**

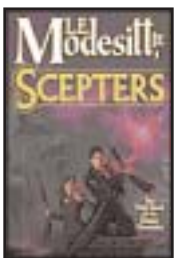
*The Ellie Chronicles #01.* The town of Wirrawee is emerging from war, slowly, like a flower after a cold snap. Businesses are starting to reopen, the school has commenced classes once again and local farmers are gradually repossessing their land. But it's not the same Australia as before the war. A new nation exists just a few miles away, a new border that separates Australia from its invaders. Or does it? For Ellie Linton, being back on the farm with her parents is what makes the terrible things that happened during the war - the things she, Homer, Lee, Fi and the others had to do - all worthwhile. It's where she belongs. But the war won't let her go. A devastating tragedy shatters any hope she ever had to reclaim her life, or herself. Pb \$14.95 300pp

L E MODESITT, JR

 **SCEPTERS**

*Corean Chronicles*

*#3.* Alucius is back on his nightsheep stead with his wife Wendra, who is expecting their first child. But the country is beset by enemies on all sides. Although the Lord Protector of Lanachrona keeps his promise not to order Alucius back to active duty, Alucius finds his request for help no easier to ignore. Newly promoted to higher rank and given command of a combined force of the Northern and Southern Guards, Alucius must first quell a strange religiously-inspired rebellion and then find a way to destroy the powerful weapons of ancient design being used by the forces of Madrien. Unlike the Lord Protector, Alucius can see that a third, covert, threat must be behind the other two. He will have to confront an alien evil that seeks to enslave the whole world of Corus in the guise of bringing back a lost golden age. Hb \$59.95 624pp



MICHAEL MOORCOCK

 **THE SKRAYLING TREE**

In 1951, UN diplomats Ulric and Oona von Bek are vacationing in Nova Scotia. Suddenly, the albino Ulric is kidnapped by Spectral Indians, thus triggering three incredible, converging quests across space and time. Three heroes must follow their own paths of fate that twist and tangle through space and time - only to meet in a moment of terrible tragedy that may destroy Elric, Ulric, Oona... and the Multiverse itself. Pb \$15.95 470pp

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 **QUICKSILVER RISING**

*Quicksilver #1.* Reeth Caldason is the last remaining member of a tribe of warriors who were brutally massacred decades ago. Cursed with episodes of blind rage that endanger anyone near him, he is forced to wander the world seeking revenge for his people and a cure for his magical affliction. But the spell that binds Reeth is an esoteric one and his search, so far, has been fruitless. Only when a young sorcerer's apprentice named Kutch tells him of the mysterious Covenant does he regain a glimmer of hope. Forming an uneasy alliance the two head for Bhealfa's capital city in search of this secretive magical society, unaware that they are about to be drawn into a dangerous world of conspiracy and sedition. Pb \$18.95 410pp

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*Fox #2.* The Third Reich has been routed, but the war is far from over. A new adversary is poised to attack on the eastern front. Former opponents George Patton and Erwin Rommel must join forces to neutralise the remnants of SS forces bent on carrying out the Reich's Final Solution in Eastern Europe. They are unaware of an intended Soviet land grab that could lead to the Stalinist occupation of post-war Europe and an ongoing Cold War that might destroy any chance for lasting peace. Pb \$17.95 661pp

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This volume collects an assortment of the author's latest work. Here are excerpts from several of his most recent novels, including *The Ringworld Throne* (Pb \$19.95) and *Destiny's Road* (Pb \$19.95), as well as numerous short stories, non-fiction articles, interviews, editorials, collaborations and correspondence. True to its title, this collection covers a wide variety of topics, featuring the author's insights into everything from space stations to convention etiquette. Pb \$15.95 327pp



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 **CLOVERMEAD**

Clovermead Wickward lives with her father, the Innkeeper Waxmelt Wickward, in a small Vale. One day, a pilgrim stumbles upon her father's inn and, in return for food and lodgings, teaches her how to fight. As she becomes aware of unexplained powers within her, Clovermead realises she's been deceived her entire life. At the same time, away from the Vale, a battle is being waged between the good nuns of Lady Moon and the evil bear-priests of Lord Ursus. Clovermead and Waxmelt will be drawn into this war and the secrets of the past will become the key to victory for both sides. Tp \$24.95 288pp

KATYA REIMANN

 **PRINCE OF FIRE AND ASHES**

*Tielmaran Chronicles #3.* Sorceress Gaultry Blas returns to her homeland yearning for peace, but instead discovers a conspiracy of evil magics. The witches sworn to defend the prince's crown have gathered to attend the dying Duchess of Melaudiere, who protects their throne's unborn heir. They also have an unpleasant truth - in years past, the witches failed their oath to Tielmark. If they fail again, their lives and those of their descendants will be lost. Pb \$17.95 529pp

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 **EMERALD SEA**

In the future the world was a paradise and then, in a moment, it ended. The council that controlled the Net fell out and went to war, while people who had never known a moment of want or pain were left wondering how to survive. Duke Talbot is sent on a simple mission - go to the Southern Isles to make contact with the scattered merfolk - those who, before the collapse of technology, altered their bodies in the shape of mythical seaw dwelling creatures. He must convince them to side with the Freedom Coalition in the battles against the dictators of New Destiny. But New Destiny has plans of its own.... Hb \$54.00 441pp

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At the Lesley Simonton School for the Magically Gifted, Tria Tesserell is unprepared for her new roommate Lina. Tria is new to the school, but Lina has already decided to flout the rules and soon a sorcery civil war breaks out between the two girls. Pb \$13.95 318pp

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*Eschaton #2.* When the planet Moscow was annihilated, its few survivors launched a counter-attack against the most likely culprit - the neighbouring system of New Dresden. But New Dresden wasn't responsible and as the deadly missiles approach their target, Rachel Mansour, agent for the interests of Old Earth, is assigned to find out who was. And the one person who knows is a disaffected teenager who calls herself Wednesday Shadowmist, but Wednesday has no idea what she knows... Hb \$49.95 355pp

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 *Behemoth #1.* Lenie Clarke - rifter, avenger, amphibious deep-sea cyborg - has destroyed the world. Once exploited for her psychological addiction to dangerous environments, she emerged in the wake of a nuclear blast to serve up vendetta from the ocean floor. The horror she unleashed - an ancient, apocalyptic microbe called Behemoth - has been free in the world for half a decade now, devouring the biosphere from the bottom up. North America lies in ruins beneath the thumb of an omnipotent psychopath. Digital monsters have taken Clarke's name, wreaking havoc throughout the decimated remnants of something that was once called Internet. Governments have fallen across the globe; warlords and suicide cults rise from the ashes, pledging fealty to the Meltdown Madonna. All because five years ago, Lenie Clarke had a score to settle. But she has learned something in the meantime - she destroyed the world for a fallacy. Hb \$54.00 300pp


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 *The Fall of Ile-Rien #2.* Despite a valiant struggle against superior forces, the country of Ile-Rien has fallen to the onslaught of the relentless Gardier, a faceless army of sorcerers determined to conquer all civilisation. To save the remnants of her country, former playwright Tremaine Valiarde undertakes an epic journey to stop the Gardier. Rescuing the proud ship Queen Ravenna from destruction, Tremaine and a band of sorcerers and warriors set sail across magical seas on a voyage of danger and discovery. For the secret to defeating the enemy and rescuing the world from the Gardier's inimitable hatred lies far beyond the walls of the world where only the tenuous ties of friendship and honour will keep the band together. Hb \$54.00 408pp



**KIM WILKINS**


**THE AUTUMN CASTLE**

 Christine Starlight has never forgotten the best friend of her childhood, the strange, red-haired Mayfridh. Abducted by the barren king and queen of a Germanic faeryland, Mayfridh has since grown up and succeeded to the throne of the Autumn Castle, lonely and reliant on the counsel of the wolf Eisengrimm. And then, for a short time, the human and faery worlds are in conjunction. When Mayfridh decides to come looking for her childhood friend, she finds Christine's partner, Jude, first and falls instantly and madly in love with him. With the help of the witch Hexebart, she learns Jude's dread secret. And Christine, the victim of a childhood accident and a lifetime of chronic pain, becomes a visitor to Mayfridh's faery world - with unpredictable consequences. Pb \$22.95 485pp



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 *Books of the Cataclysm #1.* Hadrian's mirror twin Seth is dead, stabbed in front of Hadrian by a man with no fingernails. The woman he and his brother both loved has seemingly disappeared, and as Hadrian searches for her, the cityscape becomes more nightmarish by the second. Figures from legend swirl around him to help and hinder as he tries to ascertain the truth about her fate. These figures give dark hints of secret histories and sleeping gods stirring - but Hadrian cannot make sense of anything. Was everything he ever knew about the world a lie? Caught between a world of ancient, forgotten magic and an uncertain future, Hadrian must learn to trust in the only person he has left: himself. Pb \$18.95 627pp




**TAD WILLIAMS**

**THE WAR OF THE FLOWERS**

 In the great city, in the dimly lit office of an impossibly tall building, two creatures meet. Gold changes hands and the master of the House of Hellebore gives an order: 'War is coming. The child must die.' In our own world, a young man discovers a manuscript written by his great uncle. It seems to be a novel - a strange fairytale of fantastic creatures and magical realms. But it is written as a diary... as if the events were real... as if his uncle had journeyed to another world. For the young man, the fantasy is about to become reality. Pb \$21.00 758pp


**JENNIFER SCHWAMM WILLIS (ED)**

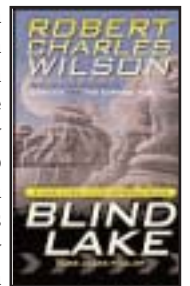
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 This combines the works of contemporary authors such as Jane Yolen, Philip Pullman, Diane Duane, Garth Nix, William Nicholson and Eoin Colfer with classic stories from writers such as E Nesbit, George Macdonald, Frank Baum and Edward Eager. The result is magical collection of stories that capture the imagination and mesmerise the reader. Tp \$37.00 324pp

**ROBERT CHARLES WILSON**

**BLIND LAKE**

 At Blind Lake, a federal research installation in Minnesota, scientists are using a technology they barely understand to watch everyday life in a city of lobster-like aliens on a distant planet. They can't contact the aliens in any way or understand their language. All they can do is watch. Then, without warning, a military cordon is imposed on the Blind Lake site. All communication with the outside world is cut off. Food and other vital supplies are delivered by remote control. No one knows why. The scientists, nevertheless, go on with their research. Among them are Marguerite Hauser and the man she recently divorced, Raymond Scutter. They continue to work together despite the difficult conditions and the bitterness between them. Ray believes their efforts are doomed; that culture is arbitrary and the aliens will forever be an enigma. Marguerite believes there is a commonality of sentient thought and that our failure to understand is our own ignorance, not a fact of nature. The behaviour of the alien she has been tracking seems to be developing an elusive narrative logic - and she comes to feel that the alien is somehow, impossibly, aware of the project's observers. But her time is running out. Ray is turning hostile, stalking her. The military cordon is tightening. Understanding had better come soon. Pb \$15.95 399pp





JENNIFER WINGERT

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Pursued by members of every species, Meris, the most ancient and legendary of the Jadamiin, is a stowaway on a ship bound for the Port Earth space station. But the pursuit isn't over and suddenly Port Earth is embroiled in high level intrigue that could annihilate the entire station. Pb \$15.95 482pp



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CHRIS WOODING

**THE SKEIN OF LAMENT**

*The Braided Path* #2. The grip of the Weavers on Saramyr's rulers has grown ever tighter and all the while, the blight that they have brought to the land grips ever more harshly. This cannot last and sure enough the land is slipping into civil war. In the growing chaos Kaiku and the orphaned heir-Empress must fight for their destiny and their survival as Saramyr succumbs to the twisting of the Weave and the unknowable ambitions of the secretive Weavers. Hb \$49.95 405pp

SARAH ZETTEL

**CAMELOT'S SHADOW**

Aged 19, the beautiful Lady Rhian is clearly of marriageable age, but her father seems reluctant to give his blessing to any of her suitors. When she discovers the true reason for this - that in return for her mother's life he promised her to a sorcerer - she runs away to join a convent. The sorcerer, Euberakon, is determined to exact his payment and waylays Rhian on the road, but she is rescued by the valiant Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table, who gallantly offers to escort Rhian to Camelot. Gawain has grave tidings to bring to Arthur - the Saxons are growing restless and the threat of war looms. He has taken a great risk in stopping to help Rhian, but when a band of Saxons attacks them, Rhian proves that her skills include more than tapestry and gossip - and Gawain will be captivated as much by her bravery as by her beauty. Tp \$29.95 436pp



STEVE ALTEN

**MEG: PRIMAL WATERS**

18 years have passed since Angel, the Megalodon shark broke free of the Tanaka Lagoon and returned to the Mariana Trench. Meanwhile, Jonas Taylor, adventurer, has become Jonas Taylor, middle-aged father of two, overwhelmed by mountains of bills and the daily strife of raising a family. But life is about to change. A Hollywood television producer wants Jonah to join his new survival series - *Daredevils*. For the next six weeks, two teams of crazy daredevils on a South Pacific Ocean voyage onboard a replica of a Spanish Galleon will try to outperform one another in front of the cameras. Jonas needs the money and the job seems easy enough. But behind the scenes, someone else is pulling the strings. And before it's over, Jonas, Terry and Mac will again come face to face with the most dangerous creatures ever to stalk the Earth. Hb \$54.00 361pp

GREG BEAR

**DEAD LINES**

Peter Russell lost a daughter to a serial killer. His marriage was the next casualty. Now he gets by as Mr Fixit for a film millionaire with a young wife on a big Hollywood estate. The millionaire invests in a new kind of phone, the Trans. The problem with the Trans is that not only can you talk to your friends on it, you can also talk to the dead - though that wasn't part of the design spec. The Trans accesses forbidden channels. It has disrupted the exit routines of the recently dead. At first, Russell is only haunted by his dead daughter. Now there are phantoms everywhere. Many are ghosts of the living, people with nothing inside them. A cascade of transgression and murder is unleashed as sales of the Trans take off. Harried near to death himself by his murdered child, Russell must find out who killed her and find a way to put an end to it all, if it kills him. Tp \$29.95 295pp

NANCY COLLINS

**IN THE BLOOD**

*A Sonya Blue novel.* Vampire and vampire-hunter Sonja Blue is back, taking out her rage on the demonic blood-drinkers who hide among the living. But her hunt is attracting attention - Morgan, the monster who remade her 20 years ago, wants to bring his beloved daughter to heel and Sonja has found her existence entwined with that of a mortal man. Part of her wants to love him, but when dealing with monsters such as she, where does love end and slavery begin? Tp \$29.95 200pp

P N ELROD

**DEATH AND THE MAIDEN**

*Jonathan Barrett* #2. Threatened by soldiers on the outside and turmoil on the inside, Jonathan Barrett fights to protect his family and the peace of the Barrett estate. Nearly consumed by his dark desires, Jonathan struggles to control his supernatural powers and his thirst for blood while in the company of his immediate family and a scheming young cousin. Tp \$32.95 274pp

CHRISTINE FEEHAN

**DARK DESTINY**

*Carpathian* #11. Her childhood had been a nightmare of violence and pain until she heard his voice calling out to her - golden and seductive, the voice of an angel. He has shown her how to survive, taught her to use her unique gifts and trained her in the ancient art of hunting the vampire. Yet he cannot bend her to his will. He cannot summon her to him, no matter how great his power. As she battles centuries-old evil in a glittering labyrinth of caverns and crystals, he whispers in her mind, forging an unbreakable bond of trust and need. Only with him can she find the courage to embrace the seductive promise of her destiny. Pb \$17.95 383pp

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Four favourite authors present their favourite characters in all-new tales of bloodlust, appetites that must be sated again and again and the passion that feeds them. Pb \$17.95 358pp

PETER JINKS

**INTUITION**

Magnus is haunted. He is trying to make a life for himself in Edinburgh, but memories of Claire, his sister, who died mysteriously when working in Africa, follow him everywhere. Or are they memories? Why is Magnus adopting Claire's interest in fashion, her romantic grudges and her links to a secretive boarding school? Is Claire herself beginning to take over his life, and his mind? As Magnus's attempts to free himself from his sister's influence grow more desperate, the boundaries between himself and his sister begin to blur. But is he imagining things, or is it really Claire? And how will he escape her? Pb \$20.95 282pp



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CHRONICLES  
OF RIDDICK  
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**RICHARD LAYMON**  
**THE LAKE**

Leigh is young, rebellious and beautiful – and she yearns for a summer of excitement by the lake. Maybe she'll find it in the arms of the handsome boy who rows her out to the abandoned beach house. Or maybe she'll stumble into a legacy of terror which will shatter her life... 18 years later, Deana has no knowledge of her mother's troubled past and not that much interest. She just wants to make out somewhere cool with her boyfriend. If only it were that simple. But that summer at the lake casts a long shadow. And when the horrors of the past meet the perils of the present, both mother and daughter are plunged into a nightmare of blood and terror from which there is no escape. Hb \$59.95 346pp

**CHANDLER MCGREW**  
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It begins with a blackout. All electrical power ceases to run. Even the sun seems a little dimmer. Cities come to a halt and then their inhabitants vanish. But a small, clandestine group of warriors has been preparing for this moment for centuries. Their hopes rest on two strangers, a thousand miles apart, who hold the keys to the world's salvation: Dylan Barnes, a martial arts instructor who teaches his students the art of inner balance, but is plagued by shadows only he can see and voices muttering in a language only he can hear; and Lucy Devereau, a private investigator who earns a living by prying into the lives of others, but is haunted by her own birthright and the mystery of her true parents. The world around them is slipping into darkness. Now, as fate and blood push them to the front lines of an extraordinary battle, Lucy and Dylan must stare into the face of something ancient, something impossible, something that has come to blot out the light forever. Pb \$15.95 413pp

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The time is the early 1960s. Jack Kerouac is hiding in his shack at Big Sur, drinking off his latest nervous breakdown, when he stumbles upon the rise of R'lyeh right off the shore of the Pacific. Jack must get back on the road to find his old friend, the holy fool Neal Cassidy, whose cryptic letters suggest that he might be the key to saving the world from Cthulhu's immense power. The duo, together with pistol-packin' nerd William S Burroughs, fight, drink and love their way across the country to face down the cult that has spread its darkness to the heart of the American Dream. But is Neal along for the ride to save the world, or to help destroy it, just so that he'll have an ending for his book? Hb \$54.00 185pp

**MATTHEW ROSSI**  
**THINGS THAT NEVER WERE**

From Sodom and Gomorrah to the Siberian taiga, from Roanoke Island to lost cities in Africa populated by ape-men in Elizabethan garb, this is a travelogue of mental expeditions to weird and imaginary places. In this book, demons caper, dinosaurs are dismayed and bewildered, vampires walk in our hospitals and gods die at the hands of men. Tp \$39.95 268pp

**LYNSAY SANDS**  
**TALL, DARK & HUNGRY**

It bites - New York hotels cost an arm and a leg and Terri has flown from England to help plan her cousin's wedding. The new in-laws offered lodging, but they're a weird bunch - and it isn't just that they're Canadian! There is the sometimes-chipper, sometimes-silent Lucern and the wacky stage-actor Vincent. And then there is Bastien. Just looking into his eyes, Terri has to admit she's falling for someone even taller, darker and hungrier. She's feeling a mite peckish herself and if she stays with him, those bloodsucking hotel owners won't get her! Pb \$15.95 372pp

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# MEDIA



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**MARC CERASINI**


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## WHAT WE'VE BEEN READING

**Northern Lights** by Philip Pullman (Pb \$18.95) is the first book in the bestselling *His Dark Materials* series and tells the story of Lyra, living at Oxford with her daemon Pantalaimon. While spying on a meeting of the Scholars, she discovers that her Uncle Asriel has been to the frozen north and tells mysterious tales of Dust and a city in the sky. Then children start disappearing, Lyra acquires the Alethiometer and she is on the run from her enemies, heading towards the ice...

This book deserves all the praise it has received (it won both the *Carnegie Medal* and the *Guardian Award*). The writing is superb, the story amazing. At the risk of being hunted down, I think this is ten times better than Harry Potter. - *David*

**Yarrow** by Charles De Lint (Tp \$29.00). Cat Midhir is a fantasy writer whose dreams are real and provide inspiration for her novels. But now, for the first time, the dreams have stopped, Cat realises that whatever is stopping the dreams is also hunting her.

This is one of De Lint's earlier novels and, although it's not as good as his recent work, it still has his trademark style and charm, making it hard to put down. Urban fantasy from one of the best. - *David*

**Song of Susannah** by Stephen King (Hb \$65.00).

The 6th instalment of *The Dark Tower* series has been released and I couldn't get my hands on it fast enough. I devoured this pretty quickly and have to say that King has delivered another amazing episode in the story of Roland. Full of tension, action (a very cool siege scene) and humour, this novel flowed more smoothly and quickly than *The Wolves of the Calla* (Hb \$65.00), although it wasn't as big. I was expecting more to happen, considering there is only one more book to go. *The Dark Tower* (Hb \$65.00) is due in September and with the cliff-hanger ending of *Song of Susannah*, it can't come soon enough. - *Sian*



**The Crooked Letter** (*Books of the Cataclysm #1*) by Sean Williams (Pb \$18.95) is a prequel to *The Books of the Change* trilogy and sets out to explain how the world of the previous trilogy came to be. As a huge fan of the previous trilogy, I was really looking forward to this book, but I was disappointed. While the ideas are great and it does answer some questions, I found it rather confusing and lacking the same vibrancy of the earlier series. The best part of the book was the last quarter. Nevertheless, fans of the previous trilogy should enjoy this book and the tale of how magic returns to the world. - *Mark*

**Passion** (*The Ashuak Chronicles #2*) by Tony Shillitoe (Pb \$18.95), picks up where *Blood* (Pb \$17.95) left off. The author throws the reader back into the crumbling world of the Ashuak Empire. The story continues to chart a course through blood thirsty imperial politics, as Sukaal Vekesk faces hidden enemies to his moderate reign as military governor of Sekesu.

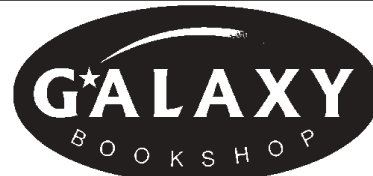
Without a doubt, this second novel in the trilogy is just as exciting as the first. Shana, the legendary Jaru gladiator, though enslaved, continues her plans to avenge her brother's murder. Alwyn, the teacher, learns more of the Dragon Priest's magic than the Dragon Priests know themselves. And all the while, the wheels set in motion by the Great Dragons to find the Genesis Stone and their ancient enemies the Alfwyn, continue to turn towards a brutal climax. I love this series! - *Mark*

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