

THE OBDURATE EYE #59

A fanzine from Garth Spencer

February 2026

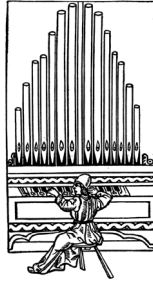


Who does this remind you of?

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THE OBDURATE EYE #59, February 2026, a personal zine from Garth Spencer, 6960 Damon Street, Vancouver, BC CANADA V5S 3H7, Email garth.van.spencer@gmail.com or hrothgarweems@gmail.com. Garth acknowledges that he does this on the denounced territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, səliwətaɫ, and skwxwú7mesh peoples. This zine endorses the Port Alberti in 2030 bid. **(Was that bid for Worldcon or Westercon? I forget)**



The organ of no clique or party

Art Credits

(Heinz Edelman's character in <i>Yellow Submarine</i>) "Jeremy Hillary Boob"	cover
Clipart	pp. 1, 2, 12, 30, 35
Brad Foster.....	p. 11
José Sanchez	p. 15
Teddy Harvia	pp. 16, 18
William Rotsler	p. 38

I Screwed Up

I numbered both the December 2025 and January 2026 issues as *Obdurate Eye* #58. And here I've been working so hard to avoid senior moments.



Reflections

One of the most embarrassing realizations I have is how often I repeat the same old topics. It is time I made a subject index, based on my past fanwriting, and moved on to *new* topics.

In the meantime I am ditching my usual verbal nonsense and adopting new verbal nonsense. By this, I mean that I have answered phatic questions such as “May I help you?” by saying “Oh, I’m beyond help,” or “How are you doing?” with “Square, flat, and crumbly at the edges,” or “Almost sort of slightly without doubt presumably perhaps under certain circumstances but not otherwise blues.” Bank tellers and customer service representatives give me standard lines like “Do you have any other questions?”, so of course I ask “Why is there air? Where does dust come from? Wenn ist das Nurnstuck gott un Slotermeyer? Who is the one more trustworthy than all the Buddhas? How do they get Caramilk™ into those Caramilk™ bars? Will there be fried chicken on outer space stations? And what about Mary Sue?” Anything to make life interesting.

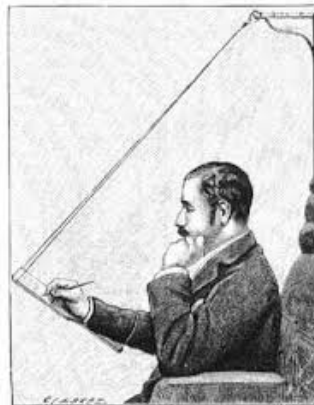
You, too, can make life more interesting. But you have to change your material regularly, the way we change diapers or politicians, and for the same reason.

§

After some consideration I have decided to move all the political content from *The Obdurate Eye* to a new publication, *The Pacific Quarterly Review* – basically a fanzine about mundane public affairs, almost but not quite a parody of public-affairs magazines like *The Atlantic*.

Of course at the outset, *The Pacific* will exhibit a glaringly obvious bias. That is because I am mainly getting news and comments critical of the current American government, from a variety of online sources. Naturally, readers will make up their

own minds how to evaluate this content. And I will be compiling a list of information sources to widen my perspective.



Appareil pour écrire en chaux de fer,

LoCs

Kent Pollard, kentpollard@gmail.com, Jan. 1, 2026

Happy New Year, Garth.

I've only read "Thinking Above My Pay Grade" so far, but wanted to comment because it touches on something I've oft thought odd about modern reasoning.

We of the late 20th century seem to look upon magazines and books as a sort of eternal object, as though they existed in wide availability for more than a hundred years. In point of fact, as late as the 1920s, no one outside of large cities had easy access to books and magazines, and even newspapers were only in wide existence maybe another 20 to 40 years before that. Go back to say 1880, and possibly half the population would never own a book or magazine, or see a newspaper less than a week old. And so we have placed mass availability of cheap printed material on a pedestal it never owned.

While it's true not everyone has Internet access, more people have access to the Internet than ever had access to daily newspapers or magazines. There's certainly a risk associated with locking our non-fiction media into objects which we can't read without mechanical assistance, but I feel that paperback books, newspapers, and print magazines were effectively a flash-in-the-pan of human history, and seeing their reduction to a niche product as a loss is little different from any other form of "The world was better in my day." Their ubiquitous cheapness was primarily a result of creator exploitation by publisher-gatekeepers, and those creators now demand a reasonable share of the pie. I'm worried for the future that my government no longer makes printed copies of the budget readily available, but not worried that it's getting harder to find paperback fiction.

((Fair points.))

**Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, penneys@bell.net,
January 3, 2026**

Happy New Year!, and here I am with my own first loc of the year, and it goes to you for *The Obdurate Eye* #58. (Well, I'm stoked...)

((#59, actually.))

If you are running in an election under an anarchical ticket, isn't that a contradiction in terms? Ah, you do it because you can, and you do perceive the irony. Isn't that what a lot of fans do? We find our fun in the weirdest places, and in the weirdest ways.

((It's a curious thing we hear of so few fannish hoaxes and pranks these days. Maybe we could do something about that.))

I remember years ago, when I had WiFi dropouts at the worst times. I went to my local Bell office and asked if I could get a portable node to help with the dropouts. Common today, but back then, they had no idea what I was talking about. Most times, I am a little Luddish, but I was ahead of my time at that time. For once. (Don't worry, Inigo, I won't let it go to my head.)

((I obtained a Ryoko portable node, such as it is; somewhat sensitive to bandwidth overload.))

Could you send me all the details about CONnections? We could use this in Toronto, but any budgeting we do usually means more \$\$ than we have access to. Also, for reasons, the CSFFA calendar is much more important in our household.

((Actually you want to talk to WCSFA. They have a website.))

The sudden passing of Jean-Louis Trudel has been a shock and a heartbreak for so many. We considered him a friend, and I remember he was shocked to find that Yvonne was bilingual. She is a Franco-Ontarian, too. In reading this, I didn't know that, like us, he was born in Toronto.

The rise of MAGA to government in the US is shocking, and quite disgusting in its practice. This is why the term 'kakistocracy' was created...rule by the worst of us. The levels of incompetency are truly terrible; witness the invasion of Venezuela, and the kidnapping of its dictator president. For all the good the removal of Madura will do for Venezuela, the invasion and kidnapping are unprecedented, and shows how little regard for the law the Trump regime has.

((The real issue, or the power behind the throne, appears to be the Project 2025 people.

((I was surprised the Canadian TV coverage of the kidnapping in Venezuela entirely omitted to ask how far the Trump administration contravened international law, or how many other nations and commentators don't support the invasion of another country's sovereignty. Even Mark Carney's public statement ignored the question. As I keep saying, it's as if we're not living in the real world anymore.))

As a public service announcement ... Dick Cheney is still dead. Just in case anyone was wondering.

((Yeah, and I think he took a turn for the worse when Den Valdron's article came out ...))

It is now late, but I had to get caught up. I have two books to work on this month, so I shall be quite busy. See you with the next issue.

Mark Nelson nelsonmark07@gmail.com, January 18, 2026

[Re the opinion that] "Penguin paperbacks somehow vulgarized literature by making classics available to the masses".

Let me quote from the back of any Penguin book:

"He just wanted a decent book to read...

Not too much to ask, was it? It was in 1935 when Allen Lane stood on a British railway platform looking for something good to read on his journey. His choice was limited to popular magazines and poor quality paperbacks. Lane's disappointment and subsequent anger at the range of books available led him to found a company - and change the world."

I'm very grateful that Lane set up a company aimed at distributing high-quality books at low prices to maximise the number of readers who can have an opportunity to read them. But then there have always been those who have opposed educating the masses.

There are so many grounds to criticize the last Conservative Government in the UK. One of their bugbears was that *too many* eighteen year olds are going to university. The UK would be better if there were fewer of them attending university. The UK needs more people going into trades, the UK should be offering better training *[sic]* in the trades. Of course, when Conservative MPs exult eighteen year-olds not to attend university they mean that other people's children should not attend; never their own.

((That is a case of half-thinking things through, which I thought was more of a military bad habit. The UK Conservatives have half a point – a nation or community needs enough people in the trades to keep the system working, just as it needs enough practical professionals, such as engineers and doctors and nurses of all kinds. We see this point in Canada, in my own province as a matter of fact – not only is the British Columbia provincial government advertising in the United States for nurses, but we anticipate a shortfall in tradespeople in the foreseeable future. Say, the next decade. But this is not precisely breaking news.

((I suspect you meant "training in the trades" rather than "trading." If so, you're falling into the same snare that I did, not only speaking but writing a misnomer under the influence of a nearby word. I have recently been making mistakes in HTML coding for a similar reason.))

Could a sociologist work up a form of "psychohistory"? That depends upon what you mean by "a form of psychohistory"? I strongly believe that it's nonsense to suggest that "social calculus" can make predictions about how a society will develop over a period of 1,000 years. On the other hand you are right that "social calculus" can be used to make short-term predictions about "average behaviour" to attempt to manipulate people. Of course advertising campaigns don't always work, neither do politicians always get it right, and economic models fall over when they collide with reality. The last of these can be useful in explaining what has happened, they might be able to explain what will happen over a very short time-span, but they are not capable of predicting what will happen in the economy over the span of a few years. (Which is one reason why psychohistory in the sense of Hari Seldon will never work.)

((Hell, I would be satisfied to predict what individuals around me are going to do or say or want me to do, just from one hour to the next! I have no instinct for human behaviour. This is one of the things that convinced me I must be an alien, and must have been stolen from the space gypsies by a tribe of wandering Anglos. But this is a twice-told tale.))

An Australian TV series that I highly recommend is *Gruen*. This is a long-running series, it debuted in 2008, that provides both an informative and entertaining examination of adverts and advertising.

Returning to the use of politicians. Western democracies that use the first-past-the-post electoral system often evolve into a two-party system. At each electoral system one use of social calculus will be more successful than the other. What does this have to say about the success of social calculus?

You might be able to persuade me that social and economic statistics can *explain* 3/4ths of "human events" but I doubt I can be persuaded that they *predict* 3/4ths of "human events". In this claim "human events" is a wonderfully vague phrase that means nothing. In writing this paragraph I'm also reminded that social and economic statistics do not predict a unique outcome, but a range of outcomes depending upon what assumptions are made. Ten implementations will lead to ten different predictions. If one of these is correct, should it be concluded that "social and economic statistics" correctly predicted the outcome? What about the 90% of models that were incorrect?

In reply to John Hertz you comment that "If there is a Society, or if it has rules expectations, it is news to me."

((Lemme see here, what did I write ... Ah. 'If there is a Society, or if it has rules and expectations, it is news to me. It is quite evident we actually have a lot of inconsistent, incoherent and conflicting subcultures [emphasis mine - GS], and we do not identify the common ground among them.' My point being, we don't have one society, but several; no social consensus, but several prevailing and conflicting belief systems, not all of them labeled or conscious.))

Margaret Thatcher famously implied that there is no such thing as society. What she actually said was "...what is society? There is no such thing!". This is often quoted as "There is no such thing as society". Why is there no such thing as society? Thatcher explained her position in the next sentence: "There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first."

((Yeah, well, Thatcher was full of shit like that. Hi ho, the witch is dead.))

I no longer know what the Conservatives think about such issues as I've not lived there since May 2000. Whilst agreeing that individuals may act in what they considered to be their best interests, particularly on polling day (!), I disagree with Thatcher. I believe that there is such a thing as society. I'm glad that some issues are tackled by the Government for the population as a whole.

((Which government, where, and under which term's administration? It isn't as if only one social faction is in control; different gangs keep grabbing the wheel at different times, and in different places. It is as if one high-speed thoroughfare were usually treated as a bumper-car rally, with no traffic control. Which is amazing, considering that

the primary function of any government is emotional, it serves the public as a security blanket serves a small child.))

To Woolcott's quote on democracy we could add any number of quotes by Churchill. The most famous of these is surely

"It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have tried". The following quote deeply resonates with me, but it definitely needs to be read in conjunction with the previous quote:

"The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter".

((It has become clear to me that most of us are not trained to be competent citizens. It takes constant reading and homework, and we alleged adults hate doing the work to learn something, unless it means making more money.))

Ray Palm, raypalmx@gmail.com, Jan. 23, 2026

Consolidation. One day all will be controlled by the Walt Disney Interdimensional Uber-Conglomerate.

((That's right up there with the joke in Demolition Man about all restaurants becoming Taco Bell by the 22nd century.))

I call myself a dot commie. The means of communication should be owned by the people. Some writers are making money through Substack. There are publications like the revival of *Amazing Stories*. I'm grateful for efanzines.com where I can disseminate my publication around the world. Of course there are materialists out there who say "You don't make any money?" Some things are done without profit in mind.

((There's that word "should" again. I am about convinced now that "should" is as meaningless a word as "freedom" or "democracy" or "honour" or "community" or "redemption" or "equity" or "world class" – just one of those things people say without defining a meaning for it. See my article later in this issue on Anglic versus English.))

There are a few people who are already self-publishers and self-distributors. I agree that if the Web comes under the control of one greedy big business there could be a single point failure.

*((I am also convinced that corporations of any size, especially publicly-traded corporations, are legally **compelled** to maintain and increase dividends to shareholders, and all other values and priorities are dismissed under this increasing pressure. If we legally defined corporations any other way, we might or might not see different corporate behaviour; the behaviour is shaped by the threats and apparent incentives to managers and executives. Obviously.))*

White Xtian Nationalism, authoritarianism/separatism, etc. in Alberta. Don't these blind followers ever see the great disconnect between their actions and the teachings of Jesus? One time there was a program in New York State to help people with disabilities to have jobs. The public thought it was great -- until it turned out it benefited businesses who could use the disabled as low wage workers instead of paying fair wages. Those without access to a car would have to take a taxi or bus to

the jobsite. That ate up most of their earnings. It was more like volunteering than gainful employment.

((Personally, I blame the evil sinister mind control plot from Belgium. The Belgians have been subverting and destroying and reframing and gaslighting the purity of essence of our precious human values since they invented ISO-9000 standards. I believe this because I think it up my own self.))

Jose Sanchez. Good to see his artwork. I like his image of the soldier standing by the flying saucer with the caption "Rumour has it this is why Canada is still independent." Speaking of saucers, Trump acts completely crazy as if he was hit in the head by one.

((Yes, well, Trump is a useful figurehead and a lightning-rod for the outrage of rationalists, now isn't he? It's a mystery whether he picked the Republican Party as useful idiots, or whether the Project 2025 gang picked him as a useful idiot. But let's reserve that discussion for my new zine, The Pacific Quarterly Review.))

Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON, M9C 2B2, penneys@bellnet, January 24, 2026

Thank you for *The Obdurate Eye* 58...B? No matter, as long as we can tell them apart. January has been one of the busiest months ever, and it is still a week to go. Comments will follow.

((We will return to the rationally scheduled numbering with this issue.))

Port Alberni in 2030? I remember Port Alberni. When I lived on the island, I remember taking the highway from Parksville to Port Alberni. Easy to get there, just keep going and following the smell of the pulp mill. We got there, the pulp smell was overwhelming, and to get away from it, we had lunch at the local Smitty's. Of course, the pulp smell was outside waiting for you, and once you left the restaurant, your lunch threatens to, shall we say, reappear? I suspect there's no more pulp mill there.

((I'm trying to remember whether I think that up as a hoax Worldcon or Westercon bid! Probably the former, as I gather there is a move afoot to make the forthcoming Westercon the last one.))

I remember a story about that single paperback distributor going out of business, and with no paperback distribution, there may soon be no more paperbacks, just trade paperback and hardcovers. With all these single-point failures, reading may radically change for all of us. Some options may become dominant. I know for many years, recycling dumpsters in our area encourage you to put all your books in the dumpster, as if book was synonymous with garbage. (I also see that conventions as we knew them may be out of the question...sky-high room rates and function space costs, and even \$15 cases of pop and \$8 bags of salty snacks, the costs of these conventions are probably out of our reach. We need new models, and we are looking into them right now.

((I suspect we will continue to see paperbacks for quite a long time, just distributed by other hands and at a higher markup.))

Thanks for all the CSFFA important dates. They've become quite important in our household. Also, I know Ed Willett has taken on *On Spec*, but I don't think it will be

the magazine it once was. I think I'd need to see Ed's first issue to see how it resembles past issues.

A shame to see Arthur Hlavaty's passing. I had so many of his little fanzines. Also, I didn't know Chilam, but I do know that Christina Carr and Martin Hunger were very close to him. I am thinking of Chris and Martin, and how they must be feeling right now. And Terry Green. During my Ad Astra days, I met with him a couple of times to explain to him the average confan. I am sure he talked with Rob Sawyer about it, but needed a different viewpoint.

((If you can explain the average confan, more power to you. I suspect there is no average any more.))

When I lived on Vancouver Island, I did see the rise of a past separatist movement, the Western Canada Concept party. It was just as racist and cruel as the UCP in Alberta, and the Republican Party in Washington, but eventually, it did go away because all those parties were destructive rather than constructive, and eventually, people began to see their real motives. I was surprised to see Trump return, and he is worse than ever. However, the model of the four-year term gives the voters a chance to correct their past decisions. Alberta has had an NDP government that came up with a balanced budget, but the Conservatives/UCP lied about the successes of the NDP to get back into power. If only the electorate were smart enough and informed enough to recognize those lies...

((As I said, I am moving all the political comment to a new zine, with my lame jokes and all.))

I think Mark Carney is the prime minister we needed when we needed him, mostly because he is not a politician, but an economist. He plays Pierre Poilievre with ease, and is playing Trump with equal skill at the same time. He knows the finances of the country with ease, and I am certain we will survive the latest grumblings and threats of Orange Monster. Yes, Trump is playing pirate with Venezuela, but now is playing serial killer on the streets of Minneapolis.

((Let's hope PM Carney can play the Chinese head of state with equal facility.

((The performance that ICE agents put on in Minneapolis ended the sense of comedy that always pervaded the Trump administration. It is time to get real and say enough is enough.))

Just made it to page 2, so I will wind it up. Many thanks for this issue, and I hope there will be more in 59...or 58C, your choice.

We Also Heard From: The Universal Life Church; Bruce Gillespie (*"Thanks as ever, Garth. I'm pretty sure I've sent you SFC 122 in retaliation, but if not, it's on efanzines.com"*); David Langford; Heath Row; Evelyn Leeper (whose correct email is "evelynchimisleep@"); Perry Middlemiss; and everyone who wished me happy birthday greetings in January!



Olds

A Reminder that eAPA is Open to New Members

eAPA, an electronic Amateur Press Association, is open to additional members. I mean, way open. There's lots of space. In fact the Official Editor [Garth Spencer] is open to contributions about anything and everything, not just science fiction or fandom or personal journalism or your plans for settling the affairs of the world.

From the description on eFanzines.com, where zipped mailings of eAPA are posted:

“e-APA is an Amateur Press Association primarily for science fiction fans, and is an attempt to bridge the format and style of traditional paper-based APAs with newer digital publishing formats. Each apazine is in Adobe .pdf format.

“Distributions are made once each calendar month. Deadline for submitting a fanzine is the first day of the distribution month. The OE [Official Editor – Garth Spencer] compiles the distribution and makes it available as soon as practical (generally on the 2nd), and notifies members by e-mail when the distribution is ready for downloading.

“Membership is open to anyone, and there are currently membership slots open. The active roster will consist of no more than 15 members. Members are expected to contribute activity at least once every other distribution. Each fanzine must have a maximum size no larger than 1.5Mb (the equivalent of 12 to 15 pages, depending on content and graphics); there is no minimum size requirement. Fanzines are e-mailed to the OE for inclusion in distributions.

“... **Distributions are for members only and the ZIP files are password-protected**, except where noted below. To join e-APA or to see a sample distribution, contact the OE ... at garth.van.spencer@gmail.com.

“Thanks to Bill Burns for providing space and bandwidth for the e-APA distributions.”

NOTE FROM GARTH: the current guidelines for eAPA were updated in December 2025; until Bill Burns posts the new guidelines on eFanzines.com, just email garth.van.spencer@gmail.com for a copy.

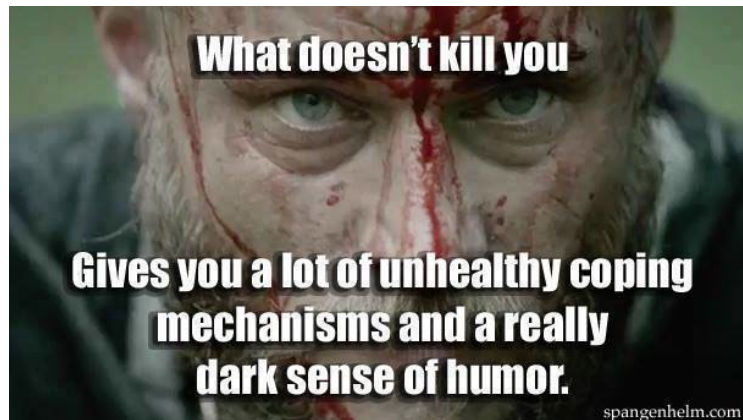
(<https://efanzines.com/eapa/>)

The WCSFA Online Book Club

For some time now, the WCSFA Book Club has been reading and discussing selected SF Novels. Starting in January, and carrying on through to March, the club has been reading and discussing *Anathem*, by Neal Stephenson.

Check out the #📖-books channel on the WCSFA Discord server (invite link: <https://discord.gg/P8jEneYZ8a>), or send an email to WCSFA at info@wcsfa.org.

(Jenni Merrifield, Jan. 14, 2026)



News

TransAtlantic Fan Fund Nominations Still Open

"Nominations for the 2026 race from North America to the Berlin Eurocon (MetropolCon, 2-5 July) are still open and will close on 1 February. For the official announcement at taff.org.uk, please see taff.org.uk/news/2026race.pdf.

"[Re] TAFF Books: No new announcements for once, but many thanks to everyone who bought fan-fund benefit paperbacks from the list at ae.ansible.uk/titles.php?taff. Such sales raised over GBP300 for TAFF and over GBP50 for GUFF in 2025."

Ansible, Jan. 2026

Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards

"Voting for the 2026 FAAn awards (for work done in 2025) is now open.

"The seven award categories are unchanged as follows:

FANZINE AWARDS

- Best Genzine
- Best Perzine
- Best Special Publication/One-shot/Limited series

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

- Best Fanwriter

- Best Fanartist (Steve Stiles Memorial Award)
- Best Letterhack (Harry Warner, Jr. Memorial Award)
- Best Fanzine Cover

“Voting is open to anyone with an interest in fanzines, no memberships or voting fees are required.

“Ballots must be received by 23:59 Pacific time, Saturday February 14th 2026, and the awards will be presented at Corflu Pickled (fanzine convention) in Santa Rosa, CA after the banquet on Sunday March 1 2026. Anyone wishing to watch the ceremonies in real time will need at least a virtual membership, details at <https://corflu.org/> along with *The Incomplete Register 2025*, the awards voters' guide and pro forma ballot, which is also available for the asking from the awards administrator, Nic Farey, fareynic@gmail.com.”

(Nic Farey email, January 8, 2026)

(NOTE FROM GARTH: If you need explanations of the fanzine terms above, email Nic Farey, or email me at garth.van.spencer@gmail.com. – GS)

Following up on Chilam's demise

A celebration of life ceremony, marking Chilam the artist's passing, will be held on Saturday, February 7, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. at the Forest City Church, 5855 Imperial Street, Burnaby, BC V5J 1G4.

Jennifer Merrifield, email, Jan. 16, 2026

Announcing Corflu Vandoo

A committee led by Murray Moore is bidding to bring back to Vancouver the fanzine fans' convention named Corflu.

The members of this year's Corflu (Corflu 43, Feb. 27-Mar. 1, Santa Rosa, California) on Mar. 1 will choose the site of the 2027 Corflu.

The previous Corflu held in Vancouver was Corflu 39, in 2022.

The 2027 bid for Corflu 44, in Vancouver, is for a late February weekend.

Corflu 42 information is here: <https://corflu.org/> .

Murray Moore, email, Jan. 16, 2026

Announcing the CSFFA/Aurora Awards Retrospective Book Club!

“The Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (CSFFA) has been around for almost 50 years! In 2030, we'll celebrate the 50th anniversary of our first recognition of Canadian excellence in speculative fiction. In that time, we've awarded lifetime achievement awards, the Prix Aurora Awards, and the Canadian SFF Hall of Fame, under various names and configurations. As we move through the next few years we'll be deciding how we'd like to invite the Canadian SFF community to celebrate with us. One thing we know for sure: starting in 2026, we're inviting readers and writers, CSFFA members or speculative fiction fans, to join us in the Aurora Awards

Retrospective Book Club. The aim of the Book Club is to read every Aurora Award winning novel (or long-form work) in the association's history, in time for the 50th anniversary. We envision the book club lasting over four years, and capping off at the proposed Edmonton Worldcon in 2030, where we hope to host some form of anniversary celebration. The book club will be housed in the new general-book-club-chat text channel and the Book Club voice channel that we've created, though we will make additional text channels as needed. Please click [general-book-club-chat](#) to see more information about how the book club will work and for a look at the 2026 reading calendar."

Kalin Stacey and the CSFFA Board, Jan. 16, 2026

WCSFA Annual General Meeting (Jan. 24, 2026)

WCSFA held its Annual General Meeting on January 24, 2026. The plans discussed included the following events: "Fandom Bazaar 2026" and a "Fall 2026 Mini-Con".

(Garth Spencer)

Why We Didn't Hear From the Montreal SF and Fantasy Association for a While

"As part of a move to a new hosting service, **MonSFFA's** Website went down for a brief stretch in early February, over the days bracketing the club's February meeting. Despite this, the club managed and the meeting went well.

"The club's Executive had decided to move from our U.S.-based host to a new, local hosting service operating out of Laval, just north of Montreal. In so doing, we realized a modest saving in fees, and will henceforth be paying in Canadian rather than U.S. funds. The down-time can be attributed to the considerable cache of data, accumulated over many years, which was transferred from former host to new, as well as to a few "settling in" issues and, of course, a certain learning curve on new software.

"Webmaster Cathy Palmer-Lister tirelessly tackled the task, and she is to be commended for all efforts made."

(WARP #116, Jan. 2026)

The "Across the Fandomension with Garth Spencer" website

I have now launched a fannish information website listing Canadian and Pacific Northwest clubs and conventions, as well as less regional information for fanzine fans and aspiring writers. Please check out <https://www.vcn.bc.ca/~garth2/> and let me know if you find it useful. My plan is to edit the web page monthly.

Any critical comments or helpful suggestions are welcome, so I have put an email link on every web page to make it easy to contact me. I am already receiving corrections, additional information and advice, which will be incorporated into the February update.

I have no aesthetic sense, so this month's edition is almost entirely text-only. (My smiling face is on the welcome page, but it's a bit large – I think I must cut it down.)

Many thanks are due to the Vancouver Community for hosting this website, and to their Help Desk and to Kalin Stacey of the Canadian SF and Fantasy Association for getting me over some glitches.

Garth Spencer

Obituaries:

John Varley (1947-2025)

“John Varley, US author whose dazzling SF of the 1970s and 1980s won him three Hugos, two Nebulas and a heap of Locus Awards, died on 10 December [2025] aged 78. His 1977 story “Air Raid” as by Herb Boehm was the basis of his screenplay for the film *Millennium* (1989).” [MS]

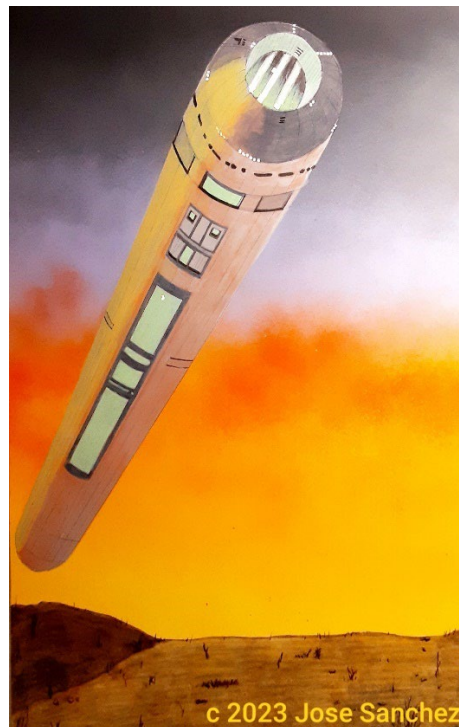
Ansible, Jan. 2026

Lyn Saunders (dec. Jan. 5, 2026)

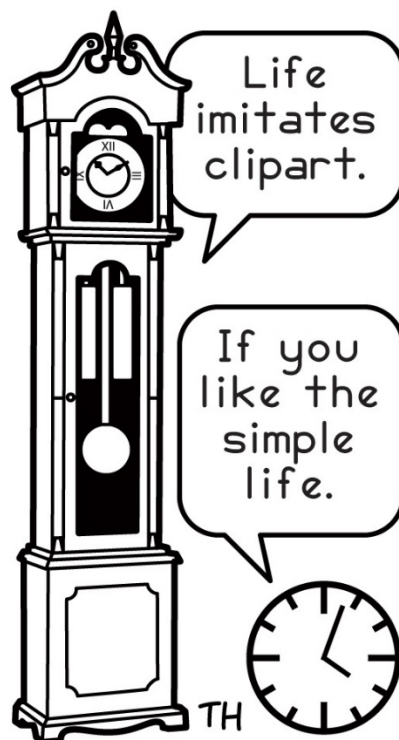
“This is to relay the sad news that long-time OSFS [Ottawa SF Society] member Lyn Saunders died on January 5, after an ongoing struggle with kidney disease.

“Lyn and I had been good friends since 1979, and this leaves a space in my life, filled with good memories.”

Elizabeth Holden, OSFS & Apaplexy email lists, Jan. 6, 2026



The biggest cigar in outer space



Movie Reviews

by Duncan Shields

For Jan. 16th, 2026

Movies and TV I've seen lately - trying to catch up on all my 2025 films:

Marty Supreme (2025) - I don't know what to tell you. Fantastic movie. No one's more shocked than I. The Timothée Chalamet ping pong movie is amazing. Go see it. The end. - currently in theaters

Twinless (2025) - Two men whose identical twins have died meet in a support group and become friends. It's a dark comedy so the road leads to strange places. An interesting film. LGBTQ themes. Some heartfelt performances. Pretty good. Some of the cringe and the tension was a smidge too much for my delicate nature but it was a good movie and I enjoyed it. Original story and premise. Thumbs up. - streaming on Paramount+. Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

F1 (2025) - This would have been amazing in the theater. The racing sequences are incredible. Joseph Kosinski knows how to put those kinds of sequences together. Brad Pitt joins Javier Bardem, the delightful Kerry Condon, and Damson Idris in testosterone-laden 'laconic veteran vs upstart rookie' man shenanigans (sheMANigans?) during the talking parts of the movie. The clichés run thick in those parts, but whatever. I heard it referred to as "*Top Gun* with race cars," and I can see that. It's EXACTLY what you think it is. Perhaps a bit long, at 2hr 35m, but you know you. Maybe fast-forward through the conversations to see the fantastic racing. - VPL

DVD. Streaming on AppleTV. Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

It Was Just An Accident (2025) (Iran/France) - Winner of the 2025 Palme d'Or at Cannes. Nominated for Best International Feature Film. A former political prisoner thinks he recognizes his prison torturer in civilian life and kidnaps him. After having doubts, he seeks out other former prisoners to confirm he's got the right guy. At times a black comedy and at times a serious drama, it's not afraid of a long take. Which I like. At points, it did get a bit TOO emotional in a way I wasn't feeling but it's a rock solid film and I mostly really enjoyed it. It isn't cleaning up the awards this year for nothing. Worth seeing. - Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Sentimental Value (2025) (Norway/UK) Joachim Trier directs Stellan Skarsgård, Elle Fanning, and Renate Reinsve in this exploration of fame and family dynamics. Stellan plays a famous director who ducked out on his two young daughters back in the day. He's returned now that they're grown and he wants one of them to star in his new movie. He doesn't understand that they have a) issues with him and b) issues because of him. While it didn't connect with me personally, all the performances are great. I ended up liking *The Worst Person In The World* by Trier, but it took me a couple of tries and this has a similar vibe. I'm not sure Trier is for me. *Sentimental Value* is a mature film that's getting all the awards so it might be your jam even if it wasn't exactly mine. - Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

The Ballad of Wallis Island (2025) - An eccentric lottery winner hires his favorite former-superstar folk duo to perform at his house on a remote British island. The duo were once lovers but are now estranged. It's a rocky road to the concert while old wounds are opened. A delightful and charming film that didn't work out like I thought it would. Carey Mulligan is her usual radiant self. Tom Basden seems like a cross between David Tennant and Tom Hiddleston. But hats off to Tim Key who plays the awkward millionaire and who also co-wrote it. Light and fun. Worth a watch. - Streaming on Prime. Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

She Rides Shotgun (2025) - An excellent crime thriller movie. Hardened criminal dad Taron Egerton kidnaps his estranged daughter, Ana Sophia Heger, to save her from the Aryan criminals and crooked police that are out to kill him and everything he loves. A cop, Rob Yang, tries to help. Heavy on atmosphere with lovely cinematography and a great score. Great performances from all concerned. Rising star Odessa A'zion (*Hellraiser*, *Until Dawn*, *Marty Supreme*) also shows up. Really glad I saw it. Worth a watch. - Streaming on Prime.

The Mastermind (2025) - One of my favorite subgenres of film is "idiots attempt a heist." I can't get enough. And this slow-moving '70s period piece starring guy *du jour* Josh O'Connor didn't disappoint. More somber and reflective than, say, a hard-boiled noir. It goes ALL IN on the '70s period vibes, which is great to see. It ends up being more of a character study regarding the aftermath of idiocy since the heist takes place pretty early on. The film's languid pace and lack of conclusion might not be everyone's cup of tea but I liked it. - Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Last Samurai Standing (series) (Japan) - *Lone Wolf and Cub* meets *The Unforgiven* with a dash of *Highlander*. Decades after the failed samurai rebellion, the age of guns and

European expansion has started. All the surviving samurai from the previous age are called together for a contest: walk the road from Kyoto to Tokyo and the last samurai standing gets huge wealth. Carnage ensues as they travel. I loved it. Amazing swordplay, great characters, and lots of everything I love about the premise. I had a great time. A season 2 has been greenlit! If this sounds up your alley, it is! - streaming on Netflix

Caught Stealing (2025) - Darren Aronofsky directs this strangely pat crime thriller. Hot loser bartender Austin Butler gets mixed up with Russian mobsters while cat-sitting for a mohawked Matt Smith and dating Zoe Kravitz. Regina King, Griffin Dunne, Vincent D'Onofrio, Liev Schreiber, and Carol Kane show up, too. It's a perfectly serviceable and enjoyable film. However, considering Aronofsky's filmography (*The Fountain*, *Black Swan*, *Mother!*), I was expecting something less...average. It's worth a watch and it achieves its goals. But it didn't feel like an Aronofsky film to me. Maybe it was trying to be an American *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*? Maybe Butler couldn't exactly carry the film? Maybe it would've hit harder in 2001? Confusing to me. But ah well. It's extremely okay if that makes sense. Very, very...pretty good. Not disappointing, exactly, but just frustratingly...not bad. - Streaming on Crave. Available for rent/purchase from all the usual places. Also try Video Cat on Cambie.

Check out all my reviews on

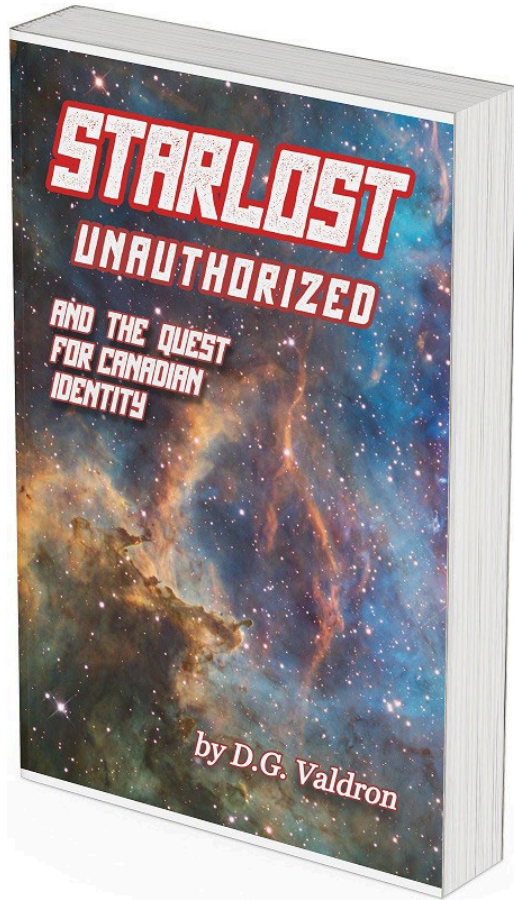
<https://letterboxd.com/duncanshields/films/reviews/>



A Bit of History about Canadian SF Television Productions

By Den Valdron

(posted on Facebook January 10, 2026)



Book #20 - Starlost Unauthorized, 2024

You may never have heard of *The Starlost*. Let me fill you in.

The Starlost is a 1973 science fiction television series, shot in Canada, that lasted sixteen episodes. Set seven hundred years in the future, on board a gigantic, generation ship made up of a cluster of domes, all isolated from each other. Centuries before, the crew had been killed by cosmic accident, leaving the ship drifting on a collision course with a star. The only people who knew were a trio of runaways from a backwards Amish community.

According to legend, it's the worst sci fi TV series ever made.

It's not actually.

That's a pretty crowded field for one thing.

Mostly, the reputation was the result of behind-the-scenes shenanigans. The series started off with incredible optimism: It starred Keir Dullea, from *Kubrick's 2001 A Space Odyssey*; Doug Trumbull, the effects wizard from *2001*, signed on with a revolutionary new effect technology; top-flight science fiction writers like Ben Bova

and Ursula K. LeGuin were brought in; and most impressively, the legendary Harlan Ellison was going to be the series creator and head writer.

As it turned out, a bunch of things went wrong. But the biggest was that Harlan Ellison had a meltdown, took his name off the show, and then spent the next forty years slagging the program and everyone connected with it.

Harlan Ellison was a brilliant writer and a giant in the field. He was also a capricious, vindictive son of a bitch, and he could carry a grudge like no one else. Even his friends were scared of crossing him. He did everything he could to trash *The Starlost*, and he did a good job.

For decades, *The Starlost* had this reputation of being epic garbage.

Now me? I'd started hearing about the show, off and on, since the '80s. I was always a little intrigued. How bad could it be? It's that impulse that has people slowing down to check out a car wreck. Morbid curiosity.

Somewhere along the way I learned that it was a Canadian series, or at least, it was shot in Canada. That was intriguing in itself. I was only really discovering that

Canadian film and television were real things, that Canadians could make funny or exciting or interesting works. Canada wasn't really known for science fiction, so the idea of a Canadian Sci Fi series was ... cool.

It wasn't until the early 2000s, that I managed to get VHS tapes of a handful of episodes from a fellow *LEXX* fan and actually watched it.

It was a revelation.

Harlan Ellison had lied, that son of a bitch! ⁽¹⁾

This was actually good. Low-budget, sure. Wooden at spots, and yeah, there was a clunker or two. But by and large the episodes were smart, thoughtful, well staged.

And Canadian.

This was something that the American audiences wouldn't have noticed. But the episodes were shot through with Canadian values and sensibilities. Canadian issues and politics were on display. Characters debated whether they should be a satellite of a larger power, or try to make their own way. Issues of industrialization, regionalism, privacy and conflict all played out through a Canadian cultural lens. Even very basic elements of how people related, collaborated or debated felt uniquely Canadian.

No one had ever picked up on this before, but watching the episodes, it was blatant. So far as I know, I'm the only person in the show's history to really drill into that. I find that amazing. How did it get missed?

I think maybe Harlan Ellison and his epic hatchet job scared a lot of people away. His invective was legendary, not even his friends wanted to cross him. And he carried a massive amount of influence. If Harlan said something was crap, that was both pervasive and persuasive. He had a real hate-on, and that was hard for anyone to challenge. No one really wanted to get in the way of that kind of grudge.

And there's the reality that a lot of "Canadian Culture" was stuffy and pretentious, and looked down on something as vulgar and American as science fiction. It still looks down on it. I remember visiting the Writers Guild as a genre writer, and they acted like I had cooties. Some of them still do.

By all means, write about wheat farmers in Saskatchewan, or small town folk in Nova Scotia, or Jewish kids on the make in Montreal. But Science Fiction? [Gasp!] Television? [Double Gasp!!] Science Fiction Television [Triple Gasp!!!] The sort of literary and nationalist elites who would have picked up and explored the cultural context of *Starlost* weren't going to come within a mile of it. Even now, no one will admit that Margaret Atwood writes sci fi.²

¹ Ellison, of course, tells a different story in one of his books of TV criticism, *The Glass Teat* (or *The Other Glass Teat*): he was called in by some producer or director, they talked about television SF series, Ellison spun an idea for a series off the top of his head – and unknown to him, the producer or director was recording the conversation, as it were to obtain a series idea without charging a consultation fee. This would obviously be fraud, if Ellison were not offered a position on the production. Ben Bova later wrote a satirical novel parodying the production of the series.

² And here I thought Atwood had changed her tune, when she found out what SF actually was. After her famous "squids in space" comment, she later helped produce an independent comic book with conventional sci-fi tropes – a man crossed with an owl crossed with a cat becomes a vigilante superhero.

So basically, the constituencies that might have given it a fair appraisal were both, for their different reasons, scared off.

So I guess it came down to me to break the ground.

So I wrote an essay, some ten thousand word thing, and circulated it. It almost got published in a book with McFarland Press. Awkwardly, my essay was one of the reasons McFarland cited when they killed that project. I feel bad about that. I'd accidentally fucked over some guy's project.

Eventually, it came to the notice of Norman Klenman, the series script editor and writer who had succeeded Harlan Ellison and written half the episodes. Harlan had nothing nice to say about him. But we had a pleasant exchange.

My life kind of went into the toilet for a while, marital failure, career change, restarting my life and I got distracted. Life does that.

I returned to *The Starlost* now and then, writing private reviews of episodes, exploring themes, and then tucking them away in my hard drive. I eventually acquired the whole series on DVD. I'd noodle away at it now and then.

Eventually COVID came along, and I decided to do something with these notes and the essay. I wrote some more, but eventually ran out of steam.

Come on, give me a break.

The series had been dead for almost fifty years, the world moved on. It wasn't like anyone was clamouring for a book on the subject. No one cared.

No one in the world has ever been sitting around waiting eagerly for any book I've ever written. That makes for a certain lack of urgency.

That's the beauty of "nobody cares." You set your own timetables, and you work at your own off-and-on pace.

And it's not like I took the year off. In 2020 I published *What Devours also Hungers*, *Fall of Atlantis*, and *Lexx Unauthorized 3*. That year was also working on *Axis of Andes*, and *New World War*, *Lexx Unauthorized 4*, Scott Ellis's two books, the third volume of my *Who Trilogy*, a Retroverse novel that didn't go anywhere, the *Drunk Elf* collections. In 2020-2021 I had at least twelve other projects on the go, most of which either published in this period or subsequently. I was working hard. You can't do everything at once.

Starlost just ... fell off the edge of the desk. I still wanted to do it, hadn't let it go. But other stuff shouldered it out of the way. I was always going to come back to it.

Then around 2024, I attended an Indy Writers Conference in Toronto. It's still goes on each year. I highly recommend it. It's about the business of writing, marketing and suchlike. One of the workshops was about crowd funding.

I'd been to crowdfunding panels before at other conventions, but I'd never gotten much out of them. It was too much like inside baseball, experienced people talking experiences with other experienced people. It's all jargon and insider knowledge and concepts. If you're not experienced already, if you don't already know all the language, it's just impenetrable.

This time, it was laid out clearly, and accessibly. I could understand what they were talking about, and see the potential. I was inspired to try a Kickstarter fundraising project.

Well, if I was going to do a Kickstarter, I needed a subject, a topic, a project.

Starlost! I actually had somewhere between a third and a half of a *Starlost* book floating around in bits and pieces. The show was infamous, or semi-infamous. There was some public cachet. Seemed like the best choice of all the projects I had floating around.

That kicked things into gear. Norman Klenman had passed away, but I had our correspondence. I did a lot of background research. Friends encouraged, or nagged me, so I tracked down and interviewed two of the three series stars - Robin Ward who played Garth, and Gay Rowan who played Rachel. I wrote, revised, wrote some more, researched Canadian nationalism and the history and issues of that era.

In the end, I had an excellent book: *Starlost Unauthorized, and the Quest for Canadian Identity*.

It turned out to be a damned good book. Not perfect, there's some duplication that could have been caught with a bit more editing. There's some passages where the language is strangled. But you know how it is - I was working to a deadline, and the perfect is the enemy of the good. You can tinker with this stuff forever, or you can put it out in the world.

Partly, I feel like I'm righting a wrong, challenging Harlan Ellison's hatchet job. Partly it's just a really good analysis and dissection of a show, its production history and its accomplishment - given what they were up against. The show was much better than it had any right to be, and genuinely worthwhile in and of itself.

Most interestingly, it's an exploration of Canadian identity, of a critical period in our history and culture, and it was fascinating to be able to use the show as a lens or mirror to examine these things.

There was one fly in the ointment. On September 14, one month before my official October 15, 2024, release date, some Australian writer named Adrian Sherlock, came out with *his Starlost* book first!

Bloody hell! Fifty years, nothing, and then two books on *Starlost* within a month of each other! And he beat me over the finish line?

Did he hear about my book, maybe from Kickstarter, or from my posts on Facebook groups, and decided to steal a march? Could be. I mean, I've talked to him, but I never asked about it.

It's one of those things. Even if he denied it, I wouldn't believe the denial. So there's no point in discussing, you choose to either hold the grudge or you let it go. I'll let it go.

For what it's worth, Adrian seems like a nice guy, and he's done several books of this sort. So whether it was deliberate or not, I'm not going to sweat it. Two books about the show after fifty years of nothing ... that's actually kind of cool.

My book is better, I don't think either of us would argue about that. His book is more oriented towards middle grades, I just dived deeper and harder and had more research and more things to say. I think we'd both prefer to say we were aiming at different niches.

In the end, I'm happy with it. In some small way, I think it's not just a good book, but possibly an important one.

The *Starlost* book's journey kind of highlights something in my work. Almost all my books, in one way or the other, have long incubation periods. Either I work on it off and on over a long period. Or I do it, but it takes forever to find a home. Stuff like that.

I'm not actually a super-slow writer. I can do a short story in an afternoon, or chug out a decent sized book anywhere from a few months to a year. Take this "Writers Journey" project - so far, about 40,000 words in about three weeks.

But then what? Where are the incentives. No one was waiting for my *Starlost* book, or for *Squad Thirteen*, another 'off-and-on' project. It's not like there was a contract or a deadline. So they meandered, and that was fine.

Other projects are written years before, but it takes a long while to find a venue for publication or self-publication. Something that I see commercial prospects with, I might hold off on for years, before I finally give in and self-pub. Long incubation periods are a thing.

Honestly, this is even the nature of publication - I was part of *Twilight of Echelon*, a book through At Bay Press, and that took something three years after I submitted my stuff. I have a novel coming out through Renaissance Press. Submitted 2023, accepted 2024, and will publish April 2027 - four years. The Luck was over a year from acceptance to publication, and that was fast.

Mostly, nothing happens quickly in publishing.

Dealing with Zombie Publishers

By Den Valdron

(posted on Facebook January 10, 2026)

So, I have this friend, Ron. R.J. Hore. He's a nice guy, retired banker, genial fellow. I would see him at Collectables Conventions and Antique Fairs, Farmers Markets, Fleas. He'd always have a table selling his books, often sharing the table with another writer. He had a replica Saber Tooth Tiger skull at his table, that was cool.

Anyway, whenever I saw him, I'd buy one of his books. That's a thing I do. Or did. I'd got to conventions, ComicCons things like that, and I'd make a point of buying books by local writers. Some were small press, some were self published. Didn't matter. I'm a writer, they're writers. I knew how hard it was to write a book, I appreciated the dedication, the commitment, the love. Every book was someone's labour of love. Here they were at tables at conventions or craft shows or just sitting outside a bookstore in the mall at one of those fold-out card tables. I wanted to support them. I'd go to a Comic-Con, that was the big one, sometimes I'd drop two hundred dollars that way. There's a bunch of people, I was their first sale. I bought their first book ever.

Honestly, doing tables at Conventions felt horrific to me. Spending an entire weekend, Friday to Sunday, sitting at a table selling books. It's not even close to economic. Add up the hours, add up the table cost, the cost of meals, transportation to and from,

printing costs for the books, divide that by the number of books sold and money earned. Ouch!

Ron told me that a good weekend was making his table costs back. I've heard that sort of thing from a lot of other writers. A really fun writer, Ira, whose work I loved, told me at one convention that selling eighteen books in a weekend was a record. Yikes.

I assume some people, particularly the ones going on tour who have a huge set up, maybe they make money. Right time, right place, sure, there's always an outlier.

But still - a table at a Comic-Con, that must be torture. These conventions are huge dealer oriented affairs. Imagine 50,000 people filing past you over a weekend, most of them carefully avoiding eye contact, or worse, just glancing at your life's work and then moving on. That feels like psychic torture. That feels like it would be traumatic and humiliating.

Maybe I'll give it a try in 2026.

But anyway: So I'd see someone sitting forlornly at their table, people walking by, putting out a book that they'd slaved over, blood sweat and tears? I knew how hard it was to write that book. I knew how hard it was to put yourself and your work out there in that cruel world.

Of course I'm going to go over and buy their book.

I was deeply sentimental.

Or, to put it another way, I am deeply stupid.

Same thing really. This world has no room for sentiment, and no respect for it.

There were some writers that just kept coming back. I'd see them again and again, and after a while I'd get to know them. Sometimes just the name, Holly Geely for instance. Others a little better, like A.P. Fuchs or I.D. Russell.

I got to know Ron. He's a small press guy, his books are mostly published by Champagne Book Group with editors and everything. He met the Champagne people when they had a dealers table at a local convention called Keycon. He showed them his stuff, and they liked it and started publishing him. That's a great story, it's wonderful to hear someone catching a break.

Anyway, one day we were talking at Keycon, or some crafts show, and he had a problem. It seems that he had a second publisher, eTreasures. They'd published four books for him.

But he'd lost touch with them. Not replying to correspondence, there were no royalties, no reports, nothing. He was feeling kind of abandoned.

I'm thinking ripped off. But you know how it is, I have certain skills for solving certain kinds of problems, so I agreed to look into it (think Liam Neeson when I say that).

I poked around. As it turns out, eTreasures was apparently an active publisher. They were all over Amazon and Smashwords, with a lot of titles.

I looked a little deeper. They hadn't uploaded a title since 2019. All the books they had out were at least three or four years old, or older. Well, that was interesting.

So I dug deeper into eTreasures, I found a physical address in Florida, an email address. The email address was dead. But now I had a name and a state. I did a corporate search for eTreasures in Florida. Success!

eTreasures indeed was a Corporation registered in Florida, I had the name of the Officer and Director, an address that matched. Bad news, it was a dead corporation, it had been defunct since 2021.

And given the age of its books on Amazon, it had probably ceased operations well before that. From the look of the Corporate search, it had been dissolved for failing to file its annual corporate reports – dissolution is automatic.

What next? Well, I had the name of the Officer and Director, one each, same person. When there's only one Director and they're also the Officer, that usually means it's a one person show. I figured even if the corporation was gone, she might be around somewhere.

So I searched the name. Turns out, it belonged to a Florida lawyer. Searched a bit deeper. Turns out her legal offices were the same as the offices of eTreasures Publishing. Well, that was interesting.

But the information could be old. Who knows, maybe she packed up and moved to Montana? Just because you find a name or address on the internet, you can't be sure it's current.

So I started searching the Court registries for her name. I figured if she was a currently practicing lawyer, I'd see her name on the Court rolls somewhere – property transactions, divorce cases, lawsuits, registrations, somewhere. Bingo! There she was in a filing in late 2022, just a few months before, same address. No indication of a change of lawyer on file. So it was active and current. She was still working as a lawyer, and out of the offices.

I wondered about eTreasures, what was the story there? Had this been some kind of Florida get rich quick scheme? Had she decided that there was real money in publishing, hung out a shingle, recruited a lot of writers, and dumped them on Amazon and Smashwords, and then just let the money roll in?

I'm kind of skeptical about that. If that was the plan, she was dreaming in technicolor. Practically nobody makes money in publishing, particularly small presses.

Think about it: She would have had to hire editors, or put time in as an editor, she'd had to hire cover artists, or design covers, hire book designers or design them herself, all on a lot of books. It just seemed like either a lot of expenses, or a lot of work. I dunno, maybe there was a period on Amazon where ebooks and POD books were selling like hotcakes and you really could make money hand over fist with no effort, or where the effort would pay off.

Who knows? Maybe she thought there was money in it. Oh my, you poor thing! It didn't work out financially, and she just walked away.

Or maybe this was a lifelong dream, to be a publisher, to be a woman of letters, to bring books into the world, discover authors. Perhaps it was all dreams and ideals. I could respect that, even admire it.

But what happened? A hurricane had blown through Florida about that time, and her practice seemed to be in the middle of the zone where it hit, so maybe that had an

effect? Then Covid the next year, that hit us all. Had life reached out and smacked her hard in the face? Or maybe the joy just wore off? Too much hard work, too little reward, writers who weren't grateful or thoughtful? Maybe the bills and the bull just mounted up and she got sick of it.

I'd like to believe the best of people, so in my mental landscape, she's a dreamer and idealist who just found it going sour and turned her back. Burned out, got out, moved on.

Who knows?

She wasn't responding to emails, the company was defunct. There were a lot of books up on Amazon and Smashwords still under eTreasures LLC. Although it had wound up, it was still out there in the world, on platforms, selling books, collecting royalties. Despite its disappearance, Ron's rights were still hung up on Amazon as a platform, he couldn't take his books to another publisher or self publish, he couldn't bring them to the same platforms. eTreasures was a zombie publisher.

I've mentioned Matt Joudrey, At Bay Press. Very nice guy, very hardworking and dedicated. He says that there are a lot of Zombie publishers out there. Sometimes it's just honest publishers that went under, or people diving in to something that turns out to be too much and end up walking away, or marginal outfits that are either inept or sketchy. There's a substrate of Zombie presses where the publisher closes and for various reasons people's books and rights disappear or get hung up in limbos, and that's hard to deal with.

Ron's books on Amazon under eTreasures: Presumably people bought them now and then. Maybe, maybe not. Presumably no one was marketing or promoting, so there might not have been anything.

But if there was, then Amazon was paying the money to somewhere to someone? Was it going into some bank account? Collecting in Amazon's accounts payables ready to be downloaded? It probably wasn't big money. But what was happening to it? Is anything? Is it paying eTreasures accumulated debts. Or does the lawyer just pocket it and use it for massages and personal perks. Ron's books had been up for years, he'd never gotten a statement or a royalty. They'd just sent him a box of books and not even an invoice.

We needed to get the rights to Ron's books back, and get them from back from Amazon.

Sometimes you can't fix the past.

You can only seize the future.

BOOK #19B – TOLTEC NOON

This is the second part of the Odyssey of R.J. Hore and his faithful monkey (yours truly) on his quest to regain his books from limbo, and wrest his rights from the zombie publisher.

In our first instalment, we discovered that eTreasures LLC, publisher of four of R.J. Hore's books, had in fact gone Zombie! It was dead, defunct, rolled up, no longer in business. But somehow, it was still selling his books on Amazon, just not giving him statements or royalties or anything.

I was very proud of my detective work, by the way.

Still, the situation was intolerable!

So, how to get his rights back? I'm a guy with certain skills for situations like this, I can make a human body disappear in thirty-eight minutes flat, family rates ... Not that this is something you needed to know ...

I mean, I have other skills, more appropriate skills.

The first thing you do in a situation like this is go to the contract. Little tip – there's always a contract. Publishing is basically just arrangements around copyright, and as anyone who reads the Copyright Act knows, any license or assignment of Copyright, to be enforceable, has to be in writing. No handshake deals. So there's always a contract in writing. And if it's not in writing, it's not a contract at all. Again, handshakes don't count, even if you spit in your palm.

Other areas, other stuff, sure, there's all kinds of stuff. But for writing and art, has to be in writing. So make sure you get and keep a copy, and if you're a self-pub or an indie, do all your paperwork, get it all in writing, have contracts for everything, even trivial stuff, and open up a file folder to keep it in. Trust me. You may never need it, but if anything goes wrong, it will save your life.

Yeah, I know. We're all artists, this sounds very business-like and complicated. Listen, if you have a box of rejection slips to flagellate yourself with, then you can open another shoebox or file folder to keep your important writer's records in. It's not rocket science, folks.

Of course, people being people, they aren't well organized, if your book's been around a few years, a contract can get buried in paper, get lost, get hard to find. But there should still be one, it's just a matter of digging it out.

So I sent Ron hunting the contracts and by god, he found one! Now, the nice thing about publishing, is that each Publisher's contracts are mainly just fill in the blanks. There's generally not a lot of negotiation that goes on.

Publishers are publishing lots of books typically, so they don't want to pay a lawyer or a manager over and over. They like certainty and consistency, so they develop a pretty standard agreement, usually based on other agreements they've seen. The industry itself has various standards that have to be in the agreements. So most publisher's contracts are standard documents for all their books.

Most writers are so desperate to be published they'll sign a duck's ass without looking at it too carefully. There's not usually a lot of negotiation and detail work going on, and what there is, is typically restricted to a few 'fill in the blank' areas. It's a matter of 'take it or leave it - I'LL TAKE IT!!!'

Ron had four contracts, but they were all going to be the same. I only needed to look at the one.

Now, you're looking for two things in this kind of situation.

1) The reversion clause. The clause that says when or how you get your rights back.

Not all contracts have them. Crap, horrible contracts, written by unscrupulous Vampires don't have them. If you have a book contract, read it, and if there isn't a reversion clause, head for the hills. Don't sign it!

If you've already signed it, then I know a guy that can dispose of a body in 38 minutes, offers family rates.

Just making an observation.

Don't think about what 'family rates' means.

Now, there's all sorts of reversion clauses, for all kinds of situations. So even if you do have a reversion clause, make sure it's up to snuff. If you're a writer, never sign a contract unless you know that you can get your rights back under reasonable circumstances. Such as you simply asking for your rights back, you're not getting reports or royalties, or a change of editor, or management, or the publisher is bankrupt, etc.

And don't buy any guff about getting your rights back if your book goes out of print – in this age of ebooks and print on demand, nothing ever goes out of print. You want something better. You absolutely need something better.

That's the first thing you look for in a contract. Look for it before you sign. Look at it when you sign. And you look at it when it all goes bad.

I'm serious. I've been writing tens of thousands of words lately. This is the part you need to remember for yourself.

2) The other thing you look for is breaches. A contract should have certain obligations from the publisher to you. What are they going to do for you, apart from just publishing.

You should get royalty or sales statements on some regular basis so you know how many books you sell or don't sell.

You should get royalties now and then, preferably on some regular basis (assuming your books sell). There may be other obligations. Make a list.

Go through the contract. What is the publisher promising to do, what are they supposed to do.

Watch out for ambiguity – if they "may" do something, it's not enforceable. Discretion is bad, options are bad, certainty is good.

The point of obligations is that if an obligation is not followed or carried out, then it's a breach. Particularly: A breach of contract.

A breach of contract gives you rights against the publisher, options to sue them and compel compliance and disclosure, and even a right to terminate the contract. Terminating the contract gives you your rights back. Now, not every breach of contract entitles you to terminate, but even where it doesn't, you've got grounds to be such a pain in the butt that the publisher might it's easier to just give you your rights back than to fight.

So children – always look for a Reversion clause, and then always look for clear obligations which can constitute breaches. Those are your escape hatches.

ANYWAY I looked at Ron's contract. Yes, there's a reversion clause! Also – breaches, royalties, reports, but you figured that out.

The Reversion clause provided that Ron could get his rights back, if the company went out of business, and Ron gave it thirty days written notice.

Say what?

So let me get this straight – the company ceases to exist, and after the company ceases to exist, all Ron needs to do is send a thirty day notice letter to the nonexistent company, and he's free. All he has to do is notify a nonexistent company? How do you do that? And just for the record, how does a nonexistent company hold rights? Wouldn't all its contracts dissolve automatically when one of the parties ceases to exist?

This was written by a lawyer. Geez.

In my line of work, you see strange ungodly things in contracts and also in my bathroom. I've learned not to let either bother me.

The problem was that the company was a Zombie. Even though it no longer existed, it had books all over Amazon. Amazon was a third party platform. They wasn't just going to give Ron his books back from Zombie eTreasures LLC, just on his say so.

Look, Amazon is not in business to be anyone's friend. Amazon's just in business to be in business. Their job is making money, not mediation, adjudication or therapy. They don't care about your relationship with your publisher. They don't care if you're having trouble with your publisher. They don't want to know. They don't want to get involved, and they won't. Not unless it's absolutely clear cut, totally certain, obvious and ironclad.

So we had to jump through the hoops. The company was gone, but the officer/director was still there, the address was still there. I drafted up a letter for Ron to send. The letter asserted serious breach of contract warranting termination for failure to provide reports or royalties. The letter also invoked the reversion clause – giving the official thirty days notice.

I had Ron send it to the address of the former corp, addressed to the corp's name (see what I did there?), AND to the name of the officer/director just in case the corp wasn't accepting mail.

Most importantly, I had him send by registered mail. They have to sign for registered mail. You get a signature receipt from registered mail that proves it was delivered. That way it didn't matter if the letter disappeared into the ether, didn't matter if there was no response or acknowledgment. We didn't need it. We would have proof that the letter directed to the address of the corporation, and to the name of the corporation and its officer/director was officially received.... by someone. And that's all we needed.

There was no requirement in the Reversion clause that they had to agree or to do anything, all that was required is that we give them thirty days notice, and to be able to prove it.

At the end of the thirty day notice period, rights were automatically terminated. It was ironclad.

Now it was time to go to Amazon.

- 1) We printed of the contract, with special attention to the reversion clause;
- 2) We printed off the letter to eTreasures LLC;
- 3) We copied out the Registered Letter receipt;

4) We printed off the Company search that showed the address of eTreasures, the name of its officer/director and the fact that the company was dissolved.

We turned the whole thing into a PDF package.

Then I drafted a brand new letter for Ron to take to Amazon with the pdf package. The letter basically said – We are the author of these books, our name is on it and here's the contract with the publisher. The company is dead. Here's the reversion clause. Here's the notice of termination. And here's the proof that the notice of reversion was given. The books are mine. Please take them down and stop giving my money to eTreasures.

Now you would think that would be it.

The problem is you have to get it to the right person or place in Amazon. They don't actually have a department of 'giving people their book rights back.' So you have to go into Amazon and find their customer service department.

The first person you talk to or write to in Amazon, they're going to be the low end entry level customer service person. They won't have the authority to actually do anything, much less what you want. They're there to just take the obvious service requests, talk about goats or something or whatever it is that they do, and respond to the most common questions from a list of answers written on a shaved goat on their desk.

By the way – don't talk to them. I mean sure, if you have a simple administrative problem, go ahead and talk. But for something like this, put it in writing and make sure you have a copy. Who knows what happens to a conversation or how it gets recorded or remembered. But something in writing? That has power. And it has a date attached to it. And it has a specific request or assertion that must be answered. Also, when you're putting things in writing, don't be vague – give names, titles, ISBN numbers, relevant dates, web page links, whatever you need. Avoid confusion. Be specific.

Anyway, entry level guy – will do nothing for you. But your only point of entry is entry level guy. You talk to entry level guy, because on his list of instructions, written on the shaved goat, is a direction that if he runs into something complicated, he can shove it upstairs. That's what we wanted, the referral up to the next level.

We go to the next level – we go through the whole song and dance again. We argue. They promise to look into it, which is English for "this is out of my league I need to pass the buck."

And hopefully, next level person does a little due diligence, checks the Amazon records and files on eTreasures LLC and R.J. Hore, verifies what he can, and kicks it upstairs, or to a specialist, or to some dusty office in the Amazon basement with a post it note on the door that read 'Department of Giving People their Books Back' which is so low status that their goat is a loaner and they have to shave it themselves.

We go through the whole song and dance again. Our file is bolstered by the previous correspondence. But finally, we're in the right place. They take the eTreasures Books down.

Ron truly, officially and finally has his rights back.

Take notes, boys and girls. Some day you may be in this situation, and if so, I want you to be able to sort things out. Look, I'm going to level with you. We writers are right

brain, 'artiste' people. We're doing something we love, we have a dream of writing a story, a novel. We put our heart and soul into these things.

And if we get lucky, if we're talented and hard working, and somehow we make the right connection, or show up at just the right moment, we have our big break, and someone puts a contract in front of us... and the temptation is just to sign the damned thing. This is your dream come true, and it's so precious, that you're terrified you'll blink and wake up and it will all be gone. Evaporated. This might be your only chance. The urge to just sign and move forward is overwhelming. They like your book, so they must like you. They'd never hurt you!

But there are Vanity Presses out there, and Hybrid Presses. There are scams, so many scams and scammers. There are so many awful people out there. And every single one acts like your best friend just so you will them money.

There are zombie publishers, that started out in good faith – but then someone dies, or goes bankrupt, or their life goes into the toilet and they just walk away.

There are real publishers, micropublishers, small press, medium press – industry professionals, and they'll hand you a bad contracts. They will fuck you over. It's business, that's all it is, and fucking you over is a part of business.

Even with the nicest people in the world, there is just so much that can go wrong in so many ways.

You don't want to look at contracts. I totally get that. Contracts are strange, they're intangible, they're full of strange wording and stuff you don't understand. And even when you do understand, you don't know what to look for, what's important or what's not important. What to fight about, and what's standard.

Make the effort. There's resources. There's people you can talk to. I've done my share of basic contract terms for writers. It's out there.

There are so many stories out there about how the writer got screwed. Everyone has them. And a lot are just out of our control. But at least with your contract, you've got a chance.

I'll tell you a personal story: Perhaps the single happiest most satisfying moment of my writing career?

Not *The Mermaid's Tale*, that will always be too tied into heartbreak.

It was the *LEXX* book, it was the moment in negotiations when I was looking at this incredibly shitty contract, and sitting there, knowing this might be the one and only book I would have in my life ... and I told them to go fuck themselves.

I knew this might be the end. Hell, I knew it was the end. I was burnt out, dispirited, depressed, practically broken. This was the end, my last gasp as a writer.

And I was dealing with assholes. They wanted me to take three years of work and distill it into a piece-of-shit, paint-by-numbers, soulless wad of paper and ink, shit it out for a few dollars, and go on their merry way. I despised them.

So I said "Fuck you, I have the book, it's written the way you want, and you'll never have it. If you ever publish anything that traces back to my work, I'll sue you bastards."

And walked away.

My feel good moment.

And, then I wrote the book I wanted to write the way I wanted to write it, and then I wrote a lot of other stuff. You can't let it go.

Writing is your dream. Your novel is you're life's work. But your soul? That's yours too. Never sell your soul. Always say no to a bad contract. If you say yes to a bad contract, you'll regret it forever. That's how it works. It's not worth it. It's never worth it.

Anyway, Ron's got his books back! My job is done! Or so I think.

BOOK #19C - TOLTEC KHAN

We should be at the Happy Ending.

My pal Ron has his rights back. His books are taken down from Amazon. He can do anything he wants with them. He's no longer chained to an undead zombie publisher.

Anyway, it's not a total win. eTresures LLC had Ron's four books up for four years, presumably there were Amazon sales and royalties that he never saw. There were no reports. Maybe in four years, there wasn't a single sale? Maybe it sold like hotcakes? The reality is we'll never know, it's just not worth it.

Technically, sure, we could spend a lot of time and effort writing letters, making phone calls, harassing and bargaining with the former eTresures LLC and its former owner and hope they cooperate.

Or go down to Florida, file a claim or a notice of application, or hire a lawyer to do it, drag the case into court, have a judge issue a ruling which may or may not be complied with, and if it's not complied with, we could go back to court some more for certiorari and eventually orders.

We can do all that – commit maybe two or three years, ten or twenty thousand dollars. A whole pile of Ron hours, or Me hours. No guarantee. Possible returns of zero, or at best a few hundred dollars?

I mean sure, if this was The Martian, Harry Potter, Fifty Shades of Gray, sure go to down and pursue. You can't hide a runaway success like that, and it's worth the time and effort to go after that.

But normally? It's not a perfect world, you don't get perfect results. You got to focus on what you need, what you can get, and what you need to let go. Don't spend a fortune chasing a nickel.

I say this as a warning to writers. Pick your battles. Sometimes you have to be cost effective. Honestly, it's so easy to lose perspective.

There's a small tragedy. Not only has eTresures hypothetically made a few dollars. Maybe, maybe not. But in the four years since they ghosted him, if Ron had acted or been able to act, he might have had those books out in the world, might have gotten reviews, sales, had a breakthrough, who knows? Sadly, nothing to be done about it.

It's a personal frustration. With my stuff, I want it all to be out in the world as soon as possible. But everything moves at a glacial pace.

Another issue - Ron hasn't gotten all the rights back. The book covers for instance, those belong to eTreasures LLC. Even if eTreasures is defunct, doesn't mean that the covers and cover art are public domain. Most likely the rights revert back to the cover artist, or whoever or whatever inherited eTreasures LLC property. Whoever it belongs to, it's not Ron.

Also, the ISBN's (International Standard Book Numbers) (not to be confused with copyrights or copyright registrations) – Not Ron's either. They're requisitioned and owned by eTreasures LLC or whoever or whatever owns that. But definitely not Ron's.

Extraneous material in the book – the back cover blurb, if eTreasures, its editor or staff wrote that, it's theirs. If Ron wrote it, it's his. Stuff like the copyright page, adverts, title page, interior art, or anything beyond the manuscript itself, not Ron's. I'm just being technical.

But the important thing is the book itself, the Manuscript. He's got the rights back.

So, I say "Ron, you've got your books back, what are you going to do with them?"

Now, he can take them to another publisher, that's an option. Some small press publishers will take previously published books.

A lot of them don't. For a lot of publishers, it's like a sandwich. When you're publishing, you like to publish a fresh new sandwich. You don't necessarily want to publish a sandwich that someone has had sex with before. If you think about it, it makes perfect sense.

But yes, finding another publisher. Definitely an option.

Or he can self publish. A lot of people are doing that these days. I've done it... a lot. I gave courses in it. I have a bunch of materials I can give him to get him going and make it easy for him.

He says to me, "I was hoping you would do it."

Surprised, I quickly look around to see who he's talking to. Someone who apparently walked into the room when I wasn't paying attention, and is gullible enough to do all sorts of work for free.

But it's just the two of us.

I have a bad feeling.

The first thing we need are the manuscripts. Which is easier said than done. Ron is a prolific guy, but you know how it is, the hard drive fills up, computers get replaced, files go astray, or get forgotten or buried.

Ron manages to find his ARC (Advance Review Copies) from eTreasures LLC. eBooks in ePub format. I think one of them was in pdf.

The ARCs have Ron's books, but they've also got a lot of extraneous stuff that we need to get rid of.

The problem is that they're not writable formats – you can't just change and edit it. Or at least I can't. It's also not particularly acceptable. So I need to convert it into word.

Technically, I've never done this before. But somehow, with that remarkable grace and efficiency that you find in a drunk drowning in a bathtub, I get it done.

The result is an unholy nightmare of weird glitches. Basically, word documents, epub's, pdf's, any word processor or document format contains a bunch of hidden control codes and signposts so the document does what you want – spacing, paragraphs, fonts, page numbering, all that fun stuff. It's different for every format.

When you transfer a document from one format, a lot of those hidden control codes are carried along. Sometimes they keep doing what they're supposed to. Sometimes they do weird unholy things, often involving goats. And in the new format, often the control codes that the document is supposed to have are missing, so the document misbehaves. What you sometimes get is a weird nightmarish mutant.

Actually, I had sort of been down this road already the first time with Scott Ellis. I had not enjoyed it. But I had learned a few tricks.

So I copied each document, pasted it into WordPad or notepad. These are stripped down word processors that come with your computer. They're basically short bus word processors, very limited capacities, but that's what you want. Because they don't have any control codes.

I saved each of them as a 'txt' or simple ASCII text document. Closed notepad, opened notepad, called up the saved documents. Then I copied each saved text document from notepad, and pasted it onto a blank MS Word program page. That way, I cleaned out all the weird hidden control codes, I got fresh raw texts that I could then format.

There was still a lot of extra work, because formatting that you wanted has been lost and must now be inserted. And there may be leftover glitch symbols of now defunct codes. But it saves so much work, you wouldn't believe it.

This is a really useful way to clean your manuscript and make sure that you're free of weird ugly surprises. I've explained all of this to make sure that if this ever happens to you, you'll know what to do, and you won't come to me.

Seriously, don't come to me. You're on your own. I just explained how to do it.

After that, it was a simple matter of formatting each manuscript. First, dumping all the eTreasures LLC stuff and getting to the core manuscript. Then setting and imposing series of styles, choosing a font, font size, page size, margins, setting special conditions for title page, copyright page, chapter headings, table of contents. For four manuscripts. It only took forever and was a highly discernible pain in the ass.

Meanwhile, Ron went on vacation in Nova Scotia. I bought him an extra size suitcase that I could fit in easily, and even punched air holes in it. But I didn't get to go.

I did make him work a bit – he had to read each manuscript over twice, catching odd line break problems (the only formatting glitch that carried over) and a few typos.

But it worked out. We got it done, all the eTreasures stuff removed, and a set of nicely formatted, edited, proper sized, pristine, clean books ready to publish with Amazon or whoever.

Except for Covers, ISBNs, adverts, blurbs, metadata, registrations, etc. etc.

No problem.



Anglic vs English

There are a number of problems that make it hard to understand contemporary English, sometimes. People keep telling me language evolves, as if I don't know that after several years of linguistics courses. I have finally decided that what is emerging (and the right word for it, actually, is "metamorphosing") is a language *almost but not quite entirely unlike* English, and often unintelligible to my fellow Classical English speakers. I call it Anglic, after several references in SF novels to a future evolution of English.

I suspect that what I hear on the streets, and sometimes on television, bears about the same resemblance to English as Afrikaans bears to Dutch. I also have a sneaking suspicion that unintelligibility is the point, especially in business jargon and political bafflegab.

Only part of the problem is *neologisms* – new words that can't be recognized, such as technical terms recently coined in New Age, financial or IT circles. There are plenty of perfectly good words that already existed, such as "spinster" instead of "bachelorette," "health" instead of "wellness," and other examples. I can only attribute them to people who actually forgot, or never knew the right words in the first place.

Another part of the problem is *misnomers* – words adapted, or misused, for no very good reason. Perhaps the best-known misuse would be the New Age terms "vibrations" or "energy," which have real meanings in basic physics but little discoverable meaning in Anglic ... except to express the speakers' subjective feelings or impressions as if they are actual physical properties of places and situations.

Yet another feature of Anglic is broken grammar. Even grown men with Bachelor of Commerce degrees may start sentences with plural nouns, followed by singular verbs

(or the reverse). I have transcribed dictation files in which speakers did not complete sentences, simply by omitting one critical word (usually a verb). The same thing happened in my last fanzine. ~~It's the Belgians, I tell you.~~

Of course, a good deal of the problem is a style that has long been common in colloquial English. Some of my acquaintances habitually use “they” or “he” or “she” in speech, without defining who they mean, and without clarifying when they shift from one subject to another – and, clearly, without any awareness that anyone listening has lost track. You can probably supply tons of additional examples.

Returning to the subject of contemporary jargon: Some of the observations I obtained from the Internet include:

“The purpose of modern jargon terms is to sound modern, efficient, or collaborative, often to describe complex ideas simply.

“The problem with jargon words and phrases is that they become vague, overused, and prevent clear communication.

“Better alternatives include direct, specific, basic English words and phrases (e.g., ‘Let's schedule a follow-up,’ not ‘Let's circle back’ jargon).”

English idioms, including Anglic jargon, have become a sufficient problem that at least one European businessman decided to invent Globish, a deliberately limited form of English without idioms that baffle English second language speakers.

To get down to specific examples, I have collected below numerous jargon terms, including either unclear or ... well ... deceptive words and phrases:

ACAT; Accelerated; Access platform; Accomplished; Accurate; Achieved; Acquisition; Action / Process; Action Officer; Actionable Insights; Actionable; Active listening; Adaptability; Administered; Advance Procurement; Advanced; Advised; Advocacy; Agency; Agile development; Agile/Scrum; AI/Big Data/Blockchain; AI/ML-driven/Data-driven; analysis/configuration/deployment/design; Analyzed; Application development/technology; Architecture; Artificial intelligence; Assembled; Asset Management; Attained; Awareness & Consciousness; Back end development; Back in the day; Balanced; Bandwidth/Cycles; Banner advertisement; Best of breed; Big Data; Blanket Primary; Blockchain; Distributed ledger technology; Boil the ocean/Big picture; Built; Business analytics; Business continuity; Business support systems; Business to business (B2B); Business to consumer (B2C); Business transformation; Calculated; Capable/capability; Capital budgets; Centralized; Certificate authority; Certified; Championed; Change management; Changed; Channel behavior / conflicts/marketing; Circle Back/Touch Base/Sync Up/Ping; Clarified; Climate Mobility; Cloud Computing/Hybrid Cloud; Cloud management; Cloud-native platforms (CNPs); Coached; Co-branding; Coding; Collaborated/Collaborative; Communicated/Communication; Competitive Bidding; Competitive; Competitive intelligence; Complied; Component development; Computer hardware engineering; Computer science; Computer-aided design (CAD); Conceptualized; Confident; Configured; Conflict resolution; conscious; Consistent; Constructed; Consultant; Content; Content management system (CMS); Converted; Cool under; Coordinated; Core competency; Created; Creative/creativity; Critical thinking; Critiqued; Cross functional; Culturally; Curated; Curiosity; Customer service; Cybersecurity mesh; Data analysis; Data controller; Data gathering; Data mining/warehousing; Data synchronization; Database administration/manager; Database development; Database

integration; Defense Acquisition University (DAU); Decision-making; Decreased; Unpack; Deep Dive; Defined; Definition & Planning; Delegated; Delivered; Delivery systems; Demonstrated; Designed; Detail-oriented; Determined / Determination; Developed; Devised; DevOps; DFARS; Diarise; Digital communication strategies; Digital marketing; Digital media; Digital Transformation; Diligent; Directed; Directive; Disrupt/Game Changer; Distributed; Distributed cloud; Distribution channels; Diversified; Documented; Due Process; Dynamic; Earned; E-commerce; Ecosystem/Hyperlocal; edge/advantage; Editing; Effective/Efficient; Electronic data interchange (EDI); Electronic marketing; Eliminated; Empathy; Encouraged; Encryption; End-user support; Energized; Energy / Vibration; Engineered; Enhanced; Ensured; Enterprise systems; Enthusiastic; E-portal; Established; Ethical; Evaluated; Everything as a service; Exceeded; Excelled; Executed; Expedited; Extended reality; Extracted; Fabricated; Facilitate; Facilitated; Facilitator; Fault analysis; Finalized; Flexibility; Flexible; Focused; Follow-up; Forecasted; Formed; Formulated; Frame (v); Framework; Front end development; Fulfilled; Gained; Gamification; Gatekeeper; Gender Apartheid; Generated; Geographic information system (GIS); Global HITS; Go-getter; Go-to person; Graphic design; Graphic user interface (GUI); Growth Hacking/Snackable Content; Guided; Handled; Headed; Wellness; Helped; Holism; Hosted; Hyperautomation; Identified; Impactful; Implemented; Improved; Incorporated; Increased; Indexed; Influenced; Information security; Information technology (IT); Informed; Infrastructure development; Initiated; Initiative; Innovated; Innovative; Inspected; Installed; Instituted; Integrated; Integrated Product Support (IPS); Integrity; Intellectual property rights (IPR); Interpersonal understanding; Interviewed; Introduced; Intuitive; Invented; Investigated/ Investigative; Internet of Things (IoT); Java; Judgment; Knowledge management; LAN/WAN; Landed; Launched; Law of Attraction; Lead/ Leader; Leadership; Lean manufacturing; Leverage; Licensing; Linked; Listened; Literally; Low-hanging fruit; Loyalty; Machine learning; Maintained; Managed; Management information system (MIS); management/timely; Managing word processors; Manifestation & Abundance; Manufactured; Mapped; Market-space; Mastered; Mathematics; Maximized; Mediated; Mentored; Merged; Mergers and Acquisitions; Methodology; Mindful; Mobile and web development; Modified; Monitored; Motivated; Move the needle: Make a difference.; Moving Forward / At Pace; Multiexperience; Multiplatform integration; Narrative; Needs assessment; Negotiated; Negotiations; Network administration/management; Network solutions; Network (verb); Objective; Official Terms; On-Brand; One-Stop Shop / Portal / Hub; Online advertising; Operated; Operations support systems (OSS); Operational Security (OPSEC); Optimized; Oracle; Ordered; Organized; Outpaced; Outsourced; Overcame; Oversaw; Oversight & Accountability; Own; Paradigm Shift/Disruptive; Partnered; Partnering; Passionate; Patience; Performative; Performed; Perseverance; Persuaded; Persuasive; Piloted; Pinpointed; Pioneered; Pivot; Planned; Planning and organization; Positioned; Predicted; Prepared; Presented; pressure; Prevented; Prioritized; Privacy policy; Proactive; Problem-solving; Process re-engineering; Processed; Procured; Produced; Product launch/testing; Productive; Professional; Profited; Program management; Programming; Project management; Prompt; Proposed; Provide; Punctual; Qualified; Quality; Quality assurance; Quantified; Quantum computing; Quick learner; Raised; Ranked; Reach; Reach Out; Reality-Based Community; Rebuilt; Recorded; Recovered; Rectified; Redefined; Redesigned; Reduced; Re-engineered; Referred; Regulated; Related; Reliable; Research(ed); Research and development; Resolved; Resourceful; Respectable / Respectful; Responsive; Responsive design strategizing; Restored; Restructured; Results-driven; Reverse engineering; Reviewed;

Revised; Revitalized; Rewarded; Rockstar; Root cause analysis; Salvaged; SAS/SPSS; satisfaction; Satisfied; Saved; Screened; Search engine optimization (SEO); Secured; Security monitoring; Selfless; Self-Spirituality; SEO strategizing; Service; Service provider; Set-up; Shipping; Shopping cart; Showcased; Simplified; Situation Report (SITREP); Social media; Software configuration; Software engineering; Solutions delivery/strategies; Solved; Spearheaded, Drove, Pioneered; Specialist; Specialized; Spiritual Identity; Sponsored; Stabilized; Standardized; Storefront; Strategic; Strategic thinker; Strategized; Streamlined, Optimized; Structured Query Language (SQL); Supervised; Supplied; Supply Chain Resilience; Supported; Surpassed; Surveyed; Synergy/Leverage/Align; Systems administration/; Systems development life cycle (from SDLC); Tactical; Tailored; Take it offline/Hard stop; Target market; Task-oriented; Team player; Teamwork; Technical; Technical documentation; Technical support; Terms and Processes; Tested; Testing and debugging; Time; Tracked; Trading; Trained; Traits and Skills; Transcribed; Transformed/ Transformative; Troubleshooter; Turnkey; Unalive (v); Uncovered; Unified/ Unifying; Universal Connection; up/through; Updated; Upgraded; User-centered design; Utilized; Validated; Vendor management; Vibe/Vibration; Visionary; Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP); Vortals (from vertical industry portals); Web administration; Web based technology; Well-written; Willingness to learn.

You may have a good deal to say about the direction that Anglic is taking, and whether it helps or hinders communication. You are invited to comment.



Fanzines Received

Ansible Jan. 2026, From DAVID LANGFORD, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. The first and only fan/pro newszine to feature Thog's Masterclass (examples of truly silly prose in otherwise dramatic or speculative fiction).

Eldritch Science Supplement Jan. 2026. N3F fictionzine, Steve Condrey ed., 60 Garfield Lane, Glenwood, IA 51534, USA. Email: steve.condrey.tnfff@gmail.com. Apparently an add-on to the regular fictionzine, in order that John Thiel's late submissions not wait for the next issue.

WCSFA newsletter Jan. 2026 (info@wcsfa.org), featuring upcoming events in the Lower Mainland in Jan., not necessarily SF-adjacent.

Impulse Jan. 2026, the Montreal SF and Fantasy Association newsletter, Keith Braithwaite ed., available via 125 Rue Léonard, Châteauguay, Québec, Canada, J6K 1N9; E-mail: Keith1958@live.ca. It seems MonSFFA has planned its whole 2026 calendar of meetings and social events, including picnics, barbecues, seasonal dinners, and a fancrafting workshop.

The Visionary, Jan. 7, 14 and 28, 2026, from the Universal Life Church, 2720 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134, USA. Email: newsletter@themonastery.org. By now the ULC weekly newsletter regularly lists some tantalizing subjects, then lists links to the articles, instead of the articles as a whole. E.g., on Jan. 7th, “what does the future hold? Among the questions to be determined: can Christians find common ground on trans rights? Will Jesus’s face continue to fetch millions at auction? And, of course, will Nostradamus be right about 2026?” and in the Jan. 28th issue, “From anti-ICE protesters disrupting church service, to a high-ranking chaplain encouraging soldiers to disobey “immoral” orders, many now feel emboldened to speak out – even if there are lasting consequences. Question is, are they taking things too far?”

SMOF News, Jan. 7, 14 & 21, 2026. Petréa Mitchell ed., smofnews@substack.com. More litigation, more suspended conventions, more Guests of Honour added to other cons, more mediacons to add to my website calendar.

Warp #116, the Montreal SF and Fantasy Association fanzine, Danny Sichel ed., warp@monsffa.ca. Contact MonSFFA c/o 29 rue Harold, Kirkland, Québec H9J 1R7. News (catching up on six months of MonSFFA doings in 2025), views, reviews, articles, you know the drill.

The Incomplete Register 2025, from Nic Farey, 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas, NV 89142, USA, fareynic@gmail.com. The FAAn Awards voters' guide and pro forma ballot for the FAAn Awards, listing more fanzines to add to my website list.

Ionisphere #49, Jan. 2026, Edited by Jean-Paul L. Garnier, 61871 Twentynine Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree, CA 92252, USA, email spacecowboybooks@gmail.com (for the editor and magazine). Published for the National Fantasy Fan, Federation.

N3F Fan Gazette, Jan. 2026, editors Mindy Hunt (mindyhunt@scifi4me.com) and Jason Hunt (jphunt@scifi4me.com). The N3F newsletter, distinguished in this issue by an article investigating the first discoverable fanzines.

MT Void Jan. 16, 23 and 30, 2026, Editor: Evelyn Leeper, evelynchinelisleeper@gmail.com. Mini-reviews and light articles about interesting aspects of popular culture.

Perryscope #56, Jan. 2026, an issue of a personalzine published whenever the mood takes him by Perry Middlemiss, 32 Elphin Grove, Hawthorn, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3122. E: perry@middlemiss.org. This is embiggened (as Perry Middlemiss' email warns us), to 44 pages in fact. As usual, travel writing, book and movie reviews, brief coverage of the podcast Two Chairs Talking; not as usual is Irwin Hirsch's version of the story of Spawncon, a bid to hold the 1985 Australian Natcon in Seattle. (Reread that a few times to get the full effect.) And letters to the max.

Tightbeam #376, Jan. 2026, Editors: George Phillies (phillies@4liberty.net), 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester, MA 01609, USA, and Jon Swartz,

judgeswartz@gmail.com, “the N3F literary fanzine. We try to cover all tastes in fandom, such as anime, comics, cosplay, films, novels, biographies, poetry, music, short stories, food, etc.

The Australian Journal of Fannish Research (AJFR) #1, 2025 - Editor - Leigh Edmonds: Enquiries and submissions should be addressed to: ajfannishr@gmail.com. “*The contents of this journal are copyright, that right being returned to the individual contributors. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any means for commercial purposes without written permission. ... Copies in PDF are available on the websites fanac.org and efanzines.com.*” This first issue features articles by the big names, Mark Plummer, Marc Ortlieb, Ahrvid Engholm, Rob Hansen, Leigh Edmonds and Perry Middlemiss – people who know about British, Australian and Swedish fandom – covering some of the fanhistory in these areas, as well as touching on. Leigh Edmonds also writes on “Research – The Questions We Ask,” describing the research he was able to conduct at UC Riverside during a brief visit to the western United States, and the practical limits on questions he could answer. Perry Middlemiss writes on fannish archives and repositories available, and the continuing loss of reference materials as fans have to discard their fan publications, or as libraries are forced to reduce the mass of papers they archive, including newspapers. The battle continues.

Captain Flashback #86, from Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125, emails at fanmailaph@aol.com and carrieroot49@yahoo.com. Under “Original Staples,” Andy writes about the recently-departed Arthur Hlavaty, his fanwriting on diverse topics, his congoing, and his humour.

N3F Review of Books, Jan. 2026, edited by Professor George Phillies, D.Sc. (phillies@4liberty.net), featuring book reviews by a horde of fans. This issue is distinguished by Cory Doctorow’s fascinating review of “The Adventures of Mary Darling by Pat Murphy”.

Tonopah Elucidator & Literary Review #3: a personal zine from Kevin Trainor, PO Box 143, Tonopah NV 89049, wombat.scho@gmail.com. Book reviews, and the continuing adventures of Kevin Trainor.

The National Fantasy Fan, January 2026, editors George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net, and Jon Swartz, judgeswartz@gmail.com. This issue announces winners of the 2025 N3F Short Story Contest, the Franson Awards and the N3F Laureate Awards, as well as reporting the FAAn Awards to be held soon at Corflu. Also: letters, other recent N3F fanzines, banner ads, and announcement of the 2026 N3F Short Story Contest.

New Mystery and SF/F/H Book Releases

Dead Write / White Dwarf Books

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Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6R 2G5
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- [Other catalogues](#)

Abbreviations

hc = hardcover, tp = trade (oversized) paperback, [UK ed] = British publication, [CDN ed] = Canadian publication. Default is US publication.

Other Titles: Please note that this listing is not exhaustive; we have many more (several hundred more) titles coming during this period.

January 2026 New Mystery and Crime Fiction Releases

Askew, Claire. LINE OF SIGHT. [DI HELEN BIRCH #6]. Hodder, 24.99 tp.

Boyle, William. SAINT OF THE NARROWS STREET. Soho, 24.95 tp.

Brandi, Mark. EDEN. Hachette Australia, 29.99 tp.

Brennan, Hannah. NO SAFE PLACE. [DETECTIVE LIZ FIELD]. Avon, 23.99 tp.

Cates, Bailey. RITUALS AND ROLLING PINS. [MAGICAL BAKERY #11]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.

Chien, Vivien. CRIME RANGOON. [NOODLE SHOP MYSTERY #12]. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.

Cleeves, Ann. ANOTHER MAN'S POISON [GEORGE AND MOLLY PALMER-JONES #5]. Pan, 21.99 tp (reissue).

Collins, Max Allan. RETURN OF THE MALTESE FALCON. [MALTESE FALCON #2]. Hard Case Crime, 36.99 hc.

Ellory, R.J. A DARKER SIDE OF PARADISE. Hodder, 39.00 hc.

Fox, Harriet. THE WOMEN IN THE SHADOWS. HQDigital, 24.99 tp.

Fox, Sarah. DEFINITELY MAYBE NOT A DETECTIVE. Bantam, 24.95 tp.

Goodwin, Sarah. ALPINE RETREAT. Avon, 23.99 tp.

Hannah, Sophie. NO ONE WOULD DO WHAT THE LAMBERTS HAVE DONE. Sourcebooks Landmark, 26.99 tp.

Hillerman, Anne. SHADOW OF THE SOLSTICE. [LEAPHORN, CHEE & MANUELITO #10]. Perennial, 23.99 tp.

Horst, Jorn Lier. THE CABIN. [THE COLD CASE QUARTET #2]. Scribner Canada, 26.99 tp.

Johansen, Iris. THE DEATH MASK. [EVE DUNCAN #31]. Grand Central, 19.00 tp.

Koreto, R. J. WINTER'S SEASON: A REGENCY MYSTERY. Histria Fiction, 28.99 tp.

Laukkanen, Owen. THE WATCHER IN THE WALL. [STEVENS AND WINDERMERE #5]. Putnam, 29.99 tp. [Vancouver author].

Marlow, Natalie. NEEDLESS ALLEY. John Murray, 23.99 tp.

Martin, Faith. THE LAST WORD IS DEATH. [VAL & ARBIE #2]. HQ Digital, 23.99 tp.

Mason, Simon. A VOICE IN THE NIGHT. [RYAN WILKINS #4]. Mobius, 19.00 tp.

Mitchell, Sandra. THIS SIDE OF GONE. [VINNIE TAYLOR#1]. Morrow, 23.99 tp.

Montgomery, Ross. THE MURDER AT WORLD'S END. [STOCKINGHAM & PIKE #1]. Morrow, 37.00 hc.

Muir, T. F. DEAD COLD. Constable, 23.99 tp.

Mukherjee, Abir. THE BURNING GROUNDS. [WYNDHAM AND BANERJEE #6]. Harvill Secker, 31.99 tp.

Nadel, Barbara. THE WOODEN LIBRARY. [IKMEN #27]. Headline, 24.99 tp.

Natt och Dag, Niklas. HOPE AND DESTINY. S&S, 25.99 tp.

Nesbo, Jo. BLOOD TIES. Vintage Canada, 27.00 tp.

Oliver, M. K. A SOCIOPATH'S GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE. HarperCanada, 25.99 tp.

Pattison, C. L. FIRST TO FALL. Headline, 23.99 tp.

Petford, F. H. A GHOST HUNTER'S GUIDE TO SOLVING A MURDER. Hodder, 24.99 tp.

Quirk, Matthew. THE METHOD. Morrow, 39.50 hc.

Romano-Lax, Andromeda. WHAT BOYS LEARN. Soho Crime, 39.95 hc. [BC author].

Rose, Bellamy. POMONA AFTON CAN SO SOLVE A MURDER. Emily Bestler, 25.00 tp.

Shelton, Paige. WRITTEN IN STONE. [SCOTTISH BOOKSHOP #10]. Minotaur, 14.99 pb.

Stabenow, Dana. ABDUCTION OF A SLAVE. [EYE OF ISIS #4]. Aries, 24.99 tp.

Stopps, Rosalind. VIRGINIA LANE IS NOT A HERO. HQ, 23.99 tp.

Stuart, Amy. A DEATH AT THE PARTY. S&S, 14.99 pb.

Sutton, Paula. THE POTTING SHED MURDER. Dialogue, 24.99 tp.

Taylor, Marsali. AN IMPOSTER IN SHETLAND. [THE SHETLAND SAILING MYSTERIES #13]. Accent, 24.99 tp.

Trujillo, Simon Lopez. PEDRO THE VAST. Algonquin, 23.99 tp.

Watson, Katy. A LIVELY MIDWINTER MURDER. [THE THREE DAHLIAS]. Mobius, 24.99 tp.

Welsh, Louise. TO THE DOGS. Canongate, 22.50 tp.

Wilson, Edward. FAREWELL DINNER FOR A SPY. Quercus, 24.99 tp.

Winslow, Don. CRIME 101 [MOVIE TIE-IN]. Morrow, 23.99 tp.

Wright, Lawrence. THE HUMAN SCALE. Vintage, 25.99 tp.

Yardley, Ellen. ELEANOR AND THE COLD WAR. Kensington, 24.95 tp.

February 2026 New Mystery and Crime Fiction Releases

Alexander, Ellie. THE WHISKING HOUR. [BAKESHOP MYSTERY #22]. Minotaur, 13.99 pb.

Beaton, M. C. & R. W. Green. DEATH OF A GROOM. [HAMISH MACBETH]. Grand Central, 37.00 hc.

Beckett, Simon. THE BONE GARDEN. Trapeze, 17.99 tp.

Benedict, Marie. THE QUEENS OF CRIME. Griffin, 26.00 tp.

Blackwell, Amelia. A CRIME THROUGH TIME. [MISS DARCY INVESTIGATES #1]. Pan, 21.99 tp.

Box, C. J. THE CROSSROADS. [JOE PICKETT #26]. Putnam, 44.00 hc.

Burke, James Lee. THE HADACOL BOOGIE. [DAVE ROBICHEAUX #25]. Atlantic Crime, 46.50 hc.

Cameron, Christian. THE VENETIAN HERETIC. Orion, 23.99 tp.

Carter, A. F. CARNEY. [DELIA MARIOLA]. Mysterious, 24.95 tp.

Childs, Laura. HIGH TEA AND MISDEMEANORS. [TEA SHOP #29]. Berkley, 13.50 pb.

Chow, Jennifer J. TELL-TALE TREATS. [MAGICAL FORTUNE COOKIE #3]. Minotaur, 14.99 pb.

Chowdhury, Ajay. THE SHADOW. [KAMIL RAHMAN #5]. Harvill Secker, 21.99 tp.

Davies, M. R. G. MURDER BY THE BOOK. [A COSY CRIME CLUB #1]. One More Chapter, 23.99 tp.

Daws, N. R. MURDER AT THE PALACE. Orion, 24.99 tp.

Dini, Elisabeth. BEARER OF BAD NEWS. Gallery, 26.00 tp.

Dunlap, A. Rae. THE RESURRECTIONIST. Kensington, 25.95 tp.

Erickson, Alex. DEATH BY IRISH COFFEE. [BOOKSTORE CAFE #15]. Cozies, 11.99 pb.

French, Nicci. TYLER GREEN WILL NEVER BE FREE. [MAUD O'CONNOR #3].
Morrow, 25.99 tp.

Gibney, Patricia. THE LOST CHILD. [DETECTIVE LOTTIE PARKER #3]. Bookouture,
24.99 tp.

Gilstrap, John. SCORCHED EARTH. [JONATHAN GRAVE #17]. Kensington, 24.95 tp.

Gray, Alex. ACTS OF MALICE. [DSI WILLIAM LORIMER #22]. Sphere, 23.99 tp.

Greaney, Mark. THE HARD LINE. [GRAY MAN #15]. Berkley, 41.00 hc.

Grippando, James. GRAVE DANGER. [JACK SWYTECK #19]. Perennial, 24.99 tp.

Gunasekera, Yosha. THE MIDNIGHT TAXI. Berkley, 27.00 tp.

Heider, Elizabeth. CHILDREN OF THE SAVAGE CITY. Penguin, 28.99 tp.

Henderson, Alice. THE VANISHING KIND. [ALEX CARTER #4]. Morrow, 24.99 tp.

Indridason, Arnaldur. THE QUIET MOTHER. Vintage UK, 21.99 tp.

Khan, Ausma Zehanat. THE LINES WE CROSS. [BLACKWATER FALLS #3]. Minotaur,
41.00 hc.

Kirwan, Catherine. THE SEVENTH BODY. Hodder, 24.99 tp.

La Plante, Lynda. THE SCENE OF THE CRIME. [JESSICA RUSSELL #1]. Zaffre, 24.99
tp.

LaMothe, Allison. DIRTY METAL. Flatiron, 41.99 hc.

Littell, Robert. BRONSHTEIN IN THE BRONX. Soho, 23.00 tp.

Meyrick, Denzil. LAST ORDERS. [DCI JIM DALEY]. Transworld, 21.99 tp.

Mosley, Walter. BEEN WRONG SO LONG IT FEELS LIKE RIGHT. [KING OLIVER #3].
Mulholland, 25.99 tp.

Nesbo, Jo. WOLF HOUR. Random House Canada, 38.00 hc.

Novack, Rebecca. MURDER BIMBO. Avid Reader, 25.99 tp.

O'Connor, Carlene. MURDER IN AN IRISH GARDEN. [IRISH VILLAGE #11]. Cozies,
24.95 tp.

Oates, Joyce Carol. DOUBLE TROUBLE. Hard Case Crime, 24.99 tp.

Perez-Reverte, Arturo. THE FINAL PROBLEM. Mulholland, 39.00 hc.

Perry, Thomas. PRO BONO. Mysterious, 22.95 tp.

Porter, Henry. ENIGMA GIRL. Atlantic Crime, 26.50 tp.

Post, Steph. A TREE BORN CROOKED. Datura, 26.99 tp.

Potzsch, Oliver. THE GIRL AND THE GRAVEDIGGER. [LEOPOLD VON HERZFELDT
#2]. HarperVia, 28.99 tp.

Preston, Douglas. PENDERGAST: THE BEGINNING. [AGENT PENDERGAST]. Grand
Central, 40.00 hc.

Raybourn, Deanna. KILLS WELL WITH OTHERS. Berkley, 25.99 tp.

Robb, J. D. STOLEN IN DEATH. [EVE DALLAS #62]. St. Martin's, 42.00 hc.

Rollins, James. TRUST NO ONE. Morrow, 28.99 tp.
Sallis, James. BRIGHT SEGMENTS: THE COMPLETE SHORT FICTION. Soho Crime, 29.00 tp.
Spotswood, Stephen. DEAD IN THE FRAME. [PENTECOST AND PARKER #5]. Black Lizad, 24.95 tp.
Turow, Scott. PRESUMED GUILTY. [PRESUMED INNOCENT #3]. Grand Central, 25.99 tp.
Whitelaw, Jonathan. ALL AT SEA. HarperNorth, 23.99 tp.
Wrobel, Stephanie. THE HITCHCOCK HOTEL. Simon & Schuster, 13.99 pb.

January 2026 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Amor, Gemma. ITCH!. Mobius, 36.00 hc.
Barnes, S. A. COLD ETERNITY. Nightfire, 25.99 tp.
Beaulieu, Bradley P. A GOD OF COUNTLESS GUISES. [BOOK OF THE HOLT]. AdAstra, 40.00 hc.
Bennett, Robert Jackson. A DROP OF CORRUPTION. [SHADOW OF THE LEVIATHAN #2]. Del Rey, 27.99 tp.
Broadbuss, Maurice. BREATH OF OBLIVION. [ASTRA BLACK #2]. Tor, 33.99 tp.
Butcher, Jim. TWELVE MONTHS. [DRESDEN FILES #18]. Ace, 39.99 hc.
Buxton, Kira Jane. TARTUFO. Grand Central, 24.99 tp.
Campbell, Rick. SYNTHETIC WAR. [NEXUS HOUSE]. Severn River, 24.95 tp.
Cole, Kamilah. AN ARCANINE INHERITANCE. Poisoned Pen, 28.99 tp.
Cooper, Iver P. 1637: THE PACIFIC INITIATIVE. [1632 NOVELS #39]. Baen, 12.99 pb..
Cordova, Jason & Melissa Olthoff. TO TREAD OBSIDIAN SHORES. [THE BRONZE LEGION #1]. Baen, 37.00 hc.
Correia, Larry. HEART OF THE MOUNTAIN. [SAGA OF THE FORGOTTEN WARRIOR #6]. Baen, 25.00 tp.
Crocker, Ed. LIGHTFALL. [EVERLANDS #1]. St. Martin's, 26.00 tp.
Dinniman, Matt. DUNGEON CRAWLER CARL. Ace, 27.99 tp.
Doctorow, Cory. PICKS AND SHOVELS. [MARTIN HENCH #3]. Tor, 25.99 tp.
Dukaj, Jacek. ICE. AdAstra, 47.00 hc.
Glover, Nicole. THE STARSEEKERS. [MURDER & MAGIC #4]. Voyager, 27.00 tp.
Guanzon, Thea. A MONSOON RISING. [THE HURRICANE WARS #2]. Voyager, 24.99 tp.
Hair, David. THE DROWNING SEA. [THE TALMONT TRILOGY #2]. Mobius, 24.99 tp.
Hamill, Shaun. SUFFER THE WITCH. [SOLOMON KANE]. Titan, 38.99 hc.

Hamilton, Peter F.. A HOLE IN THE SKY. [ARKSHIP TRILOGY #1]. Angry Robot, 24.99 tp.

Ibanez, Isabel. GRACELESS HEART. Saturday, 43.00 hc.

Ireland, Justina. WAYSEEKER. [STAR WARS: THE ACOLYTE]. Worlds, 25.99 tp.

Jensen, Van. GODFALL. Grand Central, 39.00 hc.

Jones, Stephen Graham. I WAS A TEENAGE SLASHER. Saga, 26.00 tp.

Kade, Kel. SANCTUM OF THE SOUL. [SHROUD OF PROPHECY #3]. Tor, 27.99 tp.

Kennington, Alexandra. BLOOD BENEATH THE SNOW. [BLOOD & SOULS DUOLOGY #1]. Ace, 25.99 tp.

Kingfisher, T. NINE GOBLINS: A TALE OF LOW FANTASY AND HIGH MISCHIEF. Tor.com, 34.99 hc.

Klune, TJ. THE BONES BENEATH MY SKIN. Tor, 27.99 tp.

Knausgaard, Karl Ove. THE SCHOOL OF NIGHT. [THE MORNING STAR #4]. Knopf Canada, 42.00 hc.

Knutsdottir, Hildur. THE NIGHT GUEST. Nightfire, 19.99 tp.

Kratman, Tom. FOR THE ETERNAL GLORY OF ROME. Baen, 37.00 hc.

Levine, Sara. THE HITCH. Roxane Gay, 41.95 hc.

Llewellyn, Robert. THE GHOST CAMERA. Unbound, 30.95 hc.

McGuire, Seanan. THROUGH GATES OF GARNET AND GOLD. [WAYWARD CHILDREN #11]. Tor.com, 34.99 hc.

Myers, Celina. HOLLOW. Hanover Square, 37.00 hc.

Nix, Garth. NEWT'S EMERALD: MAGIC, MAIDS, AND MASQUERADES. Katherine Tegen, 15.99 tp.

Parker, Sarah A. TO BLEED A CRYSTAL BLOOM. [CRYSTAL BLOOM #1]. Avon, 28.99 tp.

Poon, Jared. CITY OF OTHERS. [THE DEUS FILES #1]. Orbit, 24.99 tp.

Powers, Zach. FIRST COSMIC VELOCITY. Putnam, 29.99 tp.

Rake, Jeff. DETOUR. [DETOUR #1]. Worlds, 39.99 hc.

Rao, Kritika H. THE LEGEND OF MENEKA. [THE DIVINE DANCERS DUOLOGY #1]. Voyager, 23.99 tp.

Royer, Maude. THE BLOODY BRICK ROAD: A WIZARD OF OZ RETELLING. [THE FORBIDDEN TALES #1]. S&S, 25.99 tp.

Salvatore, R. A. THE WITCH OF WHISPERVALE. [DEMONWARS: THE BUCCANEERS #2]. Saga, 28.00 tp.

Selene, Lyra. A HEART SO GREEN. [FAIR FOLK #3]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.

Shepard, Katie. THE YOUNGER GODS. Ace, 25.99 tp.

St. Aubin, Cynthia. LOVE LIES. [TAILS FROM THE ALPHA ART #3]. Tor, 25.99 tp.

Summerlee, Annie. THE BOOK OF BLOOD AND ROSES. Del Rey, 39.99 hc.
Sylva, Jessie. HOW TO LOSE A GOBLIN IN TEN DAYS. Orbit, 24.99 tp.
Tao, Shen. THE POET EMPRESS. Bramble, 45.99 hc.
Taylor, Dennis E. FOR WE ARE MANY. [BOBIVERSE #2]. S&S/Saga, 42.00 hc.
Uehashi, Nahoko. KOKUN: THE GIRL FROM THE WEST. Europa, 27.95 tp.
Weber, David & Jane Lindskold. FRIENDS INDEED. [STAR KINGDOM #5]. Baen, 12.99 pb.

February 2026 New Fantasy and Science Fiction Releases

Abdullah, Chelsea. THE ASHFIRE KING. [THE SANDSEA TRILOGY #2]. Orbit, 25.99 tp.
Adams, Guy (ed). THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR ANTHOLOGY. Rebellion, 22.99 tp.
Al-Wasity, Heba. WEAVINGSHAW. Del Rey, 41.99 hc.
Anderson, Jarod K. STRANGE ANIMALS. Ballantine, 39.99 hc.
Anderson, Liza. WE WHO HAVE NO GODS. [THE ACHERON ORDER]. Ballantine, 39.99 hc.
Arena, Brittney. A DANCE OF LIES. Vintage Canada, 25.00 tp.
Armstrong, Collin. POLYBIUS. Gallery, 26.00 tp.
Ashton, Edward. AFTER THE FALL. St. Martin's, 41.00 hc.
Ashton, Edward. THE FOURTH CONSORT. St. Martin's, 26.00 tp.
Baumer, Cate. THE FAITHFUL DARK. Mobius, 36.00 hc.
Baxter, Stephen. HEARTHSPACE. Gollancz, 29.99 tp.
Blackgoose, Moniquill. TO RIDE A RISING STORM. [BOOK OF NAMPESHIWEISIT #2]. Del Rey, 27.99 tp.
Boyle, R. L. TEMPLE FALL. Titan, 24.99 tp.
Breeze, Caitlin. THE FOX HUNT. Little, Brown, 25.99 tp.
Cahill, Ryan. OF BLOOD AND FIRE. [THE BOUND AND THE BROKEN]. Broken Binding, 35.99 hc.
Campbell, Jack. DESTINY'S WAY. [THE DOOMED EARTH DUOLOGY #2]. Ace, 25.99 tp.
Castro, V. MARIA THE WANTED. Titan, 24.99 tp.
Chang, Janie. THE FOURTH PRINCESS. HarperCanada, 25.99 tp. [Vancouver author].
Chapa, Veronica. MALINALLI. Primero Sueno, 26.00 tp.
Chen, Mike. LOW RED MOON. [STAR WARS OUTLAWS]. Worlds, 41.99 hc.
Cliffwater, Ivy. THE SHADOW WEAVER. Hachette Aotearoa New Zealand, 29.99 tp.
Cogman, Genevieve. DAMNED. [THE SCARLET REVOLUTION #3]. Tor UK, 21.99 tp.

Cox, Darby. A DAY OF BREATH. Angry Robot, 26.99 tp

Dawson, Delilah S. HEIR OF STRAHD. [DUNGEONS & DRAGONS RAVENLOFT]. Worlds, 25.99 tp.

de Castell, Sebastien. THE MALEVOLENT EIGHT: THE BAD, THE WORSE AND THE WICKED. [THE MALEVOLENT SEVEN #2]. Mobius, 24.99 tp. Vancouver author.

Dinniman, Matt. OPERATION BOUNCE HOUSE. Ace, 44.00 hc.

Eccles, Megan Jauregui. SING THE NIGHT. [OPERA MAGIQUE #1]. Grand Central, 40.00 hc.

Fawcett, Heather. AGNES AUBERT'S MYSTICAL CAT SHELTER. Del Rey, 39.99 hc. [BC author].

Fellman, Isaac. NOTES FROM A REGICIDE. Tor, 25.99 tp.

Gaither, S. M. WHAT BLOOMS FROM DEATH. Cornerstone, 22.99 tp.

Golden, Kate. HALF CITY. [HARKER ACADEMY #1]. Ace, 25.99 tp.

Goldenberg, Salinee. WAY OF THE WALKER. Angry Robot, 24.99 tp.

Grecian, Alex. ROSE OF JERICHO. Nightfire, 25.99 tp.

Hall, Alexis. HELL'S HEART. Tor, 41.99 hc.

Harrison, Kim. SECONDHAND LUCK. [THE SHADOW AGE #2]. Ace, 39.99 hc.

Ivy, Alexandra. DRAGON MAGIC. [MAGIC FOR HIRE #4]. Lyrical, 24.95 tp.

Jensen, Danielle L. A CURSE CARVED IN BONE. [THE SAGA OF THE UNFATED #2]. Del Rey, 27.99 tp. [Canadian author].

Johnson, Kate. PROMISED QUEEN. One More Chapter, 23.99 tp.

Jones, Helen Glynn. RAVEN'S COURT. [RAVENS #2]. One More Chapter, 23.99 tp.

Keaton, David James. HEAD CLEANER. Datura, 24.99 tp.

Kechacha, Rym. THE APPLE AND THE PEARL. Titan, 24.99 tp.

Kennington, Alexandra. GODS BENEATH THE ICE. [BLOOD & SOULS DUOLOGY #2]. Ace, 41.99 hc.

Key, Justin C. THE HOSPITAL AT THE END OF THE WORLD. Harper, 39.00 hc.

Kirkbride, Jasmin. THE FOREST ON THE EDGE OF TIME. Tor, 41.99 hc.

Kovatcheva, Anna. SHE MADE HERSELF A MONSTER. Mariner, 39.00 hc.

Kressel, Matthew. THE RAINSEEKERS. Tor.com, 25.99 tp.

Kuroki, Poppy. PASSAGE TO TOKYO. [ANCESTOR MEMORIES #2]. Perennial, 21.99 tp.

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