

BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

NOVEMBER 2018

ISSUE 566

HONORARY PRESIDENT: CHRISTOPHER PRIEST

COMMITTEE: VERNON BROWN (CHAIRMAN); PAT BROWN (TREASURER);
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CAROL GOODWIN (NEWSLETTER EDITOR); WILLIAM MCCABE (WEBSITE);
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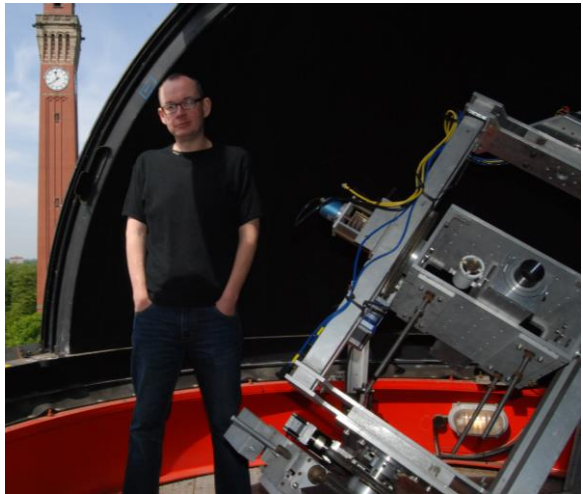
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Professor WILLIAM CHAPLIN November 16th

This month our guest speaker is Professor William Chaplin from the University of Birmingham. He will be talking to us about **SOUNDING STARS**



AND THE SEARCH FOR NEW STARS IN THE GALAXY.

The talk will review recent exciting breakthroughs in our ability to study stars -- by detecting signatures of their natural resonances -- and to detect planets orbiting stars, thanks to a new generation of satellites

December 7th - Christmas social at Selly Park Tavern. NB Date is one week earlier than usual.

and telescopes that are providing data of unrivalled quality on unprecedented numbers of stars. In particular he will be highlighting results from the NASA Kepler Mission, and will touch briefly on the promise of the recently launched NASA TESS Mission.

Professor Chaplin is the co-author of over 150 research papers in the fields of solar and stellar physics. He leads the NASA Kepler mission studying the astero-seismic investigation of solar-type stars and manages and co-ordinates the work of over 170 international scientists. He is active in promoting solar/stellar research on both national and international media, including recent appearances on the BBC to discuss the results from the Kepler spacecraft. *(Based on information on the University of Birmingham website www.birmingham.ac.uk)* CG

The meeting will take place in the conference room on the first floor of The Briar Rose Hotel, Bennetts Hill, off New Street.

The doors open at 7.30pm and the meeting will normally commence at 8.00pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar on the ground floor, and be seated in plenty of time. The entrance fee for our January AGM is free and the August and December socials are ticket only events. All other meetings the entrance fee is £3 for members and £6 for non-members.

THE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL FRIDAY - 7th DECEMBER

This year's Social will be held at The Selly Park Tavern, 592 Pershore Road, Selly Oak, where we have once again hired the Skittles Room for our own private use from 7pm until 11pm.

To get there take a 45 or 47 bus from outside Boots, opposite New Street Station's entrance on Smallbrook Queensway. (There are other stops in the City but the route does wander around a bit so give yourself extra time with these.) *Bus stops are still changing so check the destination sign carefully.* Ask for The Selly Park Tavern - It's about 15 minutes ride and is on the left a few stops past the Edgbaston Cricket Ground and the stop after the Nature Centre. Walk down the side of the Tavern to the skittle alley entrance.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FROM OUR USUAL SECOND FRIDAY

Tickets are £10 each which includes the buffet etc but not your drinks. If you wish you can play skittles - there will be prizes for winners and you don't even have to know how to play because we have our own

variants of the game, designed to give everyone a chance, and/or you can socialise over a drink or two. There will be a free half hourly raffle and, to judge from past comments, a good time to be had by all.

The buffet will consist of a selection of sandwiches, sausage rolls, quiche, pizza, salads etc., plus a separate selection for vegetarians, provided that this requirement is clearly stated when you order your ticket.

You can obtain your ticket(s) in several ways:

1. From Pat at the November meeting.
2. By post - email Pat at bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk for a postal address.
3. Online - Sort code: 40-43-28. Account No. 91493949. HSBC Bank.
 - a. Please put your name in the reference field so that we will know who sent it and email Pat with your name,
 - b. number of tickets required and type(s) of buffet required i.e. standard or vegetarian.

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS FRIDAY 23rd NOVEMBER because the Tavern needs food numbers that weekend. However, by that time NOVACON will have happened and there may not be any tickets left - numbers are restricted for safety reasons and we have often reached that number and had to refuse latecomers. *VB*
REMEMBER THAT TICKETS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE ON THE NIGHT - GET THEM NOW!

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS - Vernon Brown

At the forthcoming January AGM, the committee members will, as usual, step down from their posts. The 2019 committee will then be elected by those present.

An outline of the various committee members' duties is given below but if you do consider standing for any of the positions please ask me, without any commitment, for more details at the November meeting or the December Social. Alternatively email me via the Group address and I'll email them to you. *VB*

[NB Theresa will not be standing for re-election and Pat has been holding two roles, Treasurer and Membership Secretary since Vicky Stock passed away so "new blood" would be welcome - Editor]

THE COMMITTEE OFFICERS DUTIES

The following “Job Descriptions” are outlines of the basic duties of each Officer. However, there is a great deal of interaction and working to common deadlines between the various posts and some reports, such as the Financial Report and the Minutes, are made to an established format.

GENERAL DUTIES (and a requirement)

To help organise BSFG Meetings throughout the year.

To attend monthly Committee meetings in the City Centre, usually on the Wednesday evening of the week preceding the week in which the Group Meeting is held.

To assist other Committee members in their duties as necessary.

To present a report at the AGM.

To have email access at home.

OFFICERS' DUTIES

CHAIRMAN

To chair Committee meetings and present a report.

To chair Group Meetings, introduce and thank the Speaker.

To negotiate with hotels and other organisations on behalf of the Group.

To organise, prepare and supervise the annual Christmas Social.

To liaise with the Secretary in arranging the Committee meeting agenda.

SECRETARY

To communicate with Speakers on behalf of the Committee.

To communicate with other persons and organisations on behalf of the Committee.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

To take and circulate ASAP Records of Committee meetings.

TREASURER

To maintain the current BSFG Bank Account.

To attend Group Meetings, arriving early and ensuring that the Meeting room is prepared for Group use.

To collect admission money etc at Group Meetings.

To liaise with the Membership Secretary in the collection of membership fees etc.

To present a detailed current Financial Report at Committee meetings.

To present an Annual Financial Report at the AGM.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (This post and the post of Secretary may be held by one person)

To maintain BSFG Membership records.

To organise the collection of membership subscriptions, renewals etc.

To liaise with the Treasurer as necessary.

To present a report on current membership numbers at Committee meetings.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

To advertise the BSFG by all means possible.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

To maintain contact with sources of potential information for the Group Newsletter.

To edit and produce master copy to an agreed format ready for printing.

To organise printing of the Newsletter, and to distribute it, to a specific timescale.

To liaise with book publishers for review copies.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

ORDINARY MEMBERS - one of whom will be...

WEBSITE MANAGER

To maintain the BSFG Website to an agreed format and to update it as necessary.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

The other **ORDINARY MEMBER**

To contribute to the efficient functioning of the Committee.

To present a report at Committee meetings.

BRITISH FANTASY AWARDS 2017

The 2018 British Fantasy Award winners were announced on October 21st. The ceremony was at FantasyCon in Chester.

Best Fantasy Novel (Robert Holdstock Award): THE NINTH RAIN by Jen Williams (Headline)

Best Horror Novel (August Derleth Award): THE CHANGELING by Victor LaValle (Spiegel and Grau)

Best Short Fiction: "Looking for Laika" by Laura Mauro (*Interzone* #273)

Best Novella: PASSING STRANGE by Ellen Klages (Tor.com)

Best Anthology: NEW FEARS edited by Mark Morris (Titan Books)

Best Collection: STRANGE WEATHER by Joe Hill (Gollancz)

Best Independent Press: *Unsung Stories*

Best Comic/Graphic novel: MONSTRESS, Vol 2 by Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda (*Image Comics*)

Best Artist: Jeffrey Alan Love

Best non-fiction: GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY IN SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY edited by F T Barbini (Luna Press)

Best Magazine/Periodical: *Shoreline of Infinity* edited by Noel Chidwick

Best Film/Television production: GET OUT by Jordan Peel (Universal Pictures)

Best Audio: ANANSI BOYS by Neil Gaiman, adapted by Dirk Maggs for Radio 4

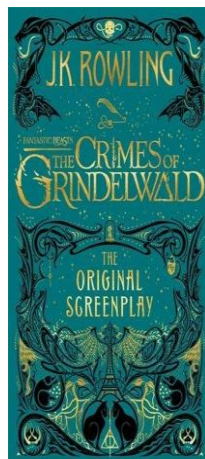
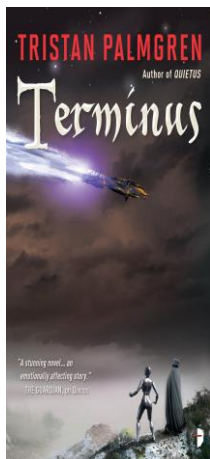
Best Newcomer (the Sydney J Bounds Award): Jeannette Ng for UNDER THE PENDULUM SUN (Angry Robot)

British Fantasy Society Special Award (Karl Edward Wagner): N K Jemisin.

Legends of Fantasycon: Alasdair Stuart and Marguerite Kenner

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

(NB Prices given are Recommended Retail Price and may be available at cheaper prices)

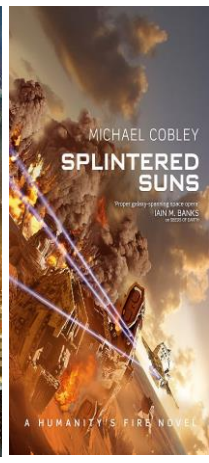
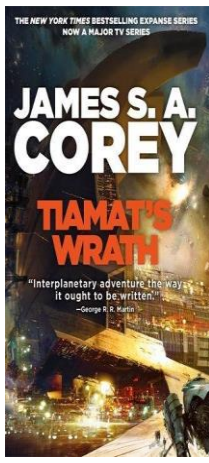
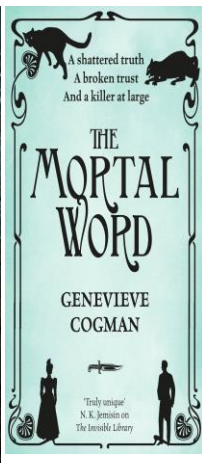
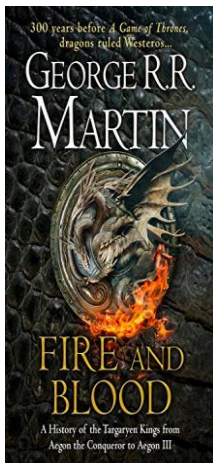


TERMINUS (Unity 2) by Tristan Palmgren / Angry Robot / 512 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0857667588 / November 1st. SF. Representatives of an advanced alien culture struggle to survive in medieval Italy

THE WINTER ROAD by **Adrian Selby** / Orbit / 480 pgs / £8.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0356508375 / November 15th. An ex-soldier attempts to build a road through hostile wilderness.

THE BLUE SALT ROAD by **Joanne Harris** / Gollancz / 224 pgs / £12.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1473222212 / November 15th. A modern fairy-tale of love, loss & adventure on the high seas.

THE CRIMES OF GRINDELWALD screenplay by **J K Rowling** / Little Brown / 304 pgs / £16.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1408711705 / November 16th. Wizards Newt and Dumbeldore try to stop a Dark Wizard, Grindelwald from establishing a magical dictatorship.



FIRE AND BLOOD by **George R R Martin** / Harper Voyager / 736 pgs / £25 hardback / ISBN 978-0008307738 / November 20th. A history of the Targaryen family, 300 years before the events in **GAME OF THRONES**.

THE MORTAL WORD (Invisible Library 5) by **Genevieve Cogman** / Pan / 368 pgs / £7.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1509830725 / November 29th. SF. Invisible Library representative investigates a murder at secret summit between dragons and the Fae.

TIAMAT'S WRATH (Expanses 8) by **James S A Corey** / Orbit / 512 pgs / £20 hardback / ISBN 978-0356509464 / December 6th. As humanity uses gates to expand into the galaxy, the threats and mysteries it faces only deepen.

SPLINTERED SUNS by Michael Cobley / Orbit / 512 pgs / £9.99 paperback / ISBN 978-0356509662 / December 6th. SF. A simple mission to find a crashed spaceship is complicated by a second group of treasure hunters. CG

NEW CINEMA FILM RELEASES

Listings should not be necessarily taken as recommendations. Release dates are subject to change. View at your own peril!

FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE CRIMES OF GRINDELWALD - Release date November 16th. Fantasy. *Harry Potter* prequels. Wizards Newt and Dumbeldore try to stop a Dark Wizard, Grindelwald from establishing a magical dictatorship.

SUSPIRIA- Release date November 16th. Horror. Remake - Dark events centre around a world-renowned dance company.

ASSASSINATION NATION - Release date November 23rd. Horror. Chaos, anger and violence in modern day Salem when people's personal and private secrets are revealed on social media

ANNA AND THE APOCALYPSE - Release date November 30th. Comedy Horror. A zombie apocalypse threatens a sleepy town - at Christmas.

WRECK-IT RALPH 2: RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET - Release date November 30th. Cartoon. Video game characters escape into the brave new world of the Internet. CG

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Spanish comic book artist, **Carlos Ezquerro** has died at the age of 70. He will be best remembered as the co-creator of the iconic Judge Dredd for the *2000AD* sci-fi magazine and also drew many of the classic Dredd stories. He also created another well-remembered character of Johnny Alpha in the Strontium Dog strip. He was regarded by many as one of the greatest comic book artists The winner of the **Utopiales Best SF Novel Award** (for a novel published in French) is **L'ÂME DES HORLOGES (THE BONE CLOCKS)** by David Mitchell The Bank of England is taking nominations for **scientists to appear on the new £50 note**. They must be real (ie non-fictional) and not be alive. Anyone can nominate (as many times as you wish) at www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/50-pound-note-

nominationsThe Chinese film THE WANDERING EARTH based upon a story by **SF author, Cixin Liu** (best known for THE THREE-BODY PROBLEM) is being discussed as China's first potential "breakout sci-fi blockbuster film" that looks likely to succeed in the US/European cinema market as well as domestically The BBC show *Tomorrow's World* will return as a one-off, 15 years after its last broadcast. It will be hosted by former presenters Maggie Philbin and Howard Stableford and will be shown on BBC Four on 22nd November NASA'S **Dawn Mission to Vesta and Ceres** has run out of fuel and lost contact with mission control. During a spectacular 11-year mission it sent back spectacular pictures including the mysterious glowing spots on the surface of Ceres. This was in the same week that NASA reported that the **Kepler Space Telescope** mission had also run out of fuel and come to an end A hard Brexit poses a significant threat to **print-on-demand books**. Many European authors/small press publishers have been using Lightning Source UK, part of Ingram Group. If the UK does not stay in the Customs Union, books printed in UK for export to EU may be subject to customs duties and formalities which could substantially impact costs and the resultant viability of many projects The European Space Agency/Airbus handed over a key part of **the Orion capsule** (the ESM section) to NASA at a ceremony in Bremen, Germany. The ESM will provide propulsion, electricity, heat, gases and water to the Orion capsule which is being developed to carry astronauts to the Moon and on to Mars. *CG*

BOOK REVIEWS

(REVIEWERS please note: - all reviews should be emailed direct to me at goodwincd@yahoo.com **Deadline for each issue is 14 days prior to the date of the monthly meeting)**

***AN AMERICAN STORY* by Christopher Priest**

Gollancz / 320pgs / £20 hardcover / ISBN 978-173200579

Reviewed by Chris Morgan

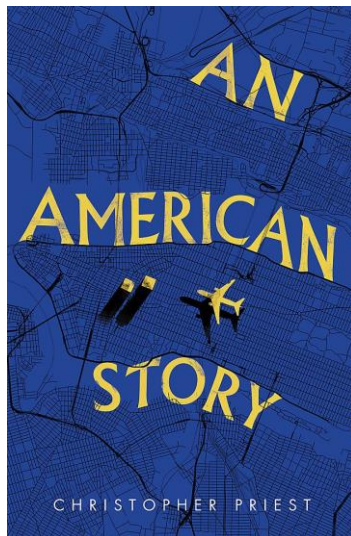
This is my novel of the year, a grabbing, electrifying and chilling read. It's probably best categorised as a conspiracy thriller, with settings in the near past, the present and the near future.

Ben Matson tells the story. He's an English freelance science journalist, living in Scotland (a member of the EU) and looking back at events from an unspecified point in the 2020's. He has a firm and loving relationship with Jeanne, who is Scottish, and they have two young sons. But more than twenty years earlier he was in a relationship with Lily Viklund, a US publishing executive and expecting to stay with her for life,

despite the complication that she was still married to Martin Viklund, a senior White House advisor.

Then 9/11 happens. Ben is in a passenger aircraft over the US at the time, and Lily is meant to be in another passenger aircraft. He cannot find out what's happened to her and has to presume her death. He researches the details of 9/11 and discovers that while there are hundreds of crackpot theories about that infamous day in 2001 the official records are incomplete and deliberately false.

A couple of events in Ben's "now" cause him to look again at 9/11 and its repercussions. Priest has cleverly interlaced chapters and scenes from the different years (all carefully labelled) to maintain a trickle of information and to increase tension. It's impossible for the reader to know how much is fact and how much fiction. Priest has done his research with care, so that the small but significant changes in air travel and communication between 2001 and now are all in place. All through the novel are the insertions of Things That Don't Fit, which worry Ben as he tries to make sense of the "true story" of 9/11. Why are people lying to Ben?



Priest's smooth and clear writing style makes the reader care about his characters. A plethora of small details gradually come together to deliver a really satisfying novel. His novels mostly operate on the outskirts of SF and this is a great addition to his oeuvre.

CM

(Review copy kindly donated by Gollancz. This copy and all the others I've examined have fading and black streaks on some pages)

THIN AIR by Richard Morgan

Gollancz / 538 pgs / £14.99 paperback / ISBN 9780575088566

Reviewed by Jim Pearce

I'm a fan of Richard Morgan and when I saw that THIN AIR had been provided for review, I was very happy that I was lucky enough to acquire it. Many if not all of the Brum Group members will be aware of, if not have read, the author's *Takeshi Kovacs* novels. The first of these, **ALTERED CARBON**, is I believe currently available on Netflix. Like these books THIN AIR is a fast-moving tale full of blistering action and populated with well-defined both male and female characters in believable environments.

There is no padding in this tale and, as with many great books, there is a surprising but totally believable twist at the end as well as a satisfactory and somewhat happy ending. I'm really glad that I had the opportunity to read it.

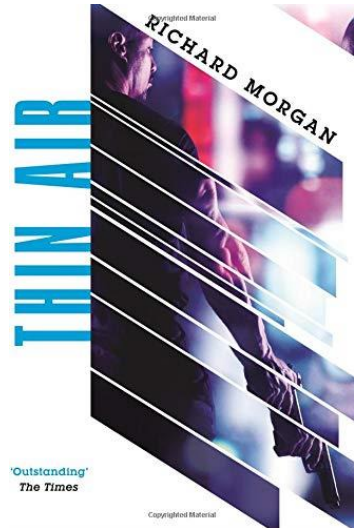
The main protagonist, Hakan Veil is an ex-corporate enforcer modified in the womb to produce a gene-engineered killing machine. Before being stranded on Mars he was employed as an 'overrider'. Hidden somewhere on his employer's spacecraft he was the ultimate deterrent to mutiny, his remit, save the ship (at any cost). In recognition of this he is often referred to in the book as 'Black Hatch' as well as 'overrider'.

The action in THIN AIR takes place in the Valles Marineris which is made habitable by an atmosphere retention layer referred to as the 'Lamina' that interacts with the solar wind to produce brilliant aurora. In addition, the inhabitants' genomes are constantly tweaked using mosquito-like 'code-flies' to frequently inject updates. This has resulted in a population that is described as 'hardscrabble to the bone, sandblasted from birth into conformity with the Valley's brutal expectations and predator norms. These men and women knew the Gash (part of Bradbury city) for what it was - an ocean of treacherous economic weather and pitiless food chain dynamics just waiting to bite.' Consequently, local governmental corruption is rife. Oversight from earth is provided by the locally hated COLIN (Colony Initiative) organization.

After falling foul of the local city police (Bradbury PD) Hakan is forced to bodyguard Madison Madekwe, a member of an unexpected COLIN spot audit. Her role is to investigate the disappearance of the winner of a lottery prize, a trip back to earth. When Madison is kidnapped and he is nearly killed, Hakan's investigation overturns 'stones' that put both himself and various others at risk. As could be expected from the environment in which he is operating and Richard Morgan's previous books there is a great deal of violence and a high body count. Perhaps surprisingly Hakan turns out to have a powerful social conscience and sense of societal obligation.

JTP

(Review copy kindly donated by Gollancz)

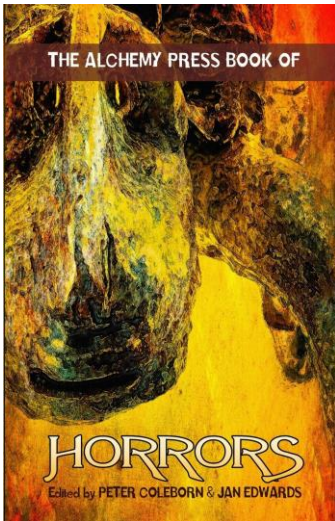


THE ALCHEMY PRESS BOOK OF HORRORS edited by Peter Coleborn & Jan Edwards

The Alchemy Press / 391 pgs / £13.99 paperback / ISBN 978-1911034056

Reviewed by Chris Morgan.

At a time when too many anthologies are limited to a theme, here's an unthemed one containing twenty-five brilliant and far-ranging horror stories. I searched assiduously on your behalf for a dud amongst them but couldn't find one. This is largely due to the fact that over 400 stories were submitted. That's a huge, perhaps unprecedented response to a small press anthology.



I'm not going to tell you about every story, just about the sharper, stronger, more surprising ones that have stayed with me.

It's easy to take Ramsey Campbell for granted as "Britain's most respected living horror writer". He's been producing top quality horror stories for over fifty years and "Some Kind of a Laugh" is one of his best. A bistro waiter is the look-alike of a famous comedian; he's pushed into using the comedian's familiar catch-phrases to increase custom at the bistro. It's all perfectly credible - and still surprising.

There's a completely different type of story from Stan Nicholls, about a changing landscape: credible, very bleak, and not an Orc in sight. Credibility of setting and characters are important aspects of horror fiction and are common to almost all of the stories here. Debbie Bennett's "The Fairest of them All" has Caitlin, in her mid-teens, with boyfriend trouble. James Brogden's "The Trade-up" shows us a travelling salesman down on his luck. There are foreign settings. John Grant's "Too Late" is a warning against Spanish holidays with one's spouse. Madhvi Ramani sets her story in a small German town reminiscent of "Hotel California". In "Along the Backroads" Jenny Barber portrays a dangerous landscape (I was reminded of Harry Harrison's DEATHWORLD). Ray Cluley's "Bluey" is set in an all too plausible English school of today, where Shaun is trying to control a class of 15-year-olds.

In the anthology you can find some quiet, atmospheric stories such as Storm Constantine's "La Ténébreuse" and some extraordinary horrors,

in particular “Peelers” by Ralph Robert Moore. So if you’re of a nervous disposition, stick with Mills & Boon romances, where a happy ending is guaranteed.

I must mention the illustrations. Renowned horror artist Jim Pitts has contributed a small headpiece for each story, terrifying and appropriate, the modern equivalent of Thomas Bewick’s engravings.

So this is a beautifully produced anthology of fine, satisfying horror stories. You may remember the editors, who spoke to the group in March 2015. If you buy a copy you won’t be disappointed and it may well become an annual series.

CM

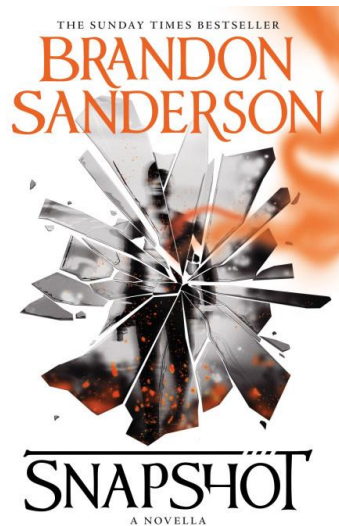
(Review copy kindly donated by The Alchemy Press)

SNAPSHOT by Brandon Sanderson

Gollancz / 125 pgs / £10.99 hardback / ISBN 978-1473224995

Reviewed by Jim Pearce

SNAPSHOT is all about the discovery of dark secrets. If a crime has been committed and there is not enough evidence for a conviction or there is doubt about the facts of the case, detectives Anthony Davis and his partner Chaz are sent into a Snapshot by the city police. But what is a Snapshot? Under the vast city of New Clipperton the American government first built then abandoned an installation that can recreate in minute detail the whole city, including its inhabitants, on a specific day. On the day in question, Davis and Chaz have two assigned tasks. The only problem for them is boredom as there are many hours between the two events and switching off the Snapshot and going home is not possible. To fill in the time Davis decides that they should, off their own bat, investigate a mystery that is bothering him.



SNAPSHOT follows our two protagonists through their day to a surprising conclusion. There is an unexpected twist right at the end. However, looking back as with all good mystery/detective yarns there were clues for the alert reader!

All in all this was a quietly satisfying story which I am glad that I had the opportunity to read. The characters had heft and if we accept that

the Snapshot technology exists we have a believable tale set in a world in which readers will feel at home. The only problem, if it is a problem which I had, is the date in which the story is set and that Snapshot technology is too advanced for the rest of the environmental technology. Reading the postscript the author and his editors are fully aware of this potential hang-up and decided that it did not detract from the interactions that he was exploring. I must say that I agree with their conclusions as it did not interfere with my enjoyment of the book, I wholeheartedly recommend this novella to potential readers.

JTP

(Review copy kindly donated by Gollancz)

ODD INFO

I recently came across a reference to *Ambrosia trifida*, the giant hogweed. It's an invasive plant, native to North America, now found around the world.

Its stem, which has a woody base, can be 10 feet tall with large leaves sticking out and terminates in a cylindrical spike about 10 inches long covered with tiny flowers that produce a highly allergenic pollen, although its oil appears to have some antibacterial properties. Does this sound a little familiar?

V B

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All details are correct to the best of our knowledge, we advise contacting organizers before travelling. Any information about forthcoming SF/Fantasy/Horror events is always welcome - please send to Carol at goodwincd@yahoo.com

AN EVENING WITH JOANNE HARRIS 14th November, Nottingham. Joanne Harris will be talking about and signing her new novella, **THE BLUE SALT ROAD**. Waterstones Nottingham. Tickets £5 + booking fee. www.waterstones.com/events/

WINTER TALES, 18th November, Old Joint Stock Theatre. Three supernatural tales including classic "The Turn of the Screw". £10 at www.oldjointstock.co.uk or 0121 200 0946.

ARROWS OF TIME - A TRIBUTE TO DR WHO, 23rd November. Dr Who tribute planetarium show with Colin Baker as narrator. Thinktank Planetarium. 7pm. Tickets £7. Info/Booking at www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank/

HAWKWIND: IN SEARCH OF UTOPIA, 25th November. SF-influenced iconic band accompanied by live orchestra. Symphony Hall. £31 - £41.50. Book at Box Office (0121 780 4949) or www.thsh.co.uk

SHAUN OF THE DEAD screening, 30th November, Birmingham. Screening of SHAUN OF THE DEAD. The Mac Centre. 8:30 pm. Price £8.10 - £9. www.macbirmingham.co.uk or 0121 446 3232

STAR WARS: A NEW HOPE screening, 2nd December. Screening with live symphonic orchestra accompaniment. Arena Birmingham. Cost £37.93 - 85.95 at www.arenabham.co.uk

CONVENTIONS and EXHIBITIONS

SLEDGE-LIT 4, 24th November, Derby. Literary SF/Fantasy festival. Guests of Honour Dave Hutchinson, Mark Morris & M R Carey. Tickets £25 at <https://www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-4.aspx>

REDEMPTION '19, 24th - 26th February 2019, Sheffield. At Royal Victoria Hotel. Guests of Honour tbc). Tickets £70 at <http://redemptioncon.org.uk>

PICOCON 36, 16th February, London. At Imperial College Union. Guests of Honour Andrew Bannister, Simon Morden, Gavin Smith, Lottie Bevan & Alexis Kennedy. Price £12. www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/icsf/picocon/

YTTERBIUM (Eastercon 2019), 19th - 22nd April, Heathrow. Guests of Honour: Frances Hardinge, Sydney Padua, John Scalzi & CD. At the Park Inn, Heathrow, London. Membership £80 at www.ytterbium.org.uk/

TOLKIEN 2019, 7th - 11th August 2019, Birmingham. 50th Year Anniversary of Tolkien Society, MacDonald Burlington Hotel (New Street). £95 www.tolkiensociety.org

WORLDCON 2019, 15th - 19th August 2019, Dublin. Guests of Honour Ian McDonald, Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Steve Jackson, Diane Duane, Ginjer Buchanan and Bill & Mary Burns. Convention Centre. 210 Euros. <https://dublin2019.com/>

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BSFG

December 7th - Christmas social

January 14th - AGM and Book Auction

February 8th - SF author Gareth Powell

March 8th - tbc

April 12th - tbc

May 10th - SF author Daniel Godfrey

June 14th - Fantasy authors Jeannette Ng and Micah Yongo

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