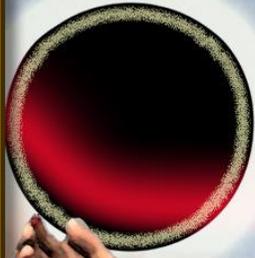


WATCH



THE

SKIES





Black Sun

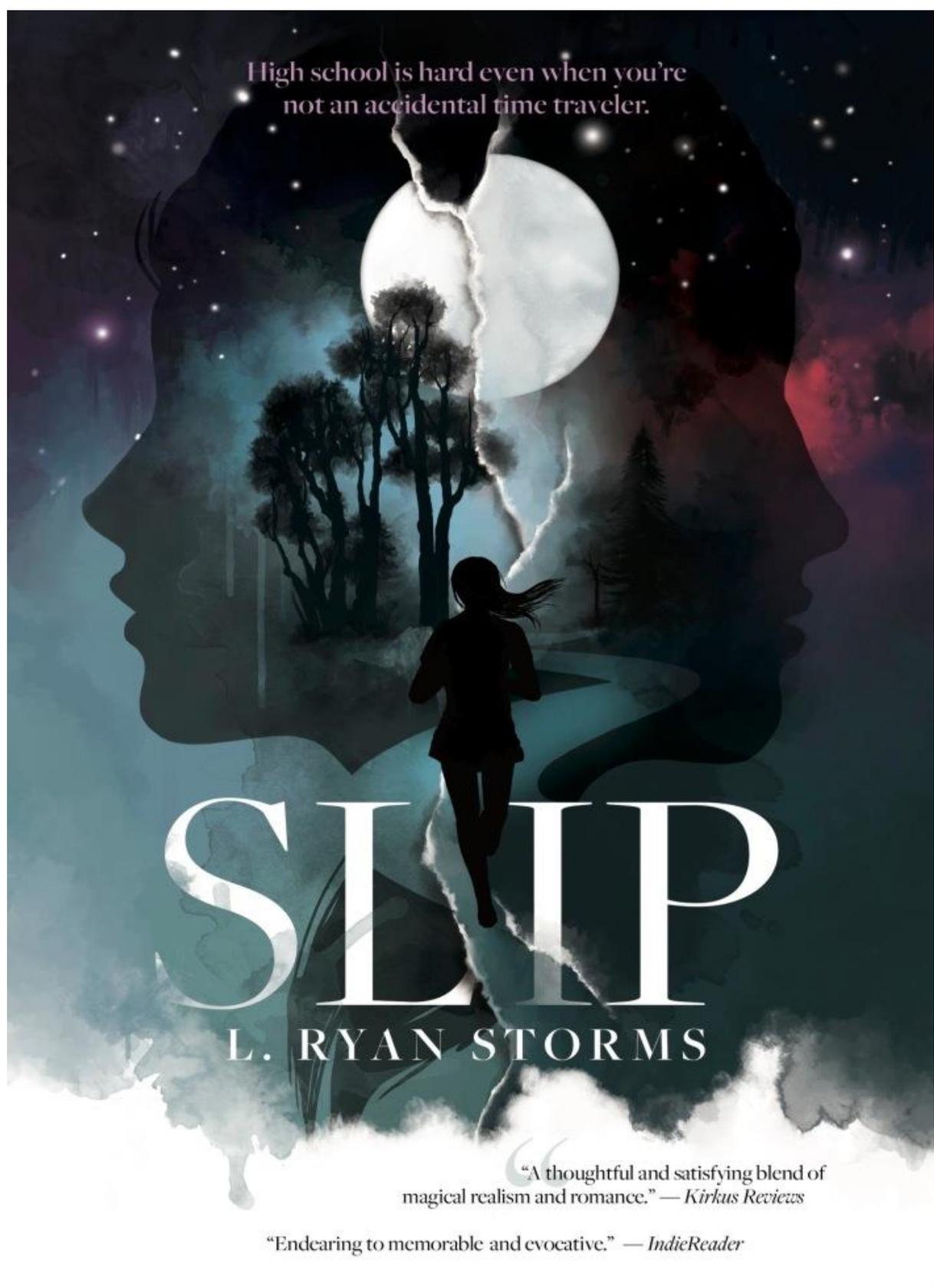
By Rebecca Roanhorse

25.6

A new age is dawning, and the sway of the Sun Priests is faltering over Tova. The Carrions Crows seek vengeance for the wrongs done to them and forge a weapon in the person of Serapio. Blinded and prepared to become a vessel to contain the power of a god, he is sent with the sea captain Xiale across the ocean Tova. Recently freed from prison for the task, Xiale is unaware of the nature of her dangerous passenger. Struggling to maintain control over the Sun Priests and their position in the city, Naranpa awaits the time of the Convergence, when the Sun, Moon, and Earth align with concern and trepidation. Three people bound by destiny are drawn together as the skies go dark and the future of Tova hangs in the balance

-Welcome to the 25th year of Watch the Skies, a whole quarter century!
July's meeting is on the 16th, in person, at the Simpson Library,
Mechanicsburg (unless otherwise announced) and the book of the month
is – The Book That Wouldn't Burn by Mark Lawrence
-Cover art by Eric V. Hardenbrook

Check out the website at: watchtheskies.org or
contact us at: wtsnewsletter@gmail.com



High school is hard even when you're
not an accidental time traveler.

SLEEP

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“A thoughtful and satisfying blend of
magical realism and romance.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

“Endearing to memorable and evocative.” — *IndieReader*

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NEW RELEASES

July 2025

BEN AARONOVITCH - **Stone & Sky**

CHINAZA BADO - **Birth of a Dynasty**

C. ROBERT CARGILL - **All the Ash We Leave Behind**

JULIE E. CZERNEDA - **A Shift of Time**

JUNO DAWSON - **Human Rites**

SARAH BETH DURST - **The Enchanted Greenhouse**

DAVID GERROLD - **The Boy Who Was Girl**

DAVID GERROLD - **The Girl Who Was Silver**

DAVID GERROLD - **Praxis II: Praxis Makes Permanent**

DAVID GERROLD - **The Praxis Papers**

AMY GOLDSMITH - **Predatory Natures**

CHARLAINE HARRIS - **The Last Wizards' Ball**

STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES - **Killer on the Road / The
Babysitter Lives**

JEN JULIAN - **Red Rabbit Ghost**

KATHARINE KERR - **Haze**

CASSANDRA KHAW - **The Library at Hellebore**

CAITLÍN R. KIERNAN - **Bright Dead Star**

MATTHEW KRESSEL - **Space Trucker Jess**

MUR LAFFERTY - **Infinite Archive**

SILVIA MORENO-GARCIA - **The Bewitching**

S.M. STIRLING - **The Winds of Fate**

HARRY TURTLEDOVE - **Powerless**

MOSES OSE UTOMI - **The Memory of the Ogisi**

THE PROGENY OF DEVILS BOOK 2

THE NIGHTMARE IN THEIR BLOOD



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NEWS OF THE REALM

2024 Nebula Award Winners

Novel Winner – Someone You Can Build a Nest in – John Wiswell

Novella Winner – The Dragonfly Gambit – A.D. Sui

Novelette Winner – “Negative Scholarship on the Fifth State of Being” – A.W. Prihandita

Short Story Winner – “Why Don’t We Just Kill the Kid in the Omelas Hole” – Isabel J. Kim

Andre Norton Award Winner – The Young Necromancer’s Guide to Ghosts – Vaness Ricci-Thode

Ray Bradbury Award Winner – Dune Part 2

Game Writing – A Death in Hyperspace

IGNYTE Awards Nominations, 2025

Outstanding Novel: Adult

The Sentence- Gautam Bhatia

Metal from Heaven- August Clarke

Blackheart Ma- Nalo Hopkinson

The Emperor and the Endless Palace- Justinian Huang

Womb City- Tlotlo Tsamaase

Outstanding Novel: YA

The Poisons We Drink- Bethany Baptiste

Spells to Forget Us- Aislinn Brophy

Moonstorm- Yoon Ha Lee

Sheine Lende- Darcie Little Badger

Heir- Sabaa Tahir

Outstanding Middle Grade

Amari and the Despicable Wonders B.B. Alston

Benny Ramírez and the Nearly Departed- José Pablo Iriarte

Sona and the Golden Beasts- Rajani LaRocca

The Last Rhee Witch- Jenna Lee-Yun

The Creepening of Dogwood House- Eden Royce

Outstanding Novella

The Butcher of the Forest- Premee Mohamed

Lost Ark Dreaming- Suyi Davies Okungbowa

Fractal Karma - Arula Ratnakar

The Practice - the Horizon, and the Chain- Sofia Samatar

The Dragonfly Gambit- A.D. Sui

Outstanding Novelette

- “A Stranger Knocks” - Tananarive Due
- “We Who Will Not Die” - Shingai Njeri Kagunda
- “¡Sangronas! Un Lista de Terror” - M.M. Olivas
- “Negative Scholarship on the Fifth State of Being” - A.W. Prihandita
- “Joanna’s Bodies” - Eugenia Triantafyllou

Outstanding Short Story

- “Whale Fall” - J.L. Akagi
- “Parthenogenesis” - Stephen Graham Jones
- “The Spindle of Necessity” - B. Pladek
- “Agni” - Nibedita Sen
- “We Will Teach You How to Read | We Will Teach You How to Read” - Caroline M. Yoachim

THEODORE STURGEON AWARD FINALISTS 2025

- “Rachel Is at a Protest” - Esther Alter
- “To Eat Your Own Head” - Nkone Chaka
- “Swarm X1048 – Ethological Field Report: Canis Lupus Familiaris, ‘6’” - F.E. Choe
- “Judas Iscariot Didn’t Kill Himself: A Story in Fragments” - James S.A. Corey
- “Hello! Hello! Hello!” - Fiona Jones
- “Why Don’t We Just Kill the Kid in the Omelas Hole” - Isabel J. Kim
- “Reduce! Reuse! Recycle!” - TJ Klune
- “Evan: A Remainder” - Jordan Kurella
- “The Carcosa Pattern” - Conrad Loyer
- “We Will Teach You How to Read | We Will Teach You How to Read” - Caroline M. Yoachim

Balticon – A Convention Report

This past Memorial Day weekend I was once again a panelist at a live, in person science fiction convention. I attended Balticon 59 and had a very good time. As happens with my musings, the time between the event and the actual writing of my report will cause some of the be details that are hazy and that will make the summaries shorter than they may have once been. This year also included a little more distance for me as I missed Balticon 58 (I was out of the country). It was good to be back.

The con took place May 23 – 26, 2025 at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace hotel, right in the middle of Inner Harbor. The location continues to be a daunting expense. The hotel itself is expensive. Parking is generally expensive as well, but the con made arrangements for a deal with the parking company and that worked out well again. I was able

to save a fair amount of money compared to past years by setting up my parking in advance. The area itself, the places around the con, is all but dead. All but a very few businesses in the area are gone. The restaurant choices were thin and did not lend themselves to quick con based meals. I thought of using my "in and out" privilege for parking to go someplace for food, but the traffic was an absolute nightmare. There were three other large events going on in the immediate area over the same time frame, adding to the challenge. The absolute lack of options was one of the most daunting aspects of attending. The room, the amenities and the rest of the hotel-related things were pretty standard.

Checking in this year was smooth. I was in and out of the registration area very quickly. The set up / arrangement of the convention spaces was the same as years past, including splitting the dealer's room into two different spaces. The set up has become pretty standard.

Being in person for the con has definitely changed. The set up and division of panels between in person and virtual is better than it was in the past, but as with anything there was room for improvement. I'd brought my own laptop along and set it up in my hotel room, but didn't in fact need it for any panel. I did use it to run a game virtually, but that was only tangentially related to one of my panels (Knights of the Virtual Table). I attended a couple of the panels being run both live and virtual. Hats off to the tech team for making that work. Keeping the tech connected is a big deal and the volunteers seemed to have pulled it off quite well.

There were a lot of new faces at the convention. One report I read stated the convention attendance was the highest it's been since before the pandemic, and I believe it. I've written other places about the struggles of conventions in the science fiction community. I've had the drama of Balticon bounce off me and I've seen the effect on other creators. This has made a profound shift in the names and faces of the con. The complete lack of attendance of my friend group was even more evident this year. My family didn't attend. People I **always** went to dinner with didn't attend. People I'd sit and share a drink with or bump into between panels weren't there. I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of an artist I'd spent time with at many a con. He was a great guy, and I will miss him. I was able to go to dinner one night with old friends, but that really was the limit. Four days and only interactions in passing. I was adrift and on my own. I missed the convention experiences of old. I tried to reach out and connect, but there wasn't some kind of grand connection. It definitely tinted my thoughts on the con.

Despite being socially adrift, it was a good con for me. I got to speak about gaming on a bunch of panels and learned a handful of things from wonderful fellow gamers and creators. I intend to use this year as fuel for next year. It's the 60th next year and I suspect it will be a big deal. I've got a lot of work to do before then. It was good to be back. I hope and look forward to doing it all again next year.

By Eric V. Hardenbrook

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