

WATCH



THE
SKIES





Artifact Space

By Miles Cameron

26-7

The great ships are the backbone of the human trade empire that runs on the alien produced xenoglass. They are the elite, nine massive ships that haul the majority of trade goods from world to world on a circular path that eventually brings them to Trade Point to meet the starfish and then home to the orbital City, only to begin the cycle again. Nbaro has watched them from the orphanage for a long time, has studied the necessary texts, taken the VR simulations, and longed to be part of their crew. Now, when she's threatened with being sold to unscrupulous men, she takes the leap and bribes her way about the *Athens*. It's a life of constant challenges to prove she belongs in the crew, even though she knows that she cheated her way on board. But Nbaro is good at a great number of things, and the *Athens* is going to be glad to have her onboard when an unknown force begins targeting the great ships. As one after another is destroyed, the crew of the *Athens* begins to wonder when their time will come. In deadly game of cat and mouse, the crew must guide their ship through to Trade Point past marauder ships and other dangers.

-Welcome to the 26th year of Watch the Skies. April's meeting is on the July 15th, in person, at the Simpson Library, Mechanicsburg (unless otherwise announced). Next month's book is Rabbits by Terry Miles.

-Cover art by Eric V. Hardenbrook

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

A HEART — A Charity Anthology — FOR HOUNDS



Edited by:
Danielle Ackley-McPhail

Available 8-1-26

NEW RELEASES

August 2026

ROBERT JACKSON BENNETT - *A Trade of Blood*

OLIVIE BLAKE - *Dreamland*

TERRY BROOKS - *Brona*

JILLIAN CANTOR - *The Season of Light and Darkness*

CLAY MCLEOD CHAPMAN - *Devil Inside*

P.A. CORNELL - *The Astronaut Among the Flowers and Other Stories*

SARAH BETH DURST - *Sea of Charms*

SAARA EL-ARIFI - *Earthbound*

C.A. FLETCHER - *The Two of Us at the End of the World*

ERIC FLINT & GRIFFIN BARBER - *1637: The Pilgrim's Passage*

CAROLYN IVES GILMAN - *Testament of Leaves*

CHLOE GONG - *Eyes of Kings*

FRANCES HARDINGE - *Traitors' Nest*

JAMES PATRICK KELLY - *The Book of Bots*

KATHARINE KERR - *Zyon*

BO-YOUNG KIM & SOPHIE BOWMAN, TR. - *A Plagued Sea*

T. KINGFISHER - *Daggerbound*

JONATHAN MABERRY - *Bewilderness*

SUYI DAVIES OKUNGBOWA - *Season of the Serpent*

CHINELO ONWUALU, ET AL., EDS. - *Africanfuturism Short Stories*

LESLYE PENELOPE - *The Inevitable Undoing of Zahara Douglass*

SARAH PINBOROUGH - *They Say a Girl Died Here*

TIM PRATT - *The Jewel and the Comet*

NATASHA PULLEY - *The Salt King*

BETH REVIS - *Chaotic Orbits*

ANTHONY RYAN - *Upon the Forge of Battle*

ADRIAN TCHAIKOVSKY - *Preaching to the Choir*

SHEREE RENÉE THOMAS - *The Tongue I Dream In*

CHUCK WENDIG - *The Calamities*



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NEWS OF THE REALM

JULY

Starlog Magazine — will return in November as a print magazine with Annalee Newitz as chief editor. The original magazine ran from 1976-2009.

2026 Le Guin Prize- here is the shortlist of the titles under consideration for the award:

Audition- Pip Adam

Sunward- William Alexander

Call and Response- Christopher Caldwell

Midnight Timetable- Bora Chung, tr. Anton Hur

The Works of Vermin- by Hiron Ennes

Notes from a Regicide- Isaac Fellman

Mad Sisters of Esi- Tashan Mehta

One Message Remains- Premee Mohamed

Slow Gods- Claire North

The award will be presented on 10/21 Le Guin's birthday.

Sidewise Awards Finalists-

Long Form

Pagans- James Alistair Henry

Tobacco Republic: What If The 13 Colonies Never United?- R.A. Moss

Ten Incarnations of Rebellion- Vaishnavi Patel

Short Form

"Two If by Seekrieg"- Lee Allred

"The Leavitt Space Telescope"- Kelli Fitzpatrick

"Caesar at Sea"- Alan Smale

"Darwin's Rocket"- Alan Smale

2026 Mythopoeic Award Finalists-

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature

The Charlatan Duology- Holly Black

Audition for the Fox- Martin Cahill

The Bright Sword- Lev Grossman

Snake-Eater- T. Kingfisher
The West Passage- Jared Pechaček
Water Moon- Samantha Sotto Yambao
The Incandescent- Emily Tesh

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Young Adult Literature

The Corruption of Hollis Brown- K. Ancrum
The Leaving Room- Amber McBride
The Little Thieves series- Margaret Owen
On the Wings of La Noche- Vanessa L. Torres

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature

The Undead Fox of Deadwood Forest- Aubrey Hartman
The Village Beyond the Mist, Sachiko Kashiwaba- tr. Avery Fischer
Udagawa
The Island of Forgotten Gods- Victor Pinñeiro
The Misewa Saga- David A. Robertson

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies

Mapping Middle-earth: Environmental and Political Narratives in J.R.R. Tolkien's Cartographies- Anahit Behrooz
The Tower and the Ruin: J.R.R. Tolkien's Creation- Michael D.C. Drout
A Real Taste for Fairy-Stories- Verlyn Flieger
Pity, Power, and Tolkien's Ring: To Rule the Fate of Many- Thomas P. Hillman
Tolkien and the Mystery of Literary Creation- Giuseppe Pezzini
J.R.R. Tolkien's Utopianism and the Classics- Hamish Williams

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies

Art and Enchantment: How Wonder Works- Patrick Curry,
Enheduanna: The Complete Poems of the World's First Author- Sophus Helle, ed.
Fantasy: A Short History- Adam Roberts
The Archetype of the Dying and Rising God in World Mythology- Paul R. Rovang
Speculative Poetry and the Modern Alliterative Revival: A Critical Anthology- Dennis Wilson Wise, ed.

Unexpected Shore Leave

This past weekend I had the opportunity to attend a portion of Shore Leave, a fan run convention that has been around for a very long time. I hadn't ever been to Shore Leave. It had always been in my peripheral vision, but the emphasis on media guests never held appeal to me. I hadn't planned the trip, but the invitation was too good to pass up.

The convention itself looked to be running smoothly. The registration tables didn't have lines. The lobby was buzzing with activities. There was even an attraction set up under the entry canopy out front. Cosplay had a very strong presence here – and the outfits were on point. I saw such effort and obvious care it was impressive. The myriad activities were all laid out on an easy-to-read grid. The convention also had a big blood drive going on, and while I was unable to participate, I was glad to see it so prominently displayed.

There was a big area that was specifically for the media stars. I did not stand in line to talk to any of them nor purchase photos and autographs, but it was a decent showing for what I could see. They were all placed with space for lines, with large banners making them easy to locate. Fans seemed to be having a great time chatting and swapping stories.

The vendor area was bigger than I was expecting. There were bunches of people and any time I was in there it always seemed busy. While I didn't chat with a large sample of vendors, those I did speak with seemed to be moderately happy with how sales were going for the weekend. There was an excellent variety of fan-made things, books, toys and collectibles lined up and waiting to catch your eye.

The panels seemed well attended, though there was one that was a bit of a bust while I was there. I got to participate in one of the crafting workshops. I listened in on some interesting tidbits from authors and editors and got to hear a couple of funny stories along the way. In all, a well-attended panel series.

There was a game room, though I didn't spend much time there. There was an art show, but it was smaller than I had hoped. It was tucked back in a corner behind the celebrity area (and the entry was at one point partially blocked by an overflowing autograph line). The art on display was really nice and all of it high quality, there just wasn't much of it.

Shore Leave hadn't been on my radar before, but now that I've been I suspect I'll be going back for more!

By Eric V. Hardenbrook



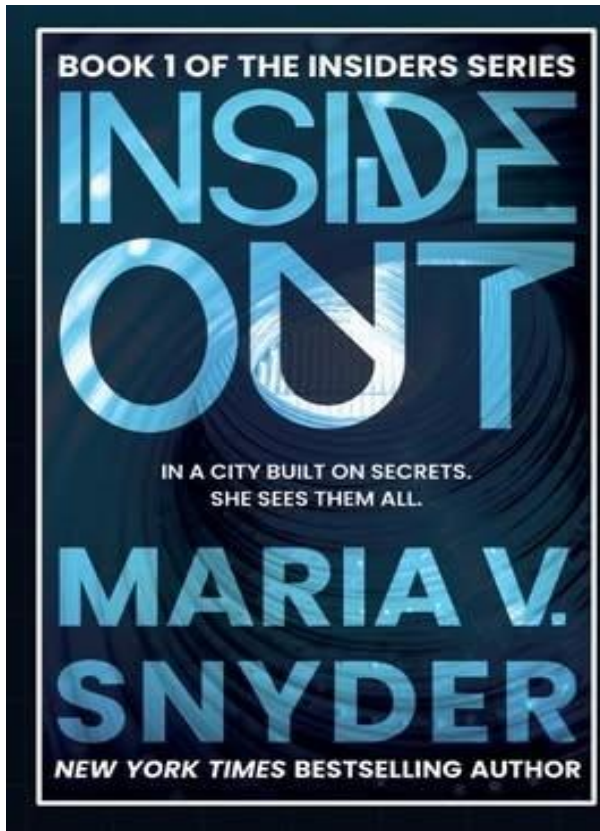
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TILLYER'S NEWS OF THE HIGH FRONTIER

-New Horizons probe answered a wake-up call and is now back online after a year of hibernation. After its historic Pluto flyby, the probe was partially shut down to allow for passive observation and conserve power. Now, at 5.9 billion miles out from Earth, it is back online and ready to transmit its data. However, that is going to take awhile since signals to us will arrive about 9 hours after being sent. Reports from the probe indicate that its systems are all running well. The Pluto flyby was in 2015, and New Horizons also studied a planetesimal called Arrokoth in 2019. Now scientists are planning to use the probe to study hydrogen present in the outer heliosphere, an area so far away only the Voyager Probes have ever entered it. Specifically, the experiments will look at the termination shock, the region where the influence of the Sun fades into interstellar space.

-More helicopters on Mars – Skyfall will hopefully be launched in 2028. The mission is slated to carry three of the copter units. The company Firefly was just awarded a 13-million-dollar contract to develop the spacecraft for the mission. The name Skyfall was chosen for the mission because NASA has a very ambitious plan about the launch of the copters. They plan to release them during the descent phase. So, Firefly has their work cut out for themselves. They have already successfully developed a lander system which they used to place a probe on the Moon. This means they already have the necessary pieces that can be adapted for Skyfall, but now the lander will also have to be able to launch the copters midflight.

-China is hoping to take home a chunk of the quasi-moon, Kamo'oalewa with their Tianwen-2 mission. Launched in 2025, the probe traveled to the asteroid and set up station keeping 12 miles away where it will study the object for a year. Afterwards, Tianwen-2 will attempt to collect a specimen from the asteroid and return it to Earth. The US and Japan have both completed similar missions. That quasi-moon appellation indicates that while it is not in orbit around the Earth, the asteroid, along with six others, travels along with the Earth in the same orbital plane as the planet orbits the Sun. Kamo'oalewa is a little different than the others according to some scientists. In fact, they posit that it may actually be a fragment of our own Moon thrown up by the impact that caused the Giordano Bruno crater. The proof will lie in the same that Tianwen-2 seeks.



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