





# ***THE PARADOX HOTEL***

**By Rob Hart**

## **23.8**

Unstuck – in time. Time travelers have a threat hanging over them at all times, an insidious reality like a disease that will take them away from what they enjoy and eventually even themselves. January Cole has been lucky so far and she has good people trying to save her from herself – but she'll never realize it. Her defense against the world is an acerbic wit and a fierce devotion to her job, security manager at the Paradox Hotel. Both of those may not be enough as time itself begins to slip in the jumping off point for adventures into the past. Suddenly, she finds herself dealing with a death only she can perceive, chasing rogue dinosaurs, and investigating a plot to turn over the power to travel into the past to affect the future to the highest bidder. All of this while her own personal view of time seems to be coming apart at the seams.

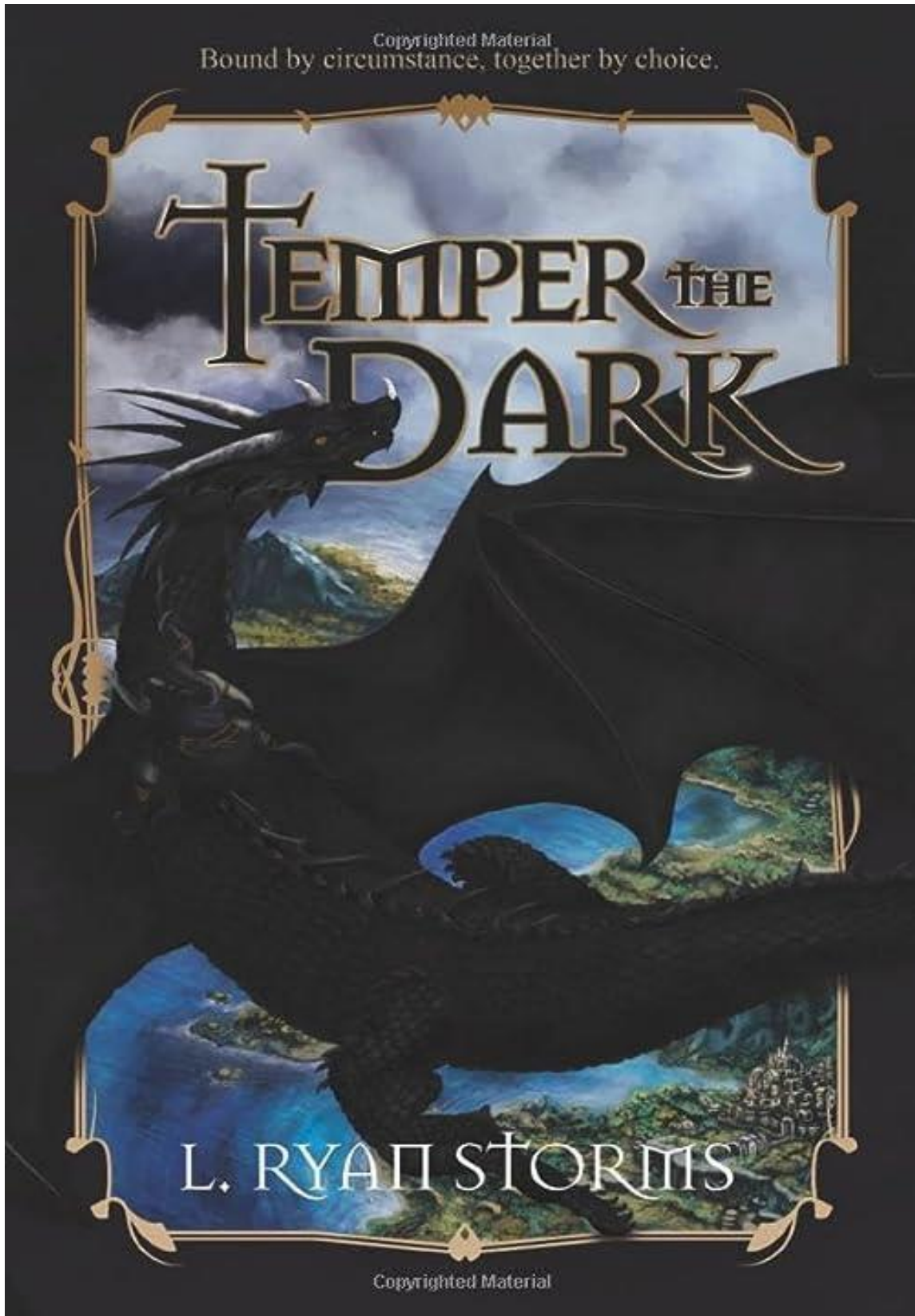
-September's meeting is on the 20th, in person, at the Simpson Library, Mechanicsburg (unless otherwise announced) and the book of the month is *Victories Greater Than Death* – Charlie Jane Anders.

-Cover art by Eric V. Hardenbrook.

Check out the website at: [watchtheskies.org](http://watchtheskies.org) or  
contact us at: [wtsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wtsnewsletter@gmail.com)



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# NEW RELEASES

**SEPTEMBER 2023**

LOU ANDERS, ED. - **Tales from Stolki's Hall**

JENNIFER L. ARMENTROUT - **Fall of Ruin and Wrath**

JOSIAH BANCROFT - **The Hexologists**

STEPHEN BAXTER - **Creation Node**

KENDARE BLAKE - **Champion of Fate**

JOHN CONNOLLY - **The Land of Lost Things**

ANYA JOHANNA DENIRO - **OKPsyche**

CORY DOCTOROW - **The Internet Con: How to Seize the Means of Computation**

CHARLAINE HARRIS - **All the Dead Shall Weep**

STEPHEN KING - **Holly**

JANE LINDSKOLD - **House of Rough Diamonds**

SEANAN MCGUIRE - **Sleep No More**

NNEDI OKORAFOR - **Shadow Speaker**

TIM POWERS - **My Brother's Keeper**

ALASTAIR REYNOLDS - **Machine Vendetta**

CHRISTOPHER ROWE - **The Navigating Fox**

NABEN RUTHNUM - **The Grimmer**

ANTHONY RYAN - **Across the Sorrow Sea**

JOHN SCALZI - **Starter Villain**

V.E. SCHWAB - **The Fragile Threads of Power**

EMILY SKRUTSKIE - **The Salvation Gambit**

LAVIE TIDHAR, ED. - **The Circumference of the World**

MAGGIE TOKUDA-HALL - **The Siren - the Song, and the Spy**

NGHI VO - **Mammoths at the Gate**

CHUCK WENDIG - **Black River Orchard**

# NEWS OF THE REALM

**Dragon Con** – is now accepting nominations for the Dragon Awards. Nominees and voting are all done by fans, no fees, or memberships necessary. [Dragon Con - Largest Multi-genre and Pop Culture Convention](#)

## BALTIMORE SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY – EVENTS:

BSFS's Speculative Poetry Workshop by Zoom – 8/17/23 7:00PM  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82344040646?pwd=eFdCQlZmL29KSVYzYUZXde1EK3Q1UT09>  
Meeting ID: 823 4404 0646 Passcode: 365968

Book Club Meeting at BSFS – Up Against It – Laura J. Mixon – 8/26/23 7:30PM  
<https://zoom.us/j/94129016253?pwd=LzRMVEZmVGtnUi9jOUc3MnFOcHFHQQT09>  
Meeting ID: 941 2901 6253 Passcode: 041896

Film Night at BSFS – Avatar – The Way of Water – 8/19/23 8:00PM (in person)

Anime Social at BSFS – 8-26-23 starting at 2:00PM also on Discord –  
<https://discord.com/invite/5U3s2YzPzQ>

Alphabet Soup Board Gaming at BSFS 8-20-23 4:30 PM to 9:00 PM (in person)

Writers Circle at BSFS – next meeting 8-24-23 6:30-8:30 by Zoom  
<https://zoom.us/j/91064908740?pwd=TENjZ25HenRNOHhtcHFaRlZnOGE3dz09>  
Meeting ID: 910 6490 8740 Passcode: 805110

## BALTIMORE AREA EVENTS:

Heroes: A Video Game Symphony takes off on Friday, August 11 - music from God of War, Dragon Age, Halo, Bioshock, Final Fantasy, Mass Effect and more. Before the show there will be a cosplay contest, food from local vendors, and a performance by the Baltimore Gamer Symphony Orchestra. All at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, 1212 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. More details at <https://my.bsomusic.org/overview/18657>

# 2023 CIBA Ozma Awards – Longlist

Ben G. Price – *Ogden*

Leisl Kaberry – *Titanian Awakenings: Shadow of Darkness*

Jenn Lees – *The Quest: Arlan's Pledge Book Two*

Philip Carlisle – *Surviving Eros Book II*

Kathleen Stone – *Heatherstone*

Nicholas Varner – *Seasons of the Blue Pearl*

Tim Facciola – *A Vengeful Realm: Book One: The Scales of Balance*

L.R. Braden – *Of Mettle and Magic*

A.S. Norris – *The Wayward Mage: The Adventures of Jack Wartnose*

A.S. Norris – *The Forbearing Mage: The Adventures of Jack Wartnose*

Lilla Glass – *The Unseen*

Ross Hightower – *Argren Blue*

John Diaz – *Rogues of the Crosslands: Azoria's Blade*

Amber Kirkpatrick – *Unleashed*

Amber Kirkpatrick – *Until the Rising*

Charles Allen – *The Order of the Red God*

Jaime Castle & Andy Peloquin – *Black Talon*

Crystal D. Grant – *Shadowcast*

Ekta R. Garg – *In the Heart of the Linden Wood*

L.L. Gray – *Shadows and Relics*

Richard C. Brusca – *The Time Travelers*

AG Flichter – *Boone and Jacque: Sahon*

D. K. Willis – *The Unexpected*

Celaine Charles – *Seam Keepers*

D.A Mucci – *Ignatius and the Battle at Dinas Affaraon*

David V. Mammina – *The Angels of Resistance*

Dale Griffin – *The Last Lion of Karkov*

Jonathan Uffelman – *Book of Leprechauns: The Lore Gatherers*

PM Black – *The Solar Realm – Silver Slayer*

K.M. Messina – *Gemja – The Message*

Omayra Vélez – *Ultima Skylar*

PJ Devlin – *The Chamber*

Rae St. Clair Bridgman – *The Kingdom of Trolls*

L. Ryan Storms – *Temper the Dark*

Alex B. Harper – *Of Light and Nightmares: The Ashes of Magic Trilogy, Volume I*

S.G. Blaise – *Proud Pada*

The Ozma Award is presented by Chanticleer Books for best Fantasy novel by an emerging talent, awards presented April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

## eSpec Books Latest Kickstarter begins 8-14-23

**Picking Up Steam!** will fund *A Cry of Hounds*, *Other Aether*, and *The Chaos Clock*, with a bonus of *Vest of the Pecos* by David Sherman, publishing posthumously.

The first book, *A Cry of Hounds*, is the next volume in the Forgotten Lore series. We have again coordinated with The Tell-Tale Steampunk Festival as this book will be the foundation of the convention's literary scavenger hunt. The theme next year is Arthur Conan Doyle, his work in general, and **The Hounds of the Baskerville** in particular. The authors participating are Christopher D. Abbott, Aaron Rosenberg, Keith R.A. DeCandido, Dana Fraedrich, James Chambers, David Lee Summers, Jessica Lucci, Ef Deal, Danielle Ackley-McPhail, Michelle D. Sonnier, Doc Coleman, and John L. French.

Next, we have *Other Aether: Tales of Global Steampunk*, a collection of stories set all around the world that isn't Victorian England. Authors participating in this one so far are Jeff Young, Cynthia Radthorne, James Chambers, Hildy Silverman, Aaron Rosenberg, David Lee Summers, Christine Norris, Ef Deal, and Danielle Ackley-McPhail. As a special highlight, Beth Cato (author of the award-nominated *A Thousand Recipes for Revenge*, and *The Clockwork Dagger* and *The Clockwork Crown*) has agreed to be one of our stretch goal authors.

And finally, *The Chaos Clock: Tales of Cosmic Aether*. This is an exciting project for us, mashing up the genres of steampunk and cosmic horror, which, if you think about it, is a perfect and complex blend, given the masters of the cosmic horror genre birthed it in the steampunk era. Authors coming out to play in this creepy playground are James Chambers, Danielle Ackley-McPhail, Will McDermott, Carol Gyzander, Jody Lynn Nye, Randee Dawn, Rachel Brune, Marc L. Abbott, Bernie Mojzes, Jeffrey Lyman, and Teel James Glenn.





AVAILABLE SOON



# You Should Be Watching

## Strange New Worlds – Subspace Rhapsody



To watch or not to watch, let's specify that first – *Star Trek's* musical episode. Let's start with the fact that I have seen a number of musical episodes that really work, especially *Buffy's* "Once More with Feeling", *Fringe's* "Brown Betty", and *Futurama's* "The Devil's Hands Are Idle Playthings". There are certainly others that are parts of shows instead of the entirety, looking at you *Legends of Tomorrow* Bollywood number. Also, consider that music has definitely had its place in the *Star Trek* Canon with Lt. Uhura being the most likely to burst into song, followed by the unlikely musical source of Spock and a drunken Kevin O'Reilly on occasion. However, just because everyone else doing it, should *Star Trek*? Ron Moore and Rick Berman apparently had a running disagreement about a musical episode, which apparently had a virus affecting universal translators and forcing everyone to get around it by singing. But enough historical hand-wringing – how was the show? As a watcher, to me it was OK. I found the basis for everyone singing silly. But let's be realistic, most of the reasons for musical episodes are kinda' silly. (at least *Buffy* blames it on magic) Does justifying it with handwavium science help? Well, it was a pretty far stretch this time. Besides, nobody explains why the background music suddenly appeared before each song, which the characters actually react to because they know something is coming. Also, spontaneous dancing, well that's just convenient. Having said this, (spoilers), the show also took the opportunity to address several emotional issues that have been boiling in the background – La'an's interest in Kirk and Spock and Christine's relationship. The episode did try to heighten the stakes – after all they were playing with a subspace rupture which is usually a *Star Trek* euphemism for impending disaster of some sort. I will give them credit for the concept of using it for communication. The show creators also played smart. The big musical numbers go to the folks who are singers and are comfortable singing, specifically Christina Chong (La'an) and Celia Rose Gooding (Uhura – yes, I would have been really surprised if they hadn't cast someone who could sing for that role). Ethan Peck (Spock) and Rebecca Romajin (Una) also scored solos. The rest of the cast are given numbers that don't strain their ranges, and this creates a feeling that they are all sometimes singing in one tone. That's a little distracting at times. There were also several times when my co-watcher and I looked at each other and quoted from Monty Python, "You're not going into a song while I'm here". I give the writer's credit for not making everything a song. This is a full hour show, there are lots of songs, and if you are not completely onboard, it's going to feel like a full hour. I've watched it. I enjoyed parts. Thank you for the singing Klingons – it should have been opera. See what you think, your enjoyment may vary.

(Jeff Young)

# THE DREAM EATERS



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## **Tillyer's News of the High Frontier**

### **AUGUST 2023**

Skipping Reentry – it's not what it sounds like. The Artemis series of missions is an updated version of our previous visits to the Moon and scientists are going to use a number of innovations to make things easier. Previously, with the Apollo missions, reentry was the result of a direct drop through the atmosphere. That meant that the craft could end up almost 1.7k miles from the entry point. So, unlike the pinpoint accurate landings of SpaceX ships, Apollo returns were all over the map. This required the navy to scatter ships over the target area and then proceed to see "how things turned out". Artemis, with its Orion Crew Capsule, however, is a targeted return with an expected landing area about 50 miles out to sea from San Diego. Obviously, this saves time and expenses in terms of deploying recovery craft. But how do they achieve this? This is where the "skipping" comes in and what we mean is the Orion capsule comes in on an angle and skips off of the upper atmosphere several times to decrease velocity and also achieve a specific entry point. There's a history to this idea and we'll come back to that. There are other pluses to this method besides accuracy. Skipping allows the Orion to extend its range giving the capsule the ability to fly 5.5k additional miles. It also means that the heat endured by the capsule based on a sustained reentry at speed can be lessened by discarding velocity with each skip. Finally, instead of a sustained high g maneuver, with a decrease in speed, the crew is subjected to less stress. So, why weren't the Apollo missions doing this? At the time, the navigational systems were simply not up to the calculations required to successfully pull off this kind of reentry. Last year's uncrewed mission proved that concept can be used to guide in the Orion and this year in April, NASA teams performed a test run on recovering an Orion in the ocean. All of this is in preparation for next years crewed Artemis mission to loop around the Moon and safely return to Earth. But where did this idea of skipping off the atmosphere come from? Would it surprise you if I said Nazis? During WWII, the Silbervogel proposal, created by Eugen Sanger and Irene Bredt in 1941, was the basis for a bomber designed to exit the atmosphere, return using its wings to skip, bomb New York and then finally land in the Pacific. Postwar, the US acquired this concept via Operation Paperclip and created our own version of the idea called the Bomber Missile or BoMi, ten years later. The



idea was further developed into three programs: RoBo -Rocket Bomber, Brass Bell – long range reconnaissance, and Hywards – prototypes designed to further the previous two programs. Sputnik's launch in 1957 put the fire under the development brought everything together under a single project with a name that just was too punny not to use. Since the concept was dynamic soaring, the builders dubbed it the Dyna-Soar. Using the previous three concepts and under the pressure of keeping up with the Soviets, developers converted Hywards into a research testing vehicle, Dyna-Soar I; Brass Bell into a reconnaissance vehicle, Dyna- Soar II, and RoBo into a strategic bomber, Dyna-Soar III. Initial tests were hoped to be flown in 1963 achieving a velocity of Mach 18. Boeing was given the development contract in 1959. Launched from a Titan booster vertically, the Dyna-Soar has a very familiar delta shape and up-turned tips to short wings – all of which look very similar to a first try at a space shuttle. In fact, designs and the work on the project would influence the shuttle program in the future. But the Dyna-soar, much like its pun namesake, did not have a future. Cost and the issues with determining the best method of putting the craft into the appropriate orbit eventually caused the project to be cancelled before it was actually built. You might even recognize the name of one of the men picked to pilot the Dyna-Soar when it was ready for testing – Neil Armstrong. He left the program in 1962 and obviously went on to greater things. The Dyna-Soar program was designed to be both a research and a military program. Interestingly enough, the Air Force's X-37B, an unmanned space plane, which flies top secret military mission and was also built by Boeing completed a two-year flight mission in 2019. Atmospheric skipping is something that would allow such a vehicle to continue in orbit for extended periods of time. It could be that Artemis is not the only mission taking advantage of the idea...



