

WATT'S OUT

SF&F Book Releases

MYRREN'S GIFT by Fiona McIntosh. **Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 596 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** Book One of The Quickening. Set in Morgravia, the latest book in this authors fantasy realm tells of the adventures of General Wyl Thirsk. One of the King's better generals, Wyl does not have as good a relationship with Prince Celimus, whom he must protect. This relationship turns even more sour when Celimus tortures Myrren, a young woman accused of being a witch. She grants Wyl a boon that soon forces him to leave the land he loves and travel dangerous paths to try to find the Manwitch, who can help him control the gift so freely given. Fantasy adventure that grips the reader and draws them along.

GOD'S CONCUBINE by Sara Douglass. **Voyager h/c, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 643 pp. A\$45. On sale now.** Book two of The Troy Game. Douglass continues her new series with verve. The year is now 1050 and the characters who were first introduced to the readers in HADES' DAUGHTER are once again on stage, having been reborn again. The setting is again London, but a more refined London than that of the previous volume. The quest is again for the Troy Game, and the same antagonists are fighting for the prize. The Troy Game, however, is not quite the same as it had been before: it has organised itself in an almost intelligent manner. The searchers would find this out themselves... An excellent fantasy.

MUDDLE EARTH by Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell. **MacMillan pb, dist in Aust by Pan MacMillan. © 2003. 449 pp. A\$14.95. On sale now.** A spoof, of sorts, about Middle Earth. Not that the characters, setting or plot are much the same.... The hero is a young boy from Earth who finds himself in a strange world with three moons and oodles of peculiar creatures, such as exploding gas frogs. There are creatures from his own world, such as budgies, and things like ogres and dragons which he comes into contact with. The book is full of English humour, and is very easy to read. The type is fairly large and the lines are set out at about 1½ spacing to give the pages an open look. A good gift for teens as well as pre-teens.

ACROSS THE FACE OF THE WORLD by Russell Kirkpatrick. **HarperCollins tpb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 510 pp. A\$24.95. On sale now.** Book One of Fire of Heaven. A fantasy story that has as its heroes a group of five men and women. They start off from an out-of-the-way settlement, but their journey would take them to the far-flung remnants of empire. Ages ago Kannwar, the Undying Man, who had attempted to destroy the Most High, had been captured and imprisoned after being maimed by a magical arrow. He had been planning his revenge for over two thousand years. And now was the time. Mahnum, having escaped from Kannwar's fortress, had found his wife, Indrett, sons Hal and Leith. They were not together

long before Mahnum was captured again.... Well written fantasy.

HIDDEN WARRIOR by Lynn Flewelling. **Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2003. 557 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.** Book two of the Tamir Triad, and the sequel to THE BONE DOLL'S TWIN. The saga continues, with Prince Tobin endeavouring to keep his true identity hidden from the usurper King Erius. Tobin is finding out, however, that as he spends more time in the king's court, that things are becoming much more complicated. One of the complications is his squire Ki. Tobin is determined to keep Ki with him, but Ki, being from the country, is finding it hard to keep up with Tobin. When the king meets them, Tobin manages to keep Ki in the job, but it could have been a close thing. Tobin comes closer and closer to having to decide to reveal his secret to the world. A good weekend's read.

RAY HARRYHAUSEN: AN ANIMATED LIFE by Ray Harryhausen and Tony Dalton. **Aurum Press, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 301 pp. 25.5x29.5 cm. A\$79.95. On sale now.** This volume is a must for the SF and fantasy fan, and for any library. It is chock full of stills, artwork and photographs from Harryhausen's collection that was garnered from his movies. There is a foreword by Ray Bradbury. The chapters are headed: Discovery of a Giant Ape; Another Ape and Beast; From Beneath the Sea to Outer Space; Sinbad has been Good to Me; Another Lost Land; Almost Human; Absolutely Imperial; Dinosaurs, Dinosaurs, everywhere Dinosaurs; Return to Legends; Good Old Friend; In the Lap of the Gods; and Lost Projects, Lost Worlds. The volume closes with a Filmography and Glossary. Most of the content has not been published before. Harryhausen is a true legend – and this is a collectors item. *Recommended*.

TRADING IN DANGER by Elizabeth Moon. **Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2003. 420 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.** Book one of Vatta's War. Elizabeth Moon's usual genre is fantasy, but she has also written SF. This novel is one of her SF ones. The protagonist is Ky Vatta. The novel opens with Cadet Vatta being called in to see her commanding officer in the Academy to get a roasting which ends up having her being forced to resign. Events rapidly escalate until she finds herself ostracised. It is with a sense of astonishment that she finds herself offered the job of taking a ship on its final trading run. All is not what it seems, however, and soon she finds herself with schemes of her own that again could blow up in her face. Very readable space opera.

TRITCHEON HASH by Sue Lange. **Metropolis Ink tpb, available from the publisher – email inquiries@metropolisink.com. © 2003. 228 pp.** Set in the years after 3000, the plot follows the career of Tritcheon Hash, as she expands her experience by journeying from the women-and-children-only planet of Coney Island to Earth, which had been the preserve of

men since the women had left. Hash finds out that all is not quite as had been portrayed in her education, and goes on to find out the truth. The truth turns out to be nearly more than she can handle, but whether it all turns out in Hash's favour in the end is a moot point.... Sue Lange has written a humorous SF novel with her latest. She is one of the few North Americans who have attempted this; most of the humorous fantasy and SF is coming from the English. A fun read.

THE PHOENIX EXULTANT by John C. Wright. TOR pb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2003. 305 pp. A\$16.95. On sale now. Volume two of The Golden Age. Phaethon has arrived on Earth by going down a space elevator on foot. He has been banished from the mentality of the Golden Oecumene and has to rely on his own resources as well as that of his golden space-suit. He eventually arrives where all the misfits are, and finds that they are ruled by a man called Ironjoy, who keeps the others going by giving them drugs and chemicals, as they do not have any money of their own. Phaethon still believes that enemies of the Oecumene are after him, but no-one will believe him, including a clone of his wife, Daphne, who is determined to be with him. His wife is in a life-casket and if brought to life will lose her mind. Then Phaethon finds himself under attack by the enemy... Excellent space opera. *Recommended*.

SOLAR LOTTERY by Philip K. Dick. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 1955. 188 pp. A\$22.95. On sale now. This novel was the first that Philip K. Dick had published. It has all the earmarks of his later works. The society that he postulates has the Challenge – everyone in the bureaucracy is elected at random. The era of the machine was designed so that no dictator could arise – and if he did, a random move by the machine would throw him out. Leon Cartwright is the protagonist of the novel – he is the usual Dickian character, with strange things happening to him and events sometimes spiralling out of control. If you don't have a library of Dick's works, you are missing out some of the best SF ever written. This volume has been out of print for years. Get it now.

DARKER THAN YOU THINK by Jack Williamson. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 1940/48. 166 p. A\$19.95. On sale now. Volume 48 in the Fantasy Masterworks series. The hero of DARKER THAN YOU THINK is Will Barbee, a reporter in the city of Claredon. Life had been simple and understandable up to the time he met April Bell, reporter for a rival newspaper. They struck off quite well, after Will's first strange feeling of alarm. It was after he met her that he began to have stranger dreams. And then the murders started... The reader can see why this book is a classic by the way it grabs one and does not let go until you have read it through to the end. I have found that any volume with a "Fantasy Masterworks" blurb is worth reading. Truly engrossing fantasy.

FUTURE RELEASES:

Hodder Headline:

THE MACHINE CRUSADE - B. Herbert & K Anderson

Bookwise: THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO DINOSAURS – S. Parker

Allen & Unwin: 1610 A SUNDIAL IN A GRAVE - Mary Gentle

THE SEPARATION - Christopher Priest

PAYCHECK – Philip K. Dick

HarperCollins: FORTY SIGNS OF RAIN – Kim Stanley Robinson

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