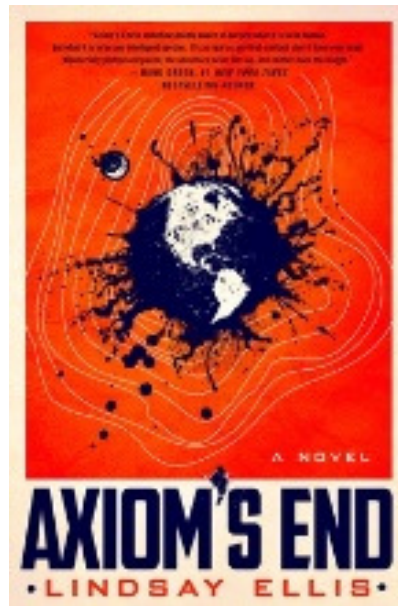


Axiom's End by Lindsay Ellis

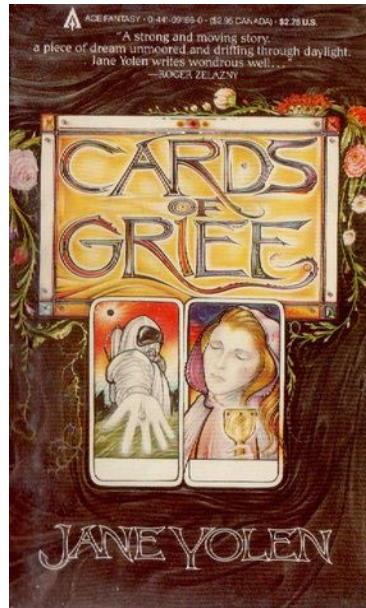


Truth is a human right.

It's fall 2007. A well-timed leak has revealed that the US government might have engaged in first contact. Cora Sabino is doing everything she can to avoid the whole mess, since the force driving the controversy is her whistleblower father. Even though Cora hasn't spoken to him in years, his celebrity has caught the attention of the press, the Internet, the paparazzi, and the government—and with him in hiding, that attention is on her. She neither knows nor cares whether her father's leaks are a hoax, and wants nothing to do with him—until she learns just how deeply entrenched her family is in the cover-up, and that an extraterrestrial presence has been on Earth for decades.

Realizing the extent to which both she and the public have been lied to, she sets out to gather as much information as she can, and finds that the best way for her to uncover the truth is not as a whistleblower, but as an intermediary. The alien presence has been completely uncommunicative until she convinces one of them that she can act as their interpreter, becoming the first and only human vessel of communication. Their otherworldly connection will change everything she thought she knew about being human—and could unleash a force more sinister than she ever imagined.

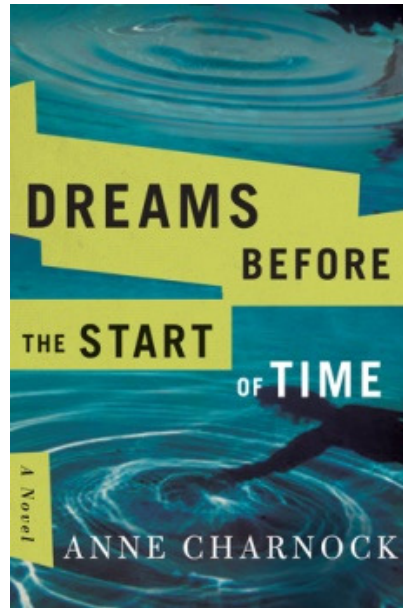
Cards of Grief by Jane Yolen



The year is 2132 when members of the Anthropologist's Guild set down on the planet Henderson's IV, or L'Lal'lor as it is known to the native population. Charged with the nonintrusive study of alien cultures, the crew discovers a society containing no love or laughter. It is, instead, centered around death—a world of aristocratic and common folk in which grieving is an art and the cornerstone of life. But the alien civilization stands on the brink of astonishing change, heralded by the discovery of Linni, the Gray Wanderer, a young woman from the countryside whose arrival has been foretold for centuries. And for Anthropologist First Class Aaron Spenser, L'Lal'lor is a place of destructive temptations, seducing him with its mysterious, sad beauty, and leading him into an unthinkable criminal act.

Told from the shifting viewpoints of characters both alien and human, and through records of local lore and transcripts of court martial proceedings, *Cards of Grief* is a thoughtful, lyrical, and spellbinding tale of first contact. It is a true masterwork of world building from Jane Yolen, a premier crafter of speculative fiction and fantasy.

Dreams Before the Start of Time by Anne Charnock

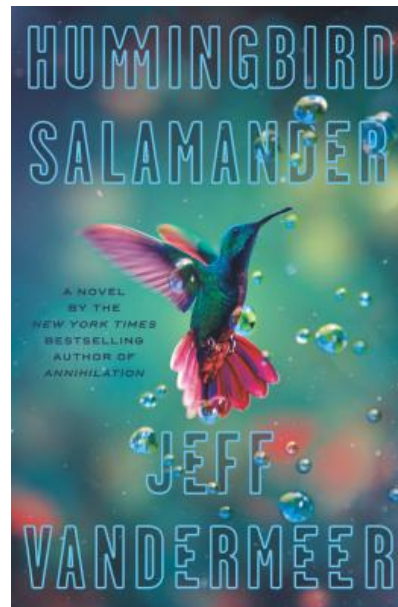


In a near-future London, Millie Dack places her hand on her belly to feel her baby kick, resolute in her decision to be a single parent. Across town, her closest friend—a hungover Toni Munroe—steps into the shower and places her hand on a medic console. The diagnosis is devastating.

In this stunning, bittersweet family saga, Millie and Toni experience the aftershocks of human progress as their children and grandchildren embrace new ways of making babies. When infertility is a thing of the past, a man can create a child without a woman, a woman can create a child without a man, and artificial wombs eliminate the struggles of pregnancy. But what does it mean to be a parent? A child? A family?

Through a series of interconnected vignettes that spans five generations and three continents, this emotionally taut story explores the anxieties that arise when the science of fertility claims to deliver all the answers.

Hummingbird Salamander by Jeff VanderMeer

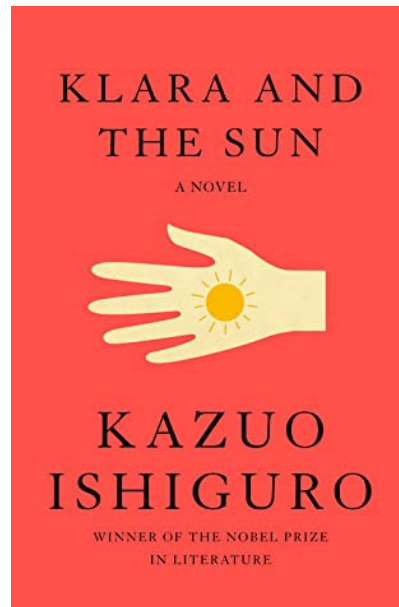


Security consultant “Jane Smith” receives an envelope with a key to a storage unit that holds a taxidermied hummingbird and clues leading her to a taxidermied salamander. Silvina, the dead woman who left the note, is a reputed ecoterrorist and the daughter of an Argentine industrialist. By taking the hummingbird from the storage unit, Jane sets in motion a series of events that quickly spin beyond her control.

Soon, Jane and her family are in danger, with few allies to help her make sense of the true scope of the peril. Is the only way to safety to follow in Silvina’s footsteps? Is it too late to stop? As she desperately seeks answers about why Silvina contacted her, time is running out—for her and possibly for the world.

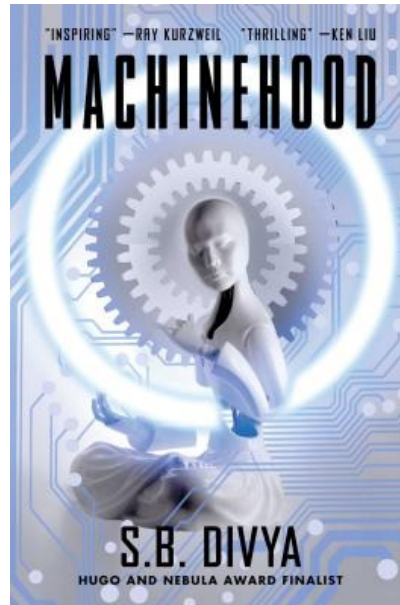
Hummingbird Salamander is Jeff VanderMeer at his brilliant, cinematic best, wrapping profound questions about climate change, identity, and the world we live in into a tightly plotted thriller full of unexpected twists and elaborate conspiracy.

Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro



Klara and the Sun, the first novel by Kazuo Ishiguro since he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, watches carefully the behaviour of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her.

Machinehood by S. B. Divya



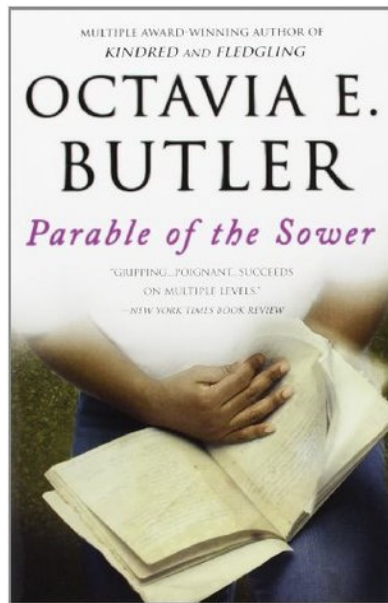
Welga Ramirez, executive bodyguard and ex-special forces, is about to retire early when her client is killed in front of her. It's 2095 and people don't usually die from violence. Humanity is entirely dependent on pills that not only help them stay alive, but allow them to compete with artificial intelligence in an increasingly competitive gig economy. Daily doses protect against designer diseases, flow enhances focus, zips and buffs enhance physical strength and speed, and juvers speed the healing process.

All that changes when Welga's client is killed by The Machinehood, a new and mysterious terrorist group that has simultaneously attacked several major pill funders. The Machinehood operatives seem to be part human, part machine, something the world has never seen. They issue an ultimatum: stop all pill production in one week.

Global panic ensues as pill production slows and many become ill. Thousands destroy their bots in fear of a strong AI takeover. But the US government believes the Machinehood is a cover for an old enemy. One that Welga is uniquely qualified to fight.

Welga, determined to take down the Machinehood, is pulled back into intelligence work by the government that betrayed her. But who are the Machinehood and what do they really want?

Parable of the Sower by Octavia E Butler

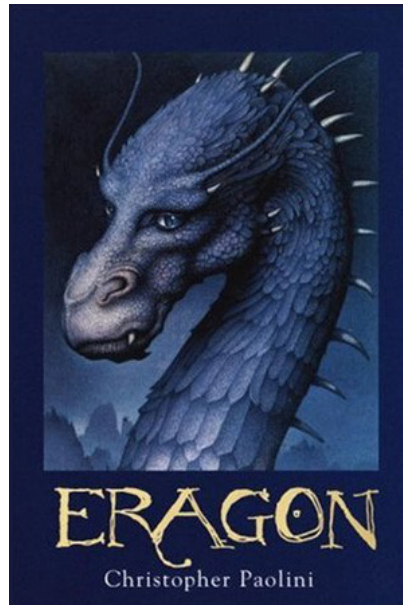


In 2025, with the world descending into madness and anarchy, one woman begins a fateful journey toward a better future.

Lauren Olamina and her family live in one of the only safe neighborhoods remaining on the outskirts of Los Angeles. Behind the walls of their defended enclave, Lauren's father, a preacher, and a handful of other citizens try to salvage what remains of a culture that has been destroyed by drugs, disease, war, and chronic water shortages. While her father tries to lead people on the righteous path, Lauren struggles with hyperempathy, a condition that makes her extraordinarily sensitive to the pain of others.

When fire destroys their compound, Lauren's family is killed and she is forced out into a world that is fraught with danger. With a handful of other refugees, Lauren must make her way north to safety, along the way conceiving a revolutionary idea that may mean salvation for all mankind.

Eragon by Christopher Paolini

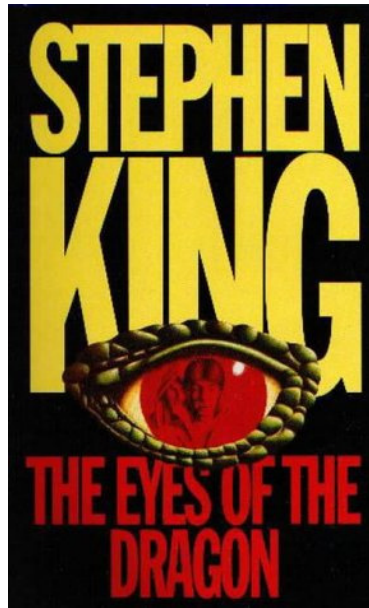


When Eragon finds a polished blue stone in the forest, he thinks it is the lucky discovery of a poor farm boy; perhaps it will buy his family meat for the winter. But when the stone brings a dragon hatchling, Eragon soon realizes he has stumbled upon a legacy nearly as old as the Empire itself.

Overnight his simple life is shattered, and he is thrust into a perilous new world of destiny, magic, and power. With only an ancient sword and the advice of an old storyteller for guidance, Eragon and the fledgling dragon must navigate the dangerous terrain and dark enemies of an Empire ruled by a king whose evil knows no bounds.

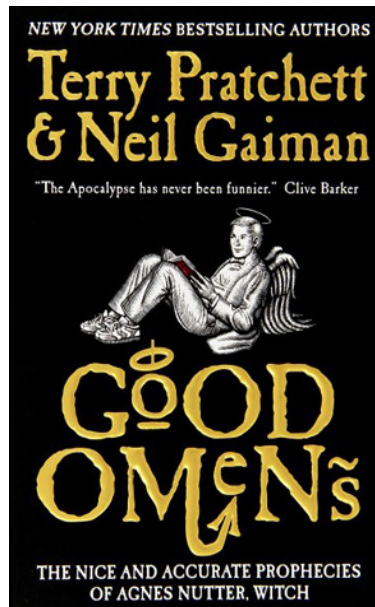
Can Eragon take up the mantle of the legendary Dragon Riders? The fate of the Empire may rest in his hands.

The Eyes of the Dragon by Stephen King



A kingdom is in turmoil as the old king dies, murdered by a strange and horrible poison. While the land of Delain mourns, the evil wizard Flagg, hatches an unscrupulous plot, which sees the King's eldest son Peter imprisoned for his father's murder, and the youngest son inherit the throne. Only Peter knows the truth about his own innocence and the evil that is Flagg. Only Peter can save Delain from the horror that Flagg has in store. But first, he must escape from the high tower.

Good Omens by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman



‘Armageddon only happens once, you know. They don’t let you go around again until you get it right.’

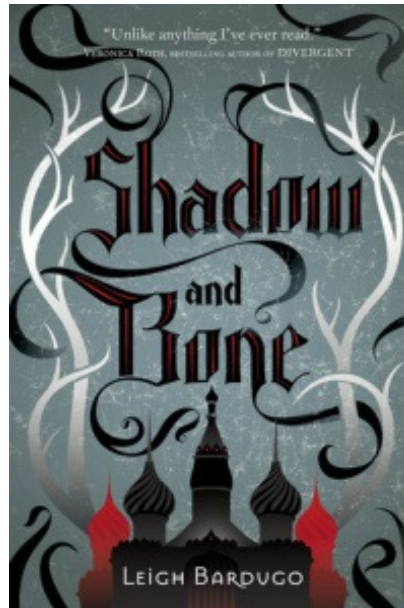
People have been predicting the end of the world almost from its very beginning, so it’s only natural to be sceptical when a new date is set for Judgement Day. But what if, for once, the predictions are right, and the apocalypse really is due to arrive next Saturday, just after tea?

You could spend the time left drowning your sorrows, giving away all your possessions in preparation for the rapture, or laughing it off as (hopefully) just another hoax. Or you could just try to do something about it.

It’s a predicament that Aziraphale, a somewhat fussy angel, and Crowley, a fast-living demon now finds themselves in. They’ve been living amongst Earth’s mortals since The Beginning and, truth be told, have grown rather fond of the lifestyle and, in all honesty, are not actually looking forward to the coming Apocalypse.

And then there’s the small matter that someone appears to have misplaced the Antichrist...

Shadow and Bone by Leigh Bardugo

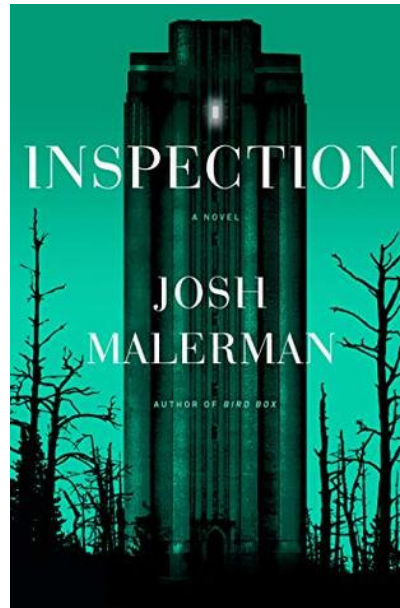


Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold, a swath of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh. Now its fate may rest on the shoulders of one lonely refugee.

Alina Starkov has never been good at anything. But when her regiment is attacked on the Fold and her best friend is brutally injured, Alina reveals a dormant power that saves his life—a power that could be the key to setting her war-ravaged country free. Wrenched from everything she knows, Alina is whisked away to the royal court to be trained as a member of the Grisha, the magical elite led by the mysterious Darkling.

Yet nothing in this lavish world is what it seems. With darkness looming and an entire kingdom depending on her untamed power, Alina will have to confront the secrets of the Grisha . . . and the secrets of her heart.

Inspection by Josh Malerman



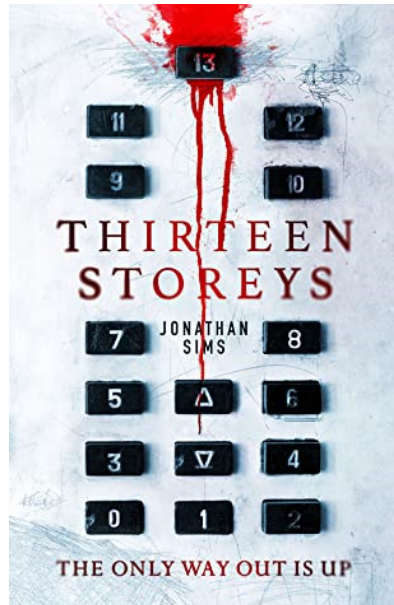
J is a student at a school deep in a forest far away from the rest of the world.

J is one of only twenty-six students, all of whom think of the school's enigmatic founder as their father. J's peers are the only family he has ever had. The students are being trained to be prodigies of art, science, and athletics, and their life at the school is all they know—and all they are allowed to know.

But J suspects that there is something out there, beyond the pines, that the founder does not want him to see, and he's beginning to ask questions. What is the real purpose of this place? Why can the students never leave? And what secrets is their father hiding from them?

Meanwhile, on the other side of the forest, in a school very much like J's, a girl named K is asking the same questions. J has never seen a girl, and K has never seen a boy. As K and J work to investigate the secrets of their two strange schools, they come to discover something even more mysterious: each other.

Thirteen Storeys by Jonny Sims



You're cordially invited to dinner. Penthouse access is available via the broken freight elevator. Black tie optional.

A dinner party is held in the penthouse of a multimillion-pound development. All the guests are strangers - even to their host, the billionaire owner of the building. None of them know why they were selected to receive his invitation. Whether privileged or deprived, besides a postcode, they share only one thing in common - they've all experienced a shocking disturbance within the building's walls.

By the end of the night, their host is dead, and none of the guests ever said what happened. His death remains one of the biggest unsolved mysteries - until now.

But are you ready for their stories?

Jonathan Sims' debut is a darkly twisted, genre-bending journey through one of the most innovative haunted houses you'll ever dare to enter.