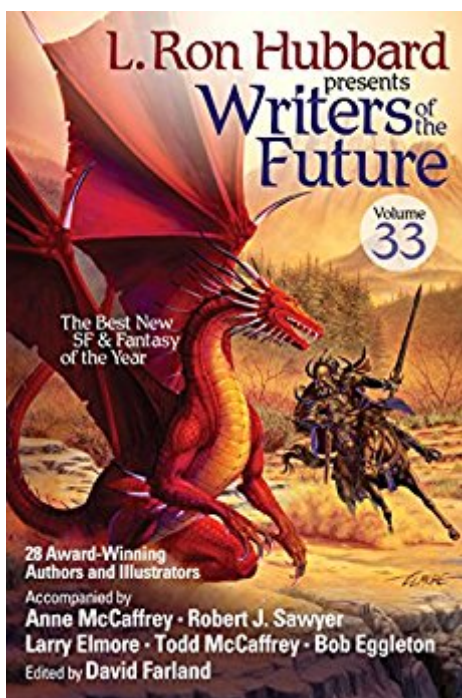


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# Writers Of The Future Vol 33, Science Fiction And Fantasy Short Stories



## Synopsis

Internationally acclaimed anthology of award winning science fiction and fantasy short stories. Explore diverse new universes of possibility through a variety of creative and fresh new ideas—all in one anthology. From dragons to mythical death dealers, from murder on the moon to deep space mystery, these stories bring you the hot new talent in science fiction, fantasy & horror. Enjoy these award-winning stories & illustrations, with bonus stories by New York Times bestselling authors—Robert J. Sawyer, Todd McCaffrey & L. Ron Hubbard. Learn how to write or improve your craft with tips from Grand Master fantasy author—Anne McCaffrey and New York Times bestselling author L. Ron Hubbard.

About the Stories:

When Gwen's husband is found murdered, she's the only suspect. After all, they were the only two people on the moon.

Moonlight One: Flora's father is a mech-soldier of the Slayer Class, but how much of him is really left inside the machine?

The Armor Embrace: When an alien with godly intelligence is discovered watching the earth, one man must try to learn if its motives are pure.

Envoy in the Ice: If you were stranded in an open boat and the only hope for rescue came from a ghost ship, would dare to ride?

The Devil's Rescue: Some gifts come with heavy price tags, and the giver must rise to the occasion.

Tears for Shul'Ina: What if an alien asks for your help with a question, and the answer affects the future of the whole human race?

The Drake Equation: Barlow has a talent for finding the dead. Or do they find him?

Acquisition: When Varga sets out to explore the ancient stronghold of a long-dead wizard, she discovers that the ruins aren't as deserted as she thought.

Obsidian Spire: If only that reptile in the sewer were something as predictable as an alligator.

Gator: On a distant world among the cloud peaks, the light-hawks promise a rich reward for those daring enough to harvest one.

A Glowing Heart: In a world where memories can be stripped, Bill discovers that he has a family he has never known.

The Long Dizzy Down: Not all spirits have the best of intentions, and they must be dealt with.

The Woodcutters' Deity: You can put an end to something wondrous, but only at a cost.

The Dragon Killer's Daughter: In a life-or-death situation, sometimes you wish that you had a really powerful spell. But that begs the question—what is power?

Useless Magic: Some devils are as old as a dream, and more evil than men can imagine.

Adramelech: When the world needs saving, three children are called to the task.

The Fox, the Wolf, and the Dove: Can an aging sorcerer find a way to track down his old nemesis with the small bit of magic he has left, or is he just fooling himself?

The Magnificent Bhajan: Read them—and enjoy!

Nanowrimo writers are welcome to enter too! Read the book to get an edge on the competition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

WRITERS OF THE FUTURE VOLUME 33 has everything you need in a sci-fi/fantasy short story collection. As with each anthology, Editor David Farland chooses a veritable mix of speculative fiction of superb quality and variation, from aliens to high fantasy to murder mystery sci-fi to grimdark. The first thing I noticed with Volume 33 was the cover – in a word, gorgeous. Renowned artist Larry Elmore's "Crimson Dawn" is a sublime representation of what got me into fantasy long ago: dragons. The cover serves not only as a prelude to the stories inside, but an invitation to the reader to prepare for an unforgettable adventure ahead. But enough about the artwork – onto the stories! Instead of reviewing each story in painstaking detail, I thought I'd give you a taste of two standouts that portray the diversity in this anthology, "Adramelech" by Sean Hazlett and "Envoy in the Ice" by Dustin Steinacker. "Adramelech" is grimdark, a subgenre of fantasy that contains darker elements, much of the way horror instills dread in our hearts. In this case, it tells of a man who has made an unwitting pact with the demon lord, Adramelech. (On a side note, this demon is one of the more obscure ones you'll find in apocryphal lore, which bumps up the fascination

factor—quite a bit if you're interested in angelology, fallen angels and such.) The more our hero (or should I say, antihero) attempts to free himself of his infernal bond, the more it drags him toward his inevitable end. Can he break the pact? You'll have to read the story to find out. (Evil laugh.) The language is gorgeous and crafted of the Victorian era. You won't be disappointed with this cautionary tale. *Envoy in the Ice* is a story about a visiting alien entity (called Envoy) and its effect on us earthly beings in a subliminal sort of way. Fans of the movie *Arrival* will find this piece intriguing in how the hero, who has worshipped Envoy since childhood, must uncover its secret. What will he find that causes him to lose faith and find it again? You're right: you need to read the story! I enjoyed the dialogue between the different players and the unfolding of the mystery behind the identity and purpose of Envoy. It has a natural feel that draws you in well, much the way *Arrival* did for me. Bon appetit! Now that I've given you a taste of what's inside WRITERS OF THE FUTURE 33, what are you waiting for? Dive in!

I received an advanced readers copy which, contained four of the stories in this anthology, in exchange for an honest review. My honest review is that they were each good enough to sell me on pre-ordering the full anthology. I was one of the lucky readers who accidentally got their copy early thanks to a mix-up at . So, I've been slowly making my way through the tales as I also consume a backlog of other works. And here's the truth. Not every story is to my liking, but I haven't read any yet that aren't good. Which is the same as going to your favorite restaurant. You order the sci-fi with a side of hard boiled science. Because, it's your favorite. And you might miss out on the grimdark side dish that would have really hit the spot. How do you know what new fiction you will like if you don't try it? And anthologies provide that buffet experience that means you don't have to commit to 100k words. Which brings up another nicety about the WotF series: because they allow longer than normal short stories in their anthology, writers can choose the length which makes their story work to a much greater degree than some other venues. I'm not opposed to artificial word constraints as an aesthetic but I appreciate this freedom too. It's also nice to see a list of past winners and think that some of these writers might also be taking up real estate on my bookshelves. And finally, the full version includes the winners of the Illustrators of the Future contest who have crafted wonderful illustrations for each of the stories. The ARC did not include the illustrations which, now that I've seen them, is a tragedy. Of the four stories in the ARC, two stand out to me, *Envoy in the Ice* is a wonderful science fiction work, that strikes many of the same chords as other first contact stories, but does so incredibly deftly, and has a kind of cinematic feel at times. The narrative always

remembers the mysterious and the story is better for it. The illustration also captures this feeling as three arctic-suited figures stare off into the snowy expanse at the unknown. Obsidian Spire is 180 degrees the other direction. Fantasy instead of Sci/fi. The story is fun and straightforward. And it reads like part of an origin story. Sometimes you just want a big helping of big damn hero. And here it is. And sometimes that big damned hero is also a more fully fleshed out character than a short story protagonist has any right to be. Great job. The illustration is also perfect at capturing this character. Which lends credence to my theory (hope) that we will see more Varga stories in the future (maybe even in the Writers of the Future). The other stories were also good, A Glowing Heart is right at home in the current crop of coming of age fantasy stories. Well written and visual, it just wasn't my forte. And Adramalech, which might be the best story in the book, but just isn't my demonic cup of tea. The author obviously spent a great deal of time crafting the language of the story to fit the ever-creeping darkness that consumes the reader almost as quickly as the story does. The illustration is also nice (done by the same illustrator who did the perfect Obsidian Spire work) but the content of the story may defy a single picture. You'll have to be the judge. So far, the other stories have been excellent as well. I'll update this review as I go along.

This volume is packed with great writing. Whatever you're looking for, it's here. If you're a SFF fan, you'll love this, and if you're like me, just a fan of great storytelling, you're in for a lot of great rides. Of course, the really great thing about this is all in the title - Writers of the Future - because it's a fact. The writers featured here are on the cusp of breaking out. It's happened before, and surely will happen with these talented wordsmiths. At the core of all great stories are people (not necessarily humanoid) thrown into conflict, and the imagination of the author adds the rich layers of storytelling to convey the things they want the readers to experience on the path that the characters take throughout the journey of the story. No matter how far out, literally or figuratively, the writer takes us, ultimately the reader must identify with the characters to make that journey. These 'Writers of the Future' have accomplished this in such bold and varied ways, that I know that I'll be returning to this volume over and over for many years to come. There are also pretty amazing illustrations for each prize-winning story included - in color. This by Illustrators of the Future. A really cool thing. Amongst many, two standouts I'll mention these two as my favorites: Tears for Shulna - Andrew L. Roberts Acquisition - Jake Marley

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