



## September 2023, Issue 19

We just returned from a two-week trip to California and it was lovely to visit family there. The weather was really nice and we did a mini-Pacific Coast Highway Road trip to visit the beaches and cities along the coast. Then we returned, tried to buy groceries and discovered our credit card was maxed out which was sad because I really wanted to eat cheese that day. Oh well, life goes on. Hope everyone had a good summer as fall comes swirling in!

Best,  
-JF Garrard

## Artsy Raven Podcast Updates

[Click for access to The Artsy Raven Youtube Channel](#)

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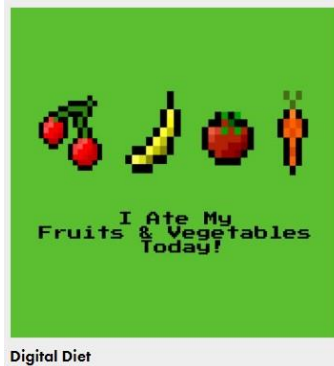
On episode 40 of *The Artsy Raven*, we speak to Catherine Graham, a Toronto writer who seems to have either won or have been nominated for every reward under the sun! She was lovely to speak with and shared many words of wisdom about using writing to cope with grief. We talk about death a lot too, one of our favorite topics!



On episode 41 of *The Artsy Raven*, Dr. Marleen S Barr discusses why she can't stop writing about Trump although she strongly dislikes him. She reveals that telling stories is a way of gaining control and playing out thoughts about things she can't control. Her latest book, *This Former President: Science Fiction as Retrospective Retrorocket Jettisons Trumpism*, recently published by

Dark Helix Press, has been getting great reviews and please check it out if you have time! [Click here for book page.](#)

## Design - Digital Diet



Digital Diet

On my California trip my uncles kept telling me I was fat despite the fact I kept telling them I'm on new meds which slows down my metabolism. I wish I had this shirt as a snarky response but at the same time I don't think they will understand the meaning of this nerdy image...sigh...[Click here to see all the designs for sale on Threadless](#), all proceeds go towards [Dark Helix Press](#) to make more books!

## Artsy Fun - Nintendo Switch is Ruining my Life!

Recently a generous relative gave my kraken child a Nintendo Switch lite. In



California, my uncles bought my kraken child the *Pokémon Scarlet* game. A black hole opened and we started fighting over playtime since we are both obsessed with Pokémon.

A long time ago I asked for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) and my parents

said they didn't have money for such things. I

entered a coloring contest and won a system which was the second prize. First prize came with the duck hunting gun. Fast forward to the present and I realized I had enough points saved up over the last two years to trade for a Zelda edition of the Nintendo Switch! I had to make up a bit of money for taxes, but it's fine.

Now the kraken is upset and said I have to save for another two years to get them a Switch too since the screen is bigger than the lite. Also I have to cool it on *Pokémon Scarlet* because I'm not allowed to have stronger *Pokémon* than them!

To be honest, *Pokémon* has too much choice and it has been driving me bonkers to figure out which one to level up. I'm taking a break and buying/playing for the third time, *Final Fantasy VIII* instead because I miss Squall and Rinoa. The remastered game was on sale for \$13.50 Cdn and I couldn't resist.

Videogames is another way of telling a story with graphics, but it just takes longer because you have to go through a process of solving a puzzle or leveling up characters. Then there are those hundreds of strategy guides with conflicting information and tidbits about the games which takes time to read. Anyhow, will have to discipline myself or else nothing will get done!

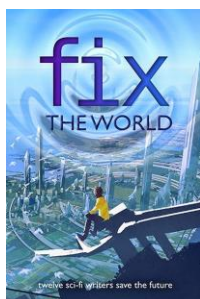
(Photo reference: [Nintendo site](#))

## Free Book Giveaways and Promos

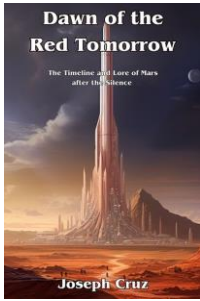
(click book title to access free ebook download link or book preview)



**[Oasis by Joan De La Haye \(click to download\)](#)**. In a world devastated by solar flares, the surviving population has turned into flesh-craving zombies due to solar radiation. Only a few remain unaffected. Led by a family of civilians and a squad of battle-worn soldiers, they must reach the safety of a UN base called New Atlantis at the South Pole. But as they face relentless undead hordes, their journey becomes a race against time. Will they make it to the oasis alive or become part of the undead themselves?



**[Fix the World by J. Scott Coatsworth \(click to download\)](#)**. Twelve Sci-Fi Authors Save the World in a near-future hopepunk anthology. Dive in and find out how we might mitigate climate change, make war obsolete, switch to alternative forms of energy, and restructure the very foundations of our society. The future's not going to fix itself.



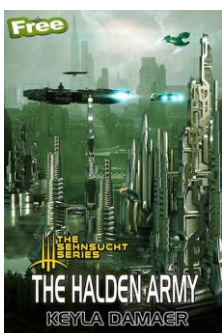
**[Dawn of the Red Tomorrow: The Timeline and Lore of Mars after the Silence](#) by Joseph Cruz (click to download).** The Earth is gone. Can the colonists of Mars forge a new society for humanity to survive? An alternate historical account of the resilience of mankind



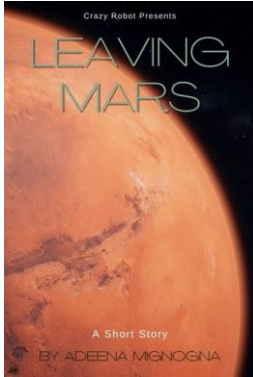
**[Shadow Of The Spark](#) by Adrian Santiago (click for preview).**

Newly-appointed Detective Migdalia Vandersey's first murder case was supposed to be open-and-shut. Wishful thinking. Armed with the latest technology she unravels the mysteries of the victims, the killer, and The Spark itself. The complex web of crime and corruption entangles her professionally, and romantically, with a bounty hunter seeking redemption (Llyr Varyan) and a witch exploring the depths of her power (Faye Noelani). At the center of all the sex, drugs, secrets, magic, and violence waits a prolific killer who hunts the streets with impunity. This murderer works to cover his tracks and stay ahead of Detective Vandersey, and her partners, as they race against the clock to stop him from taking his next victim, and tying off his final loose end.

**[Pilgrim](#) by Mitchell Luthi (click for review copy).** Set in 12th-century Jerusalem, Pilgrim follows the treacherous journey of a German knight and his companions as they return home after seven arduous years battling for God in the Holy Land. Within this sprawling tale lies a tapestry of medieval horror, intertwining history and folklore, encompassing both a metaphysical and literal odyssey. Inspired by a rich blend of Arabic, Christian, and pre-Islamic traditions, Pilgrim delivers a pulse-pounding story of action, adventure, and bone-chilling horror.



**[The Halden Army \(An Alien Dystopia\)](#) by Keyla Damaer (click to download).** A coward is not the one who is afraid. It's what we do about fear that makes the difference. Cadet Draken Kosset is getting ready for his final exam to become an officer of the Manderian Halden. He should focus on the exam, but all he can do is think about Zamal and the recurring nightmare tormenting his nights since his childhood.



**[Leaving Mars by Adeena Mignogna \(click to download\).](#)**

Mars didn't work out. We're all packing up and going home. My estranged dad is refusing to leave, so I'm out travelling the Martian landscape to his solitary outpost to bring him back. If it were up to me, I'd say he'd made his choice. But my sister, back on Earth pleaded, "The kids want to see their Grandpa. I want to see him again." I've always had a soft spot for my baby sister...



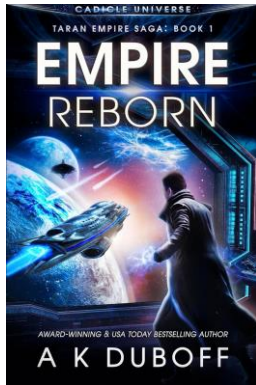
**[In the Shadow of the Rings by Frank Kennedy \(click to download\).](#)**

The Collectorate has collapsed. Forty worlds once bound to its might are on their own. Some flourish, others implode ... and a few seek to fill the vacuum. On the ringed planet Hokkaido, ecological disaster threatens many of its two billion people. Massive corporate interests vie for territory on the prized island nation called The Lagos. Caught up in these fierce and deadly machinations are the outcast Ryllen Jee and rebellious Kara Syung, who struggles to chart a path apart from the expectations of her revered family. Each will discover a new, unexpected path as they grow into adulthood amid a rapidly-changing and tense landscape, for they have no idea just how important they will be in the coming storm.



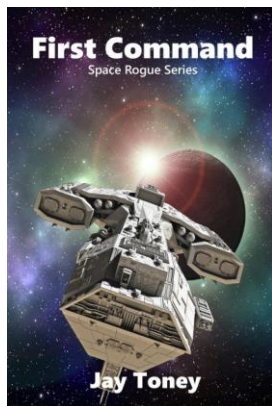
**[An Overture for the Odyssey by Danny F. Santos \(click to download\).](#)**

All Captain Fitch had to do was find the downed Merry Marigold and recover a small crate of riches. Easy enough with good pay from the thieves cartel. Unfortunately, he wasn't the only one looking for it. After he is robbed at sword point, his employers leave Captain Fitch no choice but to pull off a daring heist with little hope of success... or face dire consequences. But the cartel are not the only ones keeping an eye on him as a secret agenda threatens to sabotage his last chance at redemption. Can he pull off an impossible caper or will he fail and seal his grim fate?



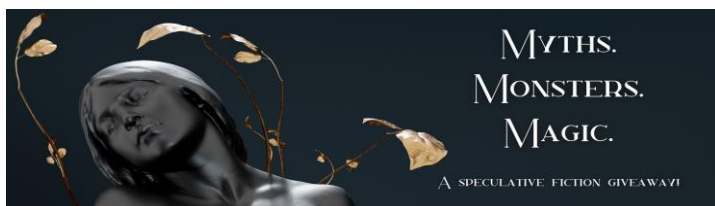
**[Empire Reborn: A Galactic Intrigue Space Opera \(Taran Empire Saga Book 1\) by A.K. DuBoff \(click for preview\).](#)**

When a civilian starship is inexplicably destroyed, young military officer Jason Sietinen launches an investigation to solve the mystery. As Jason unravels the clues, he soon learns that powerful, trans-dimensional aliens are behind the attack. A rogue faction within the Empire broke an ancient treaty, and the aliens are back for revenge. With the future of the Taran Empire hanging in the balance, Jason and his family stand at the intersection of military might and political influence. Facing a brewing galactic civil war, their only hope is to unite the feuding Taran worlds before the aliens launch a civilization-ending invasion.



**[First Command by Jay Toney \(click to download\).](#)** Bartholomew Roberts is retiring, leaving his son in command of the Queen Anne's Revenge. It is his first command, and it may be his last. The Alliance will do everything in their power to ensure that he fails. Failure in the Alliance is not tolerated. If Doc Roberts is lucky, they will hang him. If not, he will be sent to a reeducation center, mindwiped, and a control collar will be placed around his neck, then he will be paraded in the streets of Avalon's capital city, as an example of what happens to people who fail in their missions. He can't afford to fail!

## Group book promos



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**How Many Days Till Halloween?: An All-Genre Pre-Halloween Giveaway** Get these books fast! This promotion ends September 30th! [Click here to download](#)



**Tale as Old as Time- Good vs Evil** - Get these romance, speculative fiction and horror books fast! This promotion ends October 1st! [Click here to download](#)

