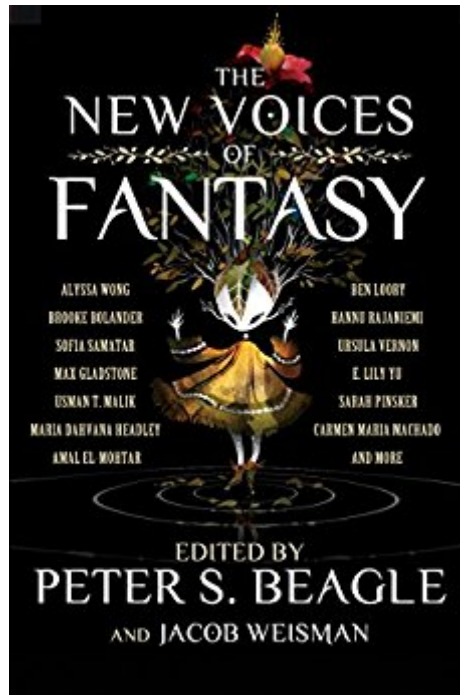




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The New Voices Of Fantasy



Synopsis

What would you do if a tornado wanted you to be its Valentine? Or if a haunted spacesuit banged on your door? When is the ideal time to turn into a tiger? Would you post a supernatural portal on Craigslist? In these nineteen stories, the enfants terribles of fantasy have arrived. The New Voices of Fantasy captures some of the fastest-rising talents of the last five years, including Sofia Samatar, Maria Dahvana Headley, Max Gladstone, Alyssa Wong, Usman T. Malik, Brooke Bolander, E. Lily Yu, Ben Loory, Ursula Vernon, and more. Their tales were hand-picked by the legendary Peter S. Beagle (The Last Unicorn) and genre expert Jacob Weisman (The Treasury of the Fantastic). So go ahead and join the Communist revolution of the honeybees. The new kids got your back.

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Customer Reviews

What a great collection! The New Voices of Fantasy is a collection of recent (2010 or later) fantasy short stories by emerging authors, as selected by Peter S. Beagle, author of The Last Unicorn. I picked the collection up because I already recognized some of the names on the front and adored

their work. Turns out some of my favorite short stories were already included! For instance, *“Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers”* by Alyssa Wong. I loved this short story when I read it last year. It’s dark, haunting, and utterly unforgettable. *“A Kiss with Teeth”* by Max Gladstone was one of the first stories I read when I started exploring short SFF fiction online. It’s a story about marriage and fatherhood, but centered around a vampire. In *“Jackalope Wives”* by Ursula Vernon, the memorable Grandma Harken is left to deal with the results of her grandson’s folly. These three stories were already among my favorite short fiction of recent years, and I was glad to see them included. I was also familiar with some of the other authors, but their stories were new to me. *“The Practical Witch’s Guide to Acquiring Real Estate”* by A.C. Wise is an utterly delightful piece about the relationship between a witch and their house. The story starts with a discussion of how the word “acquiring” can be problematic when it comes to real estate (as it implies that the house isn’t choosing the witch!) and gets even better from there. *“Selkie Stories Are for Losers”* by Sofia Samatar is a slice of life narrative about a girl whose mother is a selkie and her developing friendship with a girl with a suicidal mother. It’s a lovely story, and I immediately went to include it in a recommendation list of queer paranormal short stories. In *“Tornado Siren”* by Brooke Bolander, a tornado falls in love with a woman and she has to decide if normal is what she really wants. It’s a unique concept, and Bolander pulls it off admirably well, creating a charming short story. JY Yang presents a tale of a woman who dreams of tigers with *“Tiger Baby.”* Whenever she closes her eyes at night, she’s running on four paws, a sleek orange and black shadow. But while she may believe herself to be a tiger, there’s another truth to what she is. JY Yang is a truly talented author, and I look forward to reading more stories by them. Amal El-Mohtar was another author whose inclusion in this collection I was excited about. However, *“Wing”* didn’t prove to be a very memorable story. It’s a beautifully written story about book lovers, but I didn’t find it to have the staying power of some of the other stories. I’d read at least one other short story by E. Lily Yu, but after reading *“The Cartographer Wasps and Anarchist Bees,”* I know I need to read more by her. It was hands down one of the best stories in the collection. It’s just got so many layers! In this story, a nest of wasps

conquers a hive of bees, and the epic tale of these insects comes to involve colonialism and differences in political systems. The rest of the authors were relatively new to me, although I may have read a few stories by some of them here and there. Some of the stories were intriguing and others weren't to my tastes. Mind you, I wouldn't say any are bad stories, and if I were rating each story individually, I don't think any would get less than three stars. "The Tallest Doll in New York City" by Maria Dahvana Headley is one of the stories that left me cold. In this tale, two skyscrapers go courting on Valentine's Day. In "The Haunting of Apollo A7LB," a haunted spacesuit returns to the woman it's owner loved regardless of the fact that a living human is now wearing it. "The Pauper Prince and the Eucalyptus Jinn" by Usman T. Malik is a lengthy story (novella length?) that took up about a fifth of the collection. In it, a middle aged academic uncovers his grandfather's past and the tale of a impoverished princess. In "Here Be Dragons" by Chris Tarry, two fathers who made a living pretending to be dragon hunters find themselves out of work and now stay at home dads. "The Philosophers" by Adam Ehrlich Sachs is a collection of three flash fiction stories about the relationships between fathers and sons, often told in an offbeat way. For instance, a son who partitions the different aspects of his relationship with his deceased father by literally wearing different hats. "The Duck" by Ben Loory is a short story about a duck who falls in love with a rock, told almost as if it was a fable. Other stories worked a bit better for me, although I still had mixed feelings about some of them. "The Husband Stitch" by Carmen Maria Machado is a powerfully feminist story about a woman who gives everything of herself over to her husband except for the ribbon she wears around her neck. Yet, he isn't content until he has all of her. This may have been my favorite story by a new to me author. One of the others I enjoyed was "Left the Century to Sit Unmoved" by Sarah Pinsker, the tale of a small town with a pond where people who dive into it sometimes disappear. Despite the risks, residents still take the chance of diving in. In "The One They Took Before" by Kelly Sandoval, a musician tries to figure out how to live after being returned from the world of the fae. "My Time Among the Bridge Blowers" by Eugene Fischer is perhaps the story I'm most conflicted by. A self styled anthropologist ventures to a remote village where the inhabitants can walk on air. I believe that the story's meant to be a criticism of the sort of cultural

imperialism that can go along with this, but I don't know if it was entirely successful in that regard. Overall, *The New Voices of Fantasy* is a very strong collection and one that I wouldn't hesitate to recommend. It is perfect for anyone who looking to discover some of the newest talent in the genre, as well as for anyone who just loves a good story.

An excellent collection of contemporary fantasy short stories. I'd already read 8 out of the 19 stories, but I enjoyed rereading them. I'd also already read 15 of the authors, so it's nice to know I'm keeping up with new fantasy authors! If you're on the hunt for some new authors, this is a great collection to read. It's also interesting to note that of the 19 stories, only 2 were 2nd world fantasy. The other 17 stories were rooted in this world. But what all of these stories tend to do is use fantasy as a metaphor for something about living, and I love that. There are some really powerful stories in this collection.

4.5/5 "Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers" by Alyssa Wong: A lot of Wong's short stories (if not all) deal with a monstrous feminine and relationships among women. This is no exception. I mistakenly thought I'd read this before, so I'm glad it was in this collection.

4.5/5 "Selkie Stories are for Losers" by Sofia Samatar: And the protagonist has good reason for thinking so (the title). I really enjoy this story. This is my third time reading it, I believe.

4.5/5 "Tornado Siren" by Brooke Bolander: So good! A tornado falls in love with a little girl, and follows her the rest of her life. Such a fantastic story.

5/5 "Left the Century to Sit Unmoved" by Sarah Pinsker: In a small town, a waterhole sometimes swallows people, and a folklore has developed around it. A teenage girl dares to jump regularly. I've read this before, but had forgotten I had because the title doesn't really hint at the story. I really don't like the title, but the story is great.

4.5/5 "A Kiss with Teeth" by Max Gladstone: A vampire tries to live a normal human life and do the right thing for his family. Fun story.

4/5 "Jackalope Wives" by Ursula Vernon: Animal transformation story set in the West. I love this story so much. Also a re-read for me, but it's just perfect. Moves me every time.

5/5 "The Cartographer Wasps and Anarchist Bees" by E. Lily Yu: A political allegory between bees and wasps. Cool concept. A reread that was better the 2nd time around.

4/5 "The Practical Witch's Guide to Acquiring Real Estate" by A. C. Wise: A handbook about the ways witches can go about finding a house. I would choose 'Taming.' Another reread, but still cute.

4/5 "The Tallest Doll in New York City" by Maria Dahvana Headley: The Chrysler Building takes a walk in the 1930s, and waltzes with the Empire State Building. A reread.

3/5 *The Haunting of Apollo* by Hannu Rajaniemi: A old spacesuit is haunted, and when a rich internet mogul smuggles it, it insists on visiting an old acquaintance. First time reading this author.

3/5 *Here Be Dragons* by Chris Tarry: A retired fake dragon hunter returns home to be a stay-at-home dad. But can he settle down to this life? New author for me, and I really enjoyed it.

4/5 *The One They Took Before* by Kelly Sandoval: Oh, those faeries and their pet humans. This short story tells of woman after she returns home from a year in Faerie. How can she ever return to normal?

4/5 *Tiger Baby* by JY Yang: A woman feels she's more tiger than human.

3.5/5 *The Duck* by Ben Loory: A fable about a duck that falls in love with a rock.

3/5 *Wing* by Amal El-Mohtar: A woman wears a book necklace with a secret written inside. Lovely language, as always with Amal.

4.5/5 *The Philosophers* by Adam Ehrlich Sachs: A recursive story about sons translating a book as they slowly acquire a disability that leaves them unable to speak or move anything but a single body part.

2/5 *My Time Among the Bridge Blowers* by Eugene Fischer Original Story: A quasi-anthropologist travels to a remote village to learn the customs of its people, people his culture has attempted to colonize. Good story that felt like something larger.

4/5 *The Husband Stitch* by Carmen Maria Machado: A modern retelling of the folktale "The Girl with the Green Ribbon," one of my favorites growing up. This was my third time reading this short story, and the most effective. I kept thinking about the man who murdered his wife recently on a cruise ship, for laughing at him.

4.5/5 *The Pauper Prince and the Eucalyptus Jinn* by Usman T. Malik: A grandfather tells his grandson a story of a Princess and a jinn, and when the grandson grows into an adult and his grandfather dies, he discovers the story may be a lot more complicated and magical than his grandfather led him to believe. Another reread.

4/5 Thanks to Netgalley and Tachyon Press for providing me with a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

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