



# Watch the Skies

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# WATCH THE SKIES

## MAINSRING

By Jay Lake

"The Key Perilous is lost," the angel Gabriel tells young Hethor Jacques and charges him with its recovery. Hethor knows that there is a grinding in the great gears that drive the earth, a hesitation in the very clockwork of the world, so he believes Gabriel when the angel tells him he is the only one who can rewind the mainspring of the world. The moment that Hethor tells anyone about his visitation, his adventure truly begins. Turned out from his apprenticeship and home Hethor makes his way to Boston Commons to speak to the Viceroy and plead his case. The response is not what he expected and he finds himself imprisoned and the impressed into the Royal Navy about the airship Basset. From there the miles begin to pass under him leading him onwards. Jay Lake has taken the classic quest and given it a new veneer of adventure. His world and universe while built around the order of clockwork and gearing retains both the unexpected and rough and tumble action. His characters are sufficiently fleshed out to remain individuals and they each make their way through the world striving and struggling to survive. For the world they know is ending unless one young man can do the impossible.

-August's book is *The Speed of Dark* — Elizabeth Moon

-Check out the website at:

<http://mysite.verizon.net/res89guj/>

New Releases  
**August 2009**

Adams, John Joseph, ed. - **By Blood We Live**  
Anderson, Poul - **The Collected Short Works of Poul Anderson,  
Volume 2: The Queen of Air and Darkness**  
Asher, Neal - **Orbus**  
Baxter, Stephen - **Ark**  
Bentley, C. F. - **Enigma**  
Bova, Ben - **Return**  
Briggs, Patricia - **Hunting Ground**  
Chadbourn, Mark - **The Destroyer of Worlds**  
Chadbourn, Mark - **Lord of Silence**  
del Rey, Lester - **War and Space**  
Egan, Greg - **Crystal Nights and Other Stories**  
Elliott, Kate - **Traitors' Gate**  
Erikson, Steven - **Dust of Dreams**  
Kadrey, Richard - **Sandman Slim**  
Kiernan, Caitlín R. - **The Red Tree**  
Lovegrove, James - **The Age of Ra**  
Martin, George R. R., & Gardner Dozois, eds. -  
**Songs of the Dying Earth**  
Pynchon, Thomas - **Inherent Vice**  
Redick, Robert V. S. - **The Rats and the Ruling Sea**  
Resnick, Mike - **Stalking the Dragon**  
Robinson, Kim Stanley - **Galileo's Dream**  
Robson, Justina - **Chasing the Dragon**  
Schroeder, Karl - **Sunless Countries**  
Somers, Jeff - **The Eternal Prison**  
Vance, Jack - **This Is Me, Jack Vance!**  
Warrington, Freda - **Elfland**  
Zivkovic, Zoran - **Escher's Loops**



-So if you've ever looked at Star Wars and said I could be a better Han Solo or Princess Leia for that matter your moment has arrived and I do mean moment or actually a quarter of one. With the Star Wars Uncut project you and your side kicks could lay claim to a 15 second piece of the movie, refilm it and then have it stitched together into a gigantic frankensteinian version of the original. Casey Pugh, the project's inventor has successfully farmed off all of the segments. Now we just have to wait for the gigantic psychedelic result. In further Lucas inspired news Robot Chicken releases its second tribute to *Star Wars* with *Robot Chicken: Star Wars—Episode II* on DVD. Available on July 21st. Also available same day is the DVD for *Coraline* based on Neil Gaiman's book.

-ABC wants you to think— sex in space. Really? Yeah, I mean while there's lots of drama that looks like it ought to unfold in *Defying Gravity* which starts on August 2nd with a two hour premiere and then runs for eleven more episodes, less than artfully hidden in the barrage of images is two folks getting it on. The show is a Canadian transplant purchased by ABC. Eight astronauts and their lives— in space— and zero gravity sex. Probably didn't use much more to sell it.

-When the *Stargate SG-1* was launched based from the movie, the first episode was a two-parter entitled "Children of the Gods". MGM Home Entertainment has recut and remastered the episode with new special effects to release it as "Children of the Gods: The Final Cut".

-ComicCon will be visited by the *Farscape* crew in the form of Ben Browder, Claudia Blackman and Rockne O'Bannon to promote the release of the megaset which includes all four seasons of the show.

-In case you missed it, in the latest comic movie news Ryan Reynolds, who played Deadpool in *Wolverine* will be crossing the line from Marvel to DC to take on the role of the *Green Lantern*. Let's just be thankful that he beat out Justin Timberlake . . . Reynolds was also once tagged for the defunct *Flash* movie put together by David S. Goyer.

-Apparently *New Moon* is the new 500lb. Gorilla. ComicCon did some reshuffling of its schedule to move James Cameron's preview of *Avatar* to a spot on Friday in consideration of last year's massive lines in response to *Twilight*. This will allow for placement of *New Moon* on Thursday morning. The real loser here is Disney, whose plans to unveil *Tron 2* and other 3D material at 11AM maybe be railroaded by fans lining up in advance for the 1:45PM *New Moon*

-Can't wait for this one— steampunk plus classic Wells in animation equals *War of the Worlds: Goliath*. Fourteen years after the invasion, humanity has rebuilt its world incorporating Martian technology convinced that there will be another wave of invasion. This time we've got the giant steam powered tripods, biplanes, triplanes and zeppelins all ready— but the Martians are more advanced than their counterparts and its gonna' take the heroes of the tripod Goliath to take them down.

-NBC's series *Day One* has revealed more of its plot with a new extended trailer that expands on the prior information of post-apocalyptic survivors. It's aliens and they do a fair job of destruction and then create gigantic pillars. But it's the humans or at least they look like humans who intend to lead the rebellion that make this an interesting hook. *Day One* is a 2010 midseason replacement.

-Here's a quick look at where Bear McCreary, the soundtrack artist for *BSG* has also done work : *Eureka*, both seasons, *Terminator: the Sarah Connor Chronicles* and now the new video game Dark Void. Bear was trained by composer Elmer Bernstein and will be playing this summer at the House of Blues in San Diego for ComicCon. Bear will also be scoring the *Caprica* series, whose soundtrack just came out and the 2 disc set for *BSG* season four is due out soon.

-Paramount is the first movie studio to break the billion dollar mark this year with the big hits *Star Trek* and *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*. While all of the big three including Warner Brothers and Fox cleared the billion mark last year, its significant that the Paramount has made this many inroads early on. Also the films which propelled this momentum can easily be followed up by sequels. Warner Brothers is the next one to likely cross the line as *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* releases 7-15-09.

-After *The Half Blood Prince*, the next steps are the final two films, the divided *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. The films are currently in production now and the cast recently took a break after 5 months of work to help promote the current film. Stars talked about the upcoming film describing the first half as an action chase without the typical structure of films set in Hogwarts. The second half was described as operatic with epic battles and a gigantic climax. No clues were given away as to the break point or the handling of the epilogue. The first half of the *Deathly Hallows* will premier November 19th, 2010 with the second half following on July 15th, 2011.

-Syfy is feeling a little jealous, seems Lucas has stolen one of their ideas and it'll probably be more popular. Syfy put out a promotional toaster for *BSG* and offered it up as a prize. Apparently bowing at ComicCon will be the Star Wars toaster, looks sort of familiar... No obvious clues if it makes Vader imprinted toast as shown on its picture...

## THE PRINTED WORLD

-Young adult or teen is a constantly growing section of books and while it seems to be dominated by fantasy and vampires when one looks at the influence of the SF&F genre there are a few stand outs by easily recognizable names. John Scalzi's *Zoe's Tale* looks at the *Old Man's War* universe from the viewpoint of a teenage whose father has promoted a species to sapience which treat her as the heir apparent. Stephen Baxter's *The H-Bomb Girl* pits a teen protagonist against time travelers intent on changing the outcome of the Cuban Missile Crisis to favor them in the future.

-*Spectrum 17*, the yearly collection of the art of the genre is looking for submissions. You've got from now until January 23 of 2010 to come up with the masterpiece. It's also worthwhile to go to the website and look at the promotional poster by Paolo Rivera, which features a game player interface motif with some really twisted potential characters all made of puns about illustration.

-The Human Genre project is looking for your fiction on genes. This project created by Ken MacLeod who is the writer in residence at the Genomics forum. The project an initiative of the ESRC, Economic Social Research Council from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Fiction will be accepted in the form of flash fiction, short stories, reflections and poetry.

-Cory Doctorow's new book *Makers* will be serialized in 81 parts at Tor.com. Doctorow's work was serialized prior at Salon.com several years ago under the title *Themepunks*. The story centers around a group of financiers who deal in small industry and hardware hackers who work to reboot the economy after a collapse. Each portion of the serialization comes with an artwork tile illustration that can be assembled with others to create new images. Also Cory Doctorow's novel *Little Brother* recently received the Prometheus Award from the Libertarian Futurist Society. The hall of fame Prometheus award was given to *Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien.

-The Locus Awards were presented June 27th with Neal Stephenson's *Anathem* receiving the SF award and Ursula K. Leguin's *Lavinia* receiving the Fantasy award. Also recognized were Paul Melko's *Singularity's Ring* for best first novel and *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman for best Young Adult Book.

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# Tillyer's News from the High Frontier

(looking a little down to earth too...)

**-More miles, less money**—is the key phrase for the Volkswagen L1 which will go on sale in Shanghai in 2010 for 4000 yuan or about \$600 US. How many more miles? Well the single-seater with its 1.7 gallon gas tank will take you 404 miles on a full tank. That works out to 258 miles per gallon. The L1's top speed is about 62-74.6 miles per hour. It has a diesel single cylinder engine. It does lack somewhat in road visibility sitting about half the height of a typical vehicle but comes with air conditioning and two rear view screens as there are no side view mirrors. The car has a futuristic gull wing door and tear drop shape. There is a larger two seat version which gets about 230MPG. In this version the passenger sits directly behind the driver, maintaining the cars narrow profile. The body of the car is constructed on a magnesium frame with an unpainted carbon fiber skin and the roof is all glass. The construction of the car is designed specifically to cut down on mass so that its final weight comes in at 290 kilograms—so tie it down in strong winds.

**-So that's not saving enough gas and you don't mind paying more?**- well go ahead order the 300MPG Aptera which is primarily an electric car. For \$500 down gets you a spot on the waiting list and the vehicle will be 26.9K for the full electric and 29.9K for the diesel hybrid. Like the L1, the Aptera is all about losing the excess weight, so much that this vehicle only has three wheels. While this saves mass it also puts the Aptera into the motorcycle class which allows the manufacturers to use different safety tolerances. Where as the Volkswagen is a tear drop bullet, the Aptera looks like it fell out of some cityscape from the next fifty years. Seating for two is side by side and like the L1 there are review screens. The cockpit area is very similar to an airplane with lots of visibility. Similar to the L1, the Aptera has a single cylinder engine, but that is only to recharge the batteries when they get low. The Aptera goes from 0-60 in eleven seconds and has a top speed of 95 MPH. One thing that the Aptera does have that's different is a solar powered air conditioner. Once its set on, it runs cooling the car even when its not in use.

**-Which way did it go?**- NASA has been taking pictures of the Aral sea or rather the lack of the Aral sea. In the 1960's Russia began several diversion projects on rivers that emptied into the sea in order to provide irrigation for crops grown in the watershed. The fourth largest inland sea in the world began to disappear. The satellite photos ranging from 2000 to 2009 show a dramatic picture. The towns that surrounded the sea and depended on the fishing are now deserted their fishing boats on dry land, the sea 1/4 of its former size.



# The Pterosaur Egg

(like the easter eggs on a DVD only slightly more ridiculous)

If there ET's really are listening to our radio waves – what are they tuned into now?

Great graphic by Abtruse Goose

<http://abtrusegoose.com/163>

The Escape Pod live recording of Charles Stross's "Rogue Farm" from Balticon 43. WTS members helped out with the laugh track . . .

<http://escapepod.org/2009/07/11/ep206-rogue-farm/>

Film School Rejects gives us the Top Ten Monsters of All Time List:

<http://www.filmschoolrejects.com/features/the-10-deadliest-movie-monsters-of-all-time.php>

101 Robot T-Shirts for y'all . . .

<http://hideyourarms.com/2009/06/19/list-of-101-robot-t-shirts/>

Kim Stanley Robinson's Favorite Mars Novels

<http://www.spectrum.ieee.org/aerospace/space-flight/my-10-favorite-mars-novels/0>

And just because its way too cool . . .

<http://www.bookofjoe.com/2009/07/steampunk-cheetah.html>