CHRISTMAS TRADING HOURS

Regular trading hours in December except for:

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>7 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Sundays</td>
<td>10.00 - 6.00</td>
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<td>18 &amp; 19</td>
<td>Thu &amp; Fri</td>
<td>8.00 - 9.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>8.30 - 8.00</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>9.00 - 6.00</td>
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<td>22 &amp; 23</td>
<td>Mon &amp; Tue</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>Christmas Eve</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>Boxing Day</td>
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<td>Then regular hours except for:</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>New Years Eve</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>New Years Day</td>
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To order online from our Christmas catalogue, go to www.abbeyss.com.au/direct, then enter a catalogue page number for a list of the books from that page. Simply click any title to order.

A GAME OF THRONES BOARDGAME

King Robert Baratheon is dead and the seven kingdoms brace for war. House Lannister, whose daughter Cersei was Robert’s queen, claims the throne for her young son Joffrey. From the Dragonstone Isle, Stannis Baratheon knows that Robert was not the true father of Joffrey and rightfully demands the throne for himself. On the Iron Isles, House Greyjoy is about to embark on a second rebellion, but this time with a much grander goal. In the north, House Stark gathers its strength to defend what is right, and in the south the wealthy House Tyrell harbors an old ambition to sit on the Iron Throne. As armies gather and ravens fly, a clash of kings is inevitable.

Based on the bestselling novel series A Song of Ice and Fire by George R R Martin, this boardgame ($94.95) lets players take control of one of the great Houses of Westeros and embark on an epic struggle to claim the Iron Throne. The artwork on the board is stunning and the game pieces are wooden. The counters and cards complement the game nicely. Immerse yourself in a game of clever planning, careful allocation of power, diplomacy and the exciting flavour of A Song of Ice and Fire. - Adam

HOW DO DINOSAURS SAY GOOD NIGHT?

Jane Yolen & Mark Teague

In a few simple lines of verse on each spread, fathers and mothers are ready to put their youngsters to bed. But in this book, the youngsters are a wide variety of dinosaurs. And how do dinosaurs say good night? In the end, young dinosaurs behave a lot like people do: They give a big kiss, turn out the light, tuck in their tails, and whisper “good night.” Here is a new staple for bedtime reading, a book children will ask for again and again. Hb $32.00 (includes 8” plush dinosaur toy).

My son (3) has to have this read to him every night and it has become one of my favourite bed-time stories ever, beginning with growls, tail-lashings and teddy-bear throwing, but nicely calms down to hugs and kisses goodnight. And the gorgeous dinosaur illustrations (correctly labelled, of course) are an added bonus for the dinosaur obsessed. Even my ‘grown-up’ 7-year-old loves this! - Jo

THE ARTH OF FAERIE

David Riche & Brian Froud

This title features the creations of some of the best artists working in the US, Europe and Japan. There are a huge variety of styles to appeal to a wide range of tastes, from the gothic fantasies of Amy Brown to Myrea Pettit's gentle, playful creatures. Some of the newer artists have rebelled against the old traditions or turned them on their heads. Others celebrate the inheritance left them by masters of the craft, such as Arthur Rackham and Cicely Mary Barker. All media are represented: watercolour, pen and ink, oil, pastel. Each artist presents his or her favourite pieces, showing what best represents their work, revealing their inspirations and techniques, their working methods and what drives them to create. Hb $65.00 112pp

DR WHO

THE THREE DOCTORS

Starring William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton & Jon Pertwee.

DVD Gift Box. $49.95 This gift pack includes the DVD in an anniversary slipcase and a collectable Corgi Dr Who Bessie car. Standard edition. DVD $34.95

THE MAPS OF TOLKIEN’S MIDDLE-EARTH

Brian Sibley & John Howe

Written by writer and broadcaster Brian Sibley, this slipcase features Tolkien’s maps of The Hobbit, Beleriand and Middle-earth. Each map is presented in a box-set illustrated by Tolkien artist John Howe, the conceptual artist employed by Peter Jackson to work on his film trilogy. The maps, presented with individual books and wallets, show Tolkien’s mythical lands in detail - they are also suitable for portfolios or framing. Hb $49.95
In the summer of 1863, Gob and Tomo Woodhull, 11-year-old twin sons of Victoria Woodhull, agree to together forsake their home and family in Licking County, Ohio, for the glories of the Union Army. But when Gob suffers a change of heart, Tomo is forced to leave his brother behind. Then when Tomo is shot clean through the eye in his very first battle, Gob is left to endure the guilt and grief that will later come to fuel his obsession with building a vast machine that will bring Tomo – indeed, all the Civil War dead – back to life. Tp $34.00 387pp

Stephen Baxter
COALESCENT
Destiny’s Children #1. With this new trilogy the author tells the story of mankind’s role in the Universe from the perspective of our impossibly distant descendents - a race who have established a utopia at the end of time and the universe, but who must now try and tackle the shadow that the suffering of the past throws over their perfection. Hb $55.00 473pp

Evolution
From their beginnings foraging at the feet of the dinosaurs, through the apocalyptic effects of an asteroid strike, through countless years of the day-to-day life and death dramas of survival of the fittest, to the rise and fall of mankind and the final destruction of earth by the expanding sun, the primates have survived. This is their story. Pb $19.95 762pp

David Brin (Scott Hampton, Illus)
LIfe Eaters
Adolf Hitler devises an unholy plot that pits the ancient Norse gods against the Allied forces. Hb $65.00 131pp

Kristen Britain
First Rider’s Call
Green Rider #2. With evil forces at large in the kingdom and the messenger service depleted and weakened, can Karigan reach through the veils of time to get help from the First Rider, a woman who has been dead for 1,000 years? Tp $29.95 639pp

Robert Asprin & Linda Evans
For King and Country
Time Scout Universe. SAS Captain Trevor Stirling thinks his mission is simple: follow a terrorist into the year AD 500 to stop a Northern Irish fanatic bent on murder. If the terrorist succeeds in killing Artorius, the Briton Lord of Battle and the most revered icon of British history, the time-space continuum will fracture, destroying the British nation - and the rest of the world. He must choose between duty to his mission and the growing conviction that he should forsake everything he holds dear to follow a higher duty. Pb $19.95 333pp

E D Baker
The Frog Princess
Princess Esmeralda isn’t exactly an ideal princess. Her laugh sounds like a donkey’s bray rather than tinkling bells, she trips over her own feet more often than she gracefully curtsies and she hates the young Prince Jorge whom her mother hopes she will marry. But if Esmeralda ever thought to escape from her frustrating life, she never expected it to happen by turning into a frog! Pb $14.95 214pp

Orson Scott Card
The Crystal City
Alvin Maker #6. Alvin has been trying to avert the terrible war that his wife Peggy, a torch of extraordinary power, has seen down the life-lines of every American. Now she has sent him down the Mizzippy to the city of New Orleans or Nueva Barcelona as they call it under Spanish occupation. Nueva Barcelona is about to experience a plague and Alvin’s efforts to protect his friends by keeping them healthy will create more danger than he could ever have suspected and he will be put to the greatest test of his life - a test that will draw on all his power. Alvin must take the first steps on the road to the Crystal City that was shown to him in a vision so long ago. Hb $62.00 384pp

Jay Caselberg
Wyrmhole
Jack Stein lives and works in the crowded, semi-organic city known as the Locality. He’s hired by the Outreach Mining Company to investigate the mysterious disappearance of one of its mining crews on an uncolonised planet. But his psychic dreams are full of strange mystical symbols and red hERRings, making Jack wonder if Outreach truly wants the miners found. And the deeper he digs, the more people want to see him dead... Pb $15.95 309pp
Nicholas, Nicola and Shadrach live in a vast city on a far future Earth, where most of the planet is an apocalyptic landscape, peopled by mutants. Behind the mile-deep city walls, decadence and art are the norm. Living Artists create bioengineered monstrosities from legend and their warped imaginations. Nicholas is such an artist, and one day goes to visit the mysterious cyborg Quin to purchase a meerkat, which are genetically altered creatures that function as servants. He never comes back.

Nicola is Nicholas’ sister, and has been searching the city for him. One night, a meerkat comes to her apartment, a gift from Quin to serve her. As she continues her search for her brother, the meerkat’s behaviour arouses her suspicions, and she eventually follows it into the depths of the city.

Shadrach has been Nicola’s lover, a mixed up man who must embark on a quest into the bowels of the earth to save himself and another.

This is a wonderful novel, a tale of the city that is visually rich in the same vein as China Mieville and M John Harrison’s Viriconium sequence. Think of taking Hieronymus Bosch, Blade Runner, Judge Dredd and stirring them up into a swirling phantasmagoria of surrealism and violence. A mystery and a romance; wild scenes below ground akin to Dante’s circles of Hell. It’s all here but it doesn’t get tangled up in itself.

Like Mieville or Mervyn Peake, the metropolis assumes its own vein, in feel, but with far future Earth, where most of the planet is an apocalyptic landscape, peopled by mutants. Behind the mile-deep city walls, decadence and art are the norm. Living Artists create bioengineered monstrosities from legend and their warped imaginations. Nicholas is such an artist, and one day goes to visit the mysterious cyborg Quin to purchase a meerkat, which are genetically altered creatures that function as servants. He never comes back.

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Like Mieville or Mervyn Peake, the metropolis assumes its own

The story is told in first, second and third person, one for each of the three main characters and this works to the book’s advantage.

Nicola’s (second person) isolation and loss is portrayed very well. You experience her actions and inner feelings firsthand, whilst Shadrach’s (third person) story is more the typical quest, but he will suffer the events that unfold with more clarity.

This comes highly recommended for lovers of weird fiction. Also worth checking out is another of the author’s works, City of Saints and Madmen (Tp $55.00 or complete edition Hb $125.00). This book collects all of Vandermeers work revolving around the ancient city of Ambergis and its bizarre history. Quite similar to Veniss Underground in feel, but with Michael Moorcock and H P Lovecraft thrown into an already overpowering mix. - David
THE SECRET COUNTRY
The Secret Country #1. For the past nine years, cousins Patrick, Ruth, Ellen, Ted and Laura have played at ‘The Secret’ - a game full of witches, unicorns, a magic ring and court intrigue, in which they can imagine anything into reality, and shape destiny. Then the unbelievable happens - they find themselves in the Secret Country, their made-up identities now real. Pb $17.95 371pp

THE HIDDEN LAND
The Secret Country #2. The five cousins are still trapped in the Secret Country and must play their parts. When the King is poisoned, Ted (Prince Edward) must take the throne, even though he has no idea how to rule a country, battle magic or inspire followers. Pb $17.95 277pp

WEATHERMONGER
Changes #1. When 16-year-old Geoffrey, a “weathermonger” starts to repair his uncle’s motorboat, he and his sister Sally are condemned as witches. Fleeing for their lives, they travel to France, where they discover that everything is normal. Returning to England, they set out to discover why the country is under this mysterious spell. Pb $15.95 237pp

FOREVER AND ALWAYS
Darci’s psychic abilities have always guided her through hardship… and into a once-in-a-lifetime love with her rich, powerful husband, Adam Montgomery. When Adam vanishes in a mysterious accident, a grief-stricken Darci is left alone to raise their young sister Sally are condemned as witches. Returning to England, they set out to discover why the country is under this mysterious spell. Pb $15.95 237pp

FOR MORE THAN GLORY
Legion of the Damned. In the wake of a great universal war, General Bill Booly has been cut down where he stands: every last man, woman and child. He is a hero, fighting for his nation. But on the battlefront, Booly finds himself struggling to balance his military, political and humane obligations. But neither Booly nor his men realise that on the remote world of LanNor, another revolution is brewing. There, a career Legionnaire with a reputation for bucking authority, and an inexperienced, overly-ambitious diplomat will become key to defending the deadly LanNorian web of terrorism that threatens not only the Legionnaires, but the entire Confederacy. Hb $59.95 487pp

ASSAULT ON ATLANTIS
The Shadows, humanity’s most ancient enemy, have returned. Ten centuries ago, they destroyed Atlantis and now they want the rest of the Earth to follow. Only ex-Green Beret Eric Dane holds the key to ending this dire threat. Pb $17.95 296pp

IMPOSSIBLE ODDS
A novel of the King’s Blades. Deposed by a foul usurper, the Grand Duke Rubin is on the run and in desperate need of protection. While the King has decreed that new Blades will be magically bound to the guard, not one of the rough youths at Ironhall is ready for such an assignment. Left with no choice, the Grand Master approaches three with an offer of early bonding and probable death. Joining a True, a White Sister, the trio of would-be champions begins an astonishing journey filled with trials and horrors, leading to a restoration of a rightful ruler to the throne or die in the process. Hb $59.95 365pp

LAIR OF BONES
Runelords #4. Prince Gaborn, the Earth King, has defeated the forces arrayed against him before. Now there must be final confrontations, both on the field of battle, with the supernatural creature that Raj Ahten has become, and underground, in the cavernous homeland of the Reavers, where the sorcerous One True Master who rules them all lies in wait - in the Lair of Bones. The survival of the human race on Earth is at stake. Hb $65.00 429pp

TALON OF THE SILVER HAWK
Conclave of Shadows #1. Returning from his manhood ritual on a remote mountain peak, he stumbles upon devastation. His village is being burned, his people slaughtered. Although it means certain death, Kieli throws himself into the battle… Against all the odds, he survives, alone of all the Orosini, who mean to kill him. To add insult to all that injury, people determined to arrest, examine or hang the trio of would-be champions begins an astonishing journey filled with trials and horrors, leading to a restoration of a rightful ruler to the throne or die in the process. Hb $59.95 365pp

FLINX’S FOLLY
It’s a good thing Flinx is no stranger to trouble, because he’s swimming in it. Even before the latest murderous attack by a new gang of assailants, there seems no end to people determined to arrest, examine or kill him. To add insult to all that injury, Flinx has been spirited away and enlisted in a battle against a monstrous extra-galactic threat. Hidden behind the Great Emptiness, in a place where it seems matter and energy have never been, there is only evil. Pure evil that is approaching him, accelerating. Against such a quintessence of colossal evil what can one puny human and a formidable mini-drug protector do? Hb $99.95 268pp

PATH OF FATE
In the land of Kodu Riik, it is an honour to be selected by the Lady to become an ahalad-kaaslane - to have your soul bonded with one of Her blessed animals, and roam the land serving Her will. But Riesi refuses to bow to fate - a decision that may have repercussions across the realm… Pb $17.95 369pp

ALMOST AN ANGEL
Carolly Hanson is training to be an angel, or so she believes. It is the only explanation for why she keeps dying and reappearing in different places and times. Clearly she is intended to help people and clearly, the best way to help people is to find them true love. This time she awakes in the arms of James Oscar Henry Northam, Earl of Traynern. The handsome noble is charmed by her odd sense of humour, strange forthright manner and complete lack of interest in trapping him in marriage. But he also thinks her a Bedlamite and isn’t the least bit cooperative with the women she pushes in his direction. Pb $15.95 309pp

THE LIGHT OF EIDON
Legends of the Guardian King #1. Abramm has dedicated the last eight years of his life to becoming worthy to touch and tend the Sacred Flames of Eidon, and he expects to be blessed for his devotion and sacrifice. But on the eve of taking the vows that will irrevocably separate him from the life he was born to - as Abramm Kalladorne, 5th son of the king of Kiriath - he is betrayed by his ancient enemy, have returned. Ten gang of assailants, there seems no end to people determined to arrest, examine or hang him. To add insult to all that injury, Flinx has been spirited away and enlisted in a battle against a monstrous extra-galactic threat. Hidden behind the Great Emptiness, in a place where it seems matter and energy have never been, there is only evil. Pure evil that is approaching him, accelerating. Against such a quintessence of colossal evil what can one puny human and a formidable mini-drug protector do? Tp $27.95 432pp
STEVEN HARPER TRICKSTER
Silent Empire #3. The telepathic communications net, known as 'The Dream,' has been shattered and the majority of the Silent who used it, are unable to re-enter. But Kendi Weaver has more pressing concerns - finding the family that slavers tore from him more than a decade before... Pb $17.95 355pp

DAVID HARTWELL & KATHRYN Cramer (eds)
THE HARD SF RENAISSANCE
These award-winning editors present an anthology that maps the development and modern-day resurgence of hard SF, argues for its special virtues and presents pre-eminence, and entertains us with some storytelling along the way. Included are stories by Poul Anderson, Stephen Baxter, Gregory Benford, Ben Bova, David Brin, Arthur C. Clarke, Greg Egan, Joe Haldeman, Nancy Kress, Paul McAuley, Frederik Pohl, Alastair Reynolds, Kim Stanley Robinson, Robert J. Sawyer, Karl Schroeder, Charles Sheffield, Brian Stableford, Allen Steele, Bruce Sterling, Michael Swanwick and Vernor Vinge. Tp $52.00 960pp

MARY HOFFMAN CITY OF STARS
Stravaganza #2. Georgia loves horses and hates her step-brother Russell. So when Georgia saves up enough money to buy a little winged horse, she knows she has to keep it out of his way. But what Georgia doesn't know is that the horse offers her escape to another world and another time. Pb $15.95 459pp

EMMA HOLLY HUNTING MIDNIGHT
After he's betrayed by his long-time lover, Ulric, the leader of a pack of shape-shifting immortals, takes to the streets of Bridesmere. It is there that he introduces an innocent young maiden to the sensuous delights of searing passion. But will he grant her immortality, or will the sensuous delights of searing passion make her hide her gifts, but the modern world's seedy underbelly doesn't simply go away. And when that darkness comes to call, Cyra seeks sanctuary in the Nevada desert, where she finds Thomas Marrowbone. Beneath his tormented shell lurks something powerful and inhuman, but also something primal and erotic. Cyra recognises it; and she follows the enigmatic linter into the depths of Hell. Success promises salvation and a happiness Cyra has never known. Pb $15.95 342pp

DIANA WYNNE JONES THE DARK LORD OF DERKHOLM
Derkholm #1. Everyone is fed up with Mr Chesney's Pilgrim Parties - groups of tourists from the next door world who descend en-masse annually to take the Grand Tour. What they expect are all the trappings of a grand fantasy adventure, including the Evil Enchantress, Wizard Guides, the Dark Lord etc. Every year different people play these parts, but now they've had enough. And it's up to the Wizard Derk, his son Blade, and Blade's Griffin brothers and sisters, to save the world from Mr Chesney. Pb $17.95 328pp

ROBERT JORDAN CROSSROADS OF TWILIGHT
Wheel of Time #10. Rand al'Thor, the Dragon Reborn, must fight on against the Dark One in a struggle that has drawn an entire world into its vortex, claiming the souls of friends and enemies alike. He has cleansed the taint of madness from the male half of the True Source and may now draw on its power as a weapon of awesome potential. Pb $21.95 817pp

ROBERT KING LE Morte D'AVALON
Part female Hamlet, part mystical Arc for all women, when her position in society and royal lineage place her in direct opposition to all that Arthur must accomplish... Hb $55.00 463pp

KATHERINE KURTZ IN THE KING'S SERVICE
A Deryni novel. In this new trilogy, the author takes readers back in time, before King Kelson's bride, before King Kelson's birth, when the magical Deryni blood was sought by the most powerful men and women in the kingdom of Gwynedd. Back when a man named Donal ruled over all. Hb $55.00 359pp

MERCEDES LACKEY EXILE'S VALOR
A Valdemar novel. Once a Captain in the army of Karse, a kingdom at war with Valdemar, Alberich becomes one of Valdemar's Heralds. Despite prejudice against him, he becomes the personal protector of young Queen Selenay, but can he protect her from the dangers of her own heart? Hb $59.95 402pp

MERCEDES LACKEY & JAMES MALLORY THE OUTSTRETCHED SHADOW
The Obsidian trilogy #1. When Kellen Tavason, son of the Arch-Mage Lycaedon, finds the forbidden Books of Wild Magic, he comes to question everything he has known. Discovering too many of the City's dark secrets, he is banished, with the Outlaw Hunt on his heels. He invokes Wild Magic and finds himself running for his life with a unicorn at his side. Hb $65.00 605pp

RHIANNON LASSITER WAKING DREAM
On a table lie three books, each with a name on the front - Bethany, Poppy and Rivalaun. Bethany's father has just died and she feels abandoned by her mother, who has sent her to spend the summer with her spoiled cousin Poppy, who thinks she's a witch. Rivalaun says he has traveled from another world to be there and that only he knows what the three books mean. The three have little in common... until they sleep when, in their dreams, they suddenly seem connected. But their dreams tell them something else as well - that everything they have known about themselves is a lie. Which should they believe - their lives or their waking dreams?... Pb $12.95 312pp

TANITH LEE MORTAL SUNS
Horrible screams pierce the night air as the Daystar, Queen Hesta of Akhemony, wrestles with the delivery of the King's child, beautifully formed except for one heartbreaking deformity - she is born without feet. Consigned immediately to the world of death, the lame infant is dispatched to Thon, the underworld temple, and baptised Cemira, snake, the name she will bear throughout a lifetime of darkness. It is only at the behest of Urdombri, the Sun Consort, that the child is restored to her rightful place as heir to the throne of Oceaxis. Hb $64.00 335pp

URSULA K. LE GUIN TALES FROM EARTHESEA
Five tales of Earthsea set both before and after the time of the original novels, as well as an essay on its people, languages, history and magic. Pb $19.95 280pp

JOHN MARSDEN WHILE I LIVE
"Tomorrow universe. The town of Wirrawee is emerging from war, slowly. School's back in, Juicy's is open for coffee, farmers are bidding at the cattle sales. Ellie Linton at last gets what she fought for, to be back on the farm with her parents. But it's not the same. A new nation is on the other side of a new border. Suddenly the war is about to explode into Ellie's life again. Hb $29.95 300pp

ANNE McCAFFREY & ELIZABETH ANN SCARBOROUGH ACORNA'S REBELS
Acorna #6. Acorna's people, the Linyaari, have started to reclaim their home world from the ravages of the brutal alien Khleevi. But the expedition has unleashed a larger mystery about the origins of the Linyaari people - one that has led Aari, Acorna's lifemate, into a dangerous journey through time and space. Pb $19.95 381pp

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JUDI McCOY

HEAVEN SENT
A widowed cop, Nathan Baxter has his hands full raising his five-year-old daughter and keeping his meddling mother from constantly searching for the next Mrs Nathan Baxter. If there's anything he doesn't need, it's opening himself and his daughter up to heartbreak again. But Phoebe’s new kindergarten teacher seems to have other ideas, asking the child all sorts of questions. Nathan intends to set things straight, but meeting with the attractive, free-spirited Miss Starr leaves him anything but settled.

$17.95 319pp

DOUGLAS NILES & MICHAEL DOBSON

FOX AT THE FRONT
Fox #2. July 20, 1944. A group of disillusioned officers of Hitler's high command plant a bomb that successfully kills the Führer. For a moment, there is an opportunity for surrender, peace and survival for all of Germany, but Himmler has other plans... An armistice is signed with Stalin's Soviet Union. New battle lines result in a very different Battle of the Bulge, where the legendary Desert Fox, Erwin Rommel, meets Blood 'n' Guts George Patton. These two masters of modern cavalry tactics must join forces and push to the East, where the hungry bear of Stalin's army is readying a land grab of all of Eastern Europe, claiming war spoils they ill deserve. Hb $65.00 558pp

Pb $15.95 350pp

CHRIS MORIARTY

RIVAL
Meg is the most popular girl in school. She's unaware that her real father was a powerful voodoo priest, and that she, too, has a 'power'. Unpopular Candra would do anything to be Meg and when she meets Shea, Meg's sexy boyfriend, all the pieces fall into place. Now, her most thrilling fantasies are about to come true, because Candra also possesses a very special gift and she's about to unleash it on an unsuspecting rival.

Pb $15.95 350pp

E C MODESITT, Jnr

THE ETHOS EFFECT
Commander Van C Albert of the Republic Space Force of Taran, is a brave and resourceful officer indirectly responsible for the loss of a civilian liner. Wounded foiling an assassination, he is decorated, promoted and summarily retired while still in a coma. Then the Integrated Information Systems foundation of the Eco-Tech Coalition recruits him to fly a starship, and Van finds he has a powerful new vantage point not just for observation, but for action. Hb $65.00 509pp

Pb $21.95 258pp

JACK MCDENVITT

CHINDI!
Hutch #3. The universe has been explored and humanity has all but given up on finding other intelligent life. Then an alien satellite orbiting a distant star sends out an unreadable signal. Is it the final programmed gasp of an ancient, long-dead race? Or the first greeting of an alien satellite orbiting a distant star system Accord wants to sign a simple trade treaty with the Empire, but if the townspersons are gripped by a plague of madness and the entire town is visited by a pestilence of rats. Only Salz remains unaffected. Is that because he is innocent, or is he the devil himself? Hb $39.95 260pp

Pb $17.95 319pp

LE MODESITT, Jnr

THE SADDLEBAG
Six children are drawn to Coldharbour - an eerie wasteland, rats, seagulls and rubbish tips. Emily and Freda, the twins, scuttle in search of the others. They find Thomas on a food tip. Freda, the twins, scuttle in search of the others. They find Thomas on a food tip.

Hb $24.95 167pp

GALAXY BOOKSHOP 6 www.galaxybooks.com.au

ELIZABETH MOON

DEED OF PAKSENARRION
Paksenarrion, a simple sheep farmer’s daughter, yearns for a life of adventure and glory, such as was known to heroes in songs and story. At age 17, she runs away from home to join a mercenary company and begins her epic life. Trained as a mercenary she distinguishes herself, but leaves the Duke's service to follow the path of Gird, the soldier’s god. That path leads her on a holy quest for a lost elven prince that brings the gods’ wrath down on her and tests her very limits. Hb $82.00 1123pp

WENDY MORGAN

OBSESSION
Meg is the most popular girl in school. She's unaware that her real father was a powerful voodoo priest, and that she, too, has a 'power'. Unpopular Candra would do anything to be Meg and when she meets Shea, Meg's sexy boyfriend, all the pieces fall into place. Now, her most thrilling fantasies are about to come true, because Candra also possesses a very special gift and she's about to unleash it on an unsuspecting rival.

Pb $15.95 350pp

CHRIS MORTARITY

SPIN STATE
UN Peacekeeper Major Catherine Li has made 37 faster-than-light jumps in her lifetime and has probably forgotten more than most people remember. But nothing prepare Li for what she finds on Compson's World, a mining colony she once called home, and where she is sent after a botched raid puts her on the bad side of the powers-that-be. A dead physicist who just happens to be her cloned twin, a missing dataset that could change the interstellar balance of power and a mining accident that is starting to look more and more like murder. Suddenly Li is chasing a killer in an alien world miles underground where everyone has a secret. Tp $29.95 477pp

BANIYIIN NAKHJAVANI

THE SADDLEBAG
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Musician Megan O'Casey has returned to the home of her ancestors to perform, with her husband Finn, in a weeklong series of concerts, culminating on All Hallow's Eve... and to renew her connection with the past. But from the moment they arrive in Salem, Finn seems different - sensual beyond belief one moment; cold and ruthless the next. The locals regard him with a distrust bordering on hatred. Megan must soon face the fact that something powerful is rising, a malevolence that may have already claimed Finn for its own and that she, too, is in great danger. Pb $17.95 495pp

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Eden Waring is a talented young psychic with the ability to produce at will her doppelganger - her mirror image, who calls herself Gwen and possesses remarkable powers beyond even Eden's gifts. As gifted as Eden and Gwen are, there is a stronger entity that stalks them, coveting Gwen's unique talents. He is known as Mordant, the Dark Side of God, a being both ageless and deadly. In order to regain his full potential for destruction and reach his goal of world domination, he must seduce Eden through any means necessary and take away her control of Gwen. Pb $17.95 375pp

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Kate Drake is one of seven sisters gifted with amazing powers of witchcraft. Returning home in time for her hometown's annual Christmas pageant, Kate decides to open a bookstore in a charming but run-down historic mill. When an earthquake cracks the mill's foundation and reveals a burial crypt, Kate senses that a centuries-old evil has been unleashed, that it's coming after her and that she will have to summon all of her and her sisters' powers to battle the darkness threatening to destroy both Christmas and the gift of soul-searing passion her hometown hero wants her to keep forever... Pb $17.95 293pp

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Matt Stone doesn't believe in ghosts. But pressured to get to the truth about some strange happenings at his home, Melody House, he agrees to let Harrison Investigations explore the house. As a paranormal investigator, Darcy Tremayne has learned to believe in the unbelievable. And she's given Matt fair warning - sometimes people don't like the skeletons she finds and she's about to discover that the house holds much more than a mystery from the past. It holds a lethal danger, that will cast her into a struggle against the worlds of both the living and the dead. Pb $17.95 379pp
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JAMES HERBERT

A boy's body is discovered on the shores of Kingsfield reservoir and Det. Insp. Alan Fielding is frantic to find the killer before another child is taken... In a run

Alan Fielding is frantic to find the killer and discover why and how he has managed to survive. As he closes in on his murderer, True discovers that even the very people he loved and trusted have betrayed him and he meets his killer - a man now intent on loved and trusted have betrayed him and discovers that even the very people he knows he still exists. True embarks on a can hear him, no one, except his killer, mutilated. No one can see him, no one

STEPHEN JONES (ED)

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_consumes the town's residents and Jake  
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chamber that's been covered up for  
its depths. There, he finds a stone  
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When Jake Caruso and his construction  
RIVERWATCH  
JOSEPH NASSISE  
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team find a hidden tunnel in the cellar of  
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Ian Brodie
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Revised edition. This edition has additional location information, new interviews with key cast and crew, including an exclusive interview with Peter Jackson and a new foreword by Viggo Mortenson. The author has added new photographs and additional movie images from the third movie, along with the touring information, GPS references and local directions, which helped make the first edition such a success. Pb $22.95 128pp
What We’ve Been Reading...

Sunshine by Robin McKinley (Hb $55.00) is set in a future Earth where the Voodoo Wars have destroyed most populated areas, and according to rumour, have left vampires in control of a significant amount of the world’s wealth and technology. Sunshine is a baker who leads a quite, uncomplicated life until one night she is caught by a gang of vampires and chained to a wall to be the entrée for Con, a shackled vampire. They escape and the story that follows, of a young woman coming into her powers and the conflict caused by her siding (and empathising) with the enemy for a higher purpose, is not your usual fare. Not McKinley’s usual type of story, but when she decides to branch out, she does it well. Wonderful. - Steph

The Tomb by F Paul Wilson (Pb $19.95) follows a relatively simple plot. Murders and the defilement of a temple in a mid-19th century India by British soldiers unleashes a curse which is to follow the descendants of the leader of the attack. Coupled with that curse is an entourage of creatures of unimaginable horror that have once again risen to right past wrongs. Enter Repairman Jack, a man who ‘fixes’ situations for those whom he loves. Highly original and inventive, this well-written book introduces Repairman Jack, who now has a number of books based around him. - Nik

The second book in the Stravaganza series, City of Stars by Mary Hoffman (Pb $15.95), has been released this month and I got my hands on a copy as soon as I could. In the first book, City of Masks (Pb $15.95), we learn about Talia, a country in a parallel universe equivalent to 16th century Italy, and the Stravaganti, people who are able to travel between Talia and our world.

Georgia O’Grady is 15, living in modern day London and hates her stepbrother Russell. One night, after she has bought a model of a flying horse, she awakens to find herself in a stable. Georgia learns she is in the city of Remora in Talia, that she is a Stravagante and luckily, she has arrived in the stable of a fellow Stravagante. Soon she is swept up in the intrigue and politics of the city and her new friends. Georgia is warned of the dangerous and power-hungry di Chimici family, who already own most of Talia and want the secrets of the Stravaganti, but she befriends Gaetano and Falco, sons of Duke Niccolo, head of the di Chimici family. Falco was injured in a horse-riding accident at a young age and can only walk with the aid of sticks. When he begs her to use her powers as a Stravagante to make him whole, Georgia is torn between helping her new friend and endangering the lives of the Stravaganti.

This series is aimed at young adults and I found it a little too simple at times, but overall it is a very interesting series. Talia is amazingly brought to life and the characters are complex and three dimensional. - 8/10. Sian

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To win a photo of the Troika (Andrew, Warren & Jonathan) from Buffy Season 6, signed by Tom Lenk (Andrew) & Danny Strong (Jonathan), name the character who shot Buffy... Send in your answer along with your name and address. Competition closes 23 December 2003. Entry open to Galaxy Cardholders only.
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