

Title of Magazine: Clarkesworld Magazine Issue #97

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Editor: Sean Wallace

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Web Address: <http://clarkesworldmagazine.com/>

What they publish: Sci-fi, fantasy (1,000 to 8,000 words), nonfiction (up to 2,500 words)

Submission Guidelines: Submit using online submission manager. If published, magazine claims first world electronic rights, first print rights, and non-exclusive anthology rights.

Description of Publication: Monthly magazine publishing interviews, articles, and fiction, available in E-book, audio, and print. Contributors are typically well-established writers with credits ranging from a couple short stories to a dozen award-winning novels.

Prose Per Issue / Amount of Published Annually: About eleven stories per issue (33% fiction, 33% nonfiction, 33% podcasts), about 130 stories per year.

Prose Reviews:

*Falling Star* by Brendan Dubois is a plainspoken realistic story told in a domestic setting. Rick Monroe, an ex-astronaut, has returned as an old man to the town he grew up in, which has regressed into an 1800s Puritan Connecticut community as the result of humanity's technological empire crumbling. Rick bonds with a little boy named Tom and tells him about the way things used to be. Rick is then cast out of the town on accusations of knowing about computers and having an ancient *Playboy* magazine in his possession.

For anyone going into this story expecting it to be sci-fi (which it is), the initial reaction is probably surprise. In the opening scene, Rick is sitting on a bench waiting for his groceries to show up. They eventually show up carried by a man with a horse and buggy. The mystery of the story then becomes *why* is a futuristic world like this? One of the things the story does best is build that suspense, giving the reader backstory in little pieces while also developing the world of the story and the characters within it. We connect with Rick most strongly because he is from our time and he represents all that remains of humanity's dreams and potential.

*Five Stages of Grief After the Alien Invasion* by Caroline M. Yoachim is a plainspoken realistic story told in a domestic setting. It follows five interrelated stories of humans who are grieving their loved ones killed in an alien invasion—in searching for a new home, the aliens accidentally killed off all of the young and elderly. Humans and aliens eventually come to terms with their grief and accept that they have to move forward in their new world.

The characters in this story feel as real as any breathing person walking around in the world today. Although set in a version of earth that is not our current reality, the emotional reaction to tragedy is something that readers can easily relate to. The alien invasion itself is a random event that feels, while reading, as though it could happen at any given moment to any range of people, as all real tragedy is. The ability to connect with the characters enables us to connect with the world. The shorter pieces combined to make a whole story show how all-encompassing this grief is and how much of the world as we know it has been affected, which adds to the realistic feel in the sense almost of a news broadcast.