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# The Bottle Imp

**Issue 8, November 2010**  
**New Publications**  
**Fiction & Poetry**

## **The Restoration Game**

**by Ken MacLeod**

**Hamish Hamilton, 2010**

There is no such place as Krassnia. Lucy Stone should know—she was born there. In that tiny, troubled region of the former Soviet Union, revolution is brewing. Its organisers need a safe place to meet, and where better than the virtual spaces of an online game? Lucy, who works for a start-up games company in Edinburgh, has a project that almost seems made for the job: a game inspired by *The Krassniad*, an epic folk tale concocted by Lucy's mother Amanda, who studied there in the 1980s. Lucy knows Amanda is a spook. She knows her great-grandmother Eugenie also visited the country in the '30s, and met the man who originally collected Krassnian folklore, and who perished in Stalin's terror. As Lucy digs up details about her birthplace to slot into the game, she finds the open secrets of her family's past, the darker secrets of Krassnia's past—and hints about the crucial role she is destined to play in *The Restoration Game* ...

## **Da Happie Laand**

**by Robert Alan Jamieson**

**Luath Press, 2010**

An experimental novel on a grand scale, beautifully carried through. A Perth minister takes in a traumatised stranger who calls himself the son and heir to being lost. When the stranger disappears, the events leading up to and following on from this are revealed. Shifting perspectives from a contemporary mystery to a history of Shetland and emigration, it extends the idea of Scottish empire and diaspora imaginatively, while addressing notions of being and belonging in 21st century Scotland.

## **Surface Detail**

**by Iain Banks**

**Orbit, 2010**

It begins in the realm of the Real, where matter still matters. It begins with a murder. And it will not end until the Culture has gone to war with death itself. Lededje Y'breq is one of the Intagliated, her marked body bearing witness to a family shame, her life belonging to a man whose lust for power is without limit. Prepared to risk everything for her freedom, her release, when it comes, is at a price, and to put things right she will need the help of the Culture. Benevolent, enlightened and almost infinitely resourceful though it may be, the Culture can only do so much for any individual. With the assistance of one of its most powerful - and arguably deranged - warships, Lededje finds herself heading into a combat zone not even sure which side the Culture is really on. A war - brutal, far-reaching - is already raging within the digital realms that store the souls of the dead, and it's about to erupt into reality. It started in the realm of the Real and that is where it will end. It will touch countless lives and affect entire civilizations, but at the centre of it all is a young woman whose need for revenge masks another motive altogether.

## **Saturn's Children**

**by Charles Stross**

**Orbit, 2008**

Freya Nakamachi-47 has some major existential issues. She's the perfect concubine, designed to please her human masters—hard-wired to become aroused at the sight mere of a human male. There's just one problem: she came off the production line a year after the human species went extinct. Whatever else she may be, Freya Nakamachi-47 is gloriously obsolete. But the rigid social hierarchy that has risen in the 200 years since the last human died, places beings such as Freya very near the bottom. So when she has a run-in on Venus with a murderous aristocrat, she needs passage off-world in a hurry—and can't be too fussy about how she pays her way. If Venus was a frying pan, Mercury is the fire—and soon she's going to be running for her life. Because the job she's taken as a courier has drawn her to the attention of powerful and dangerous people, and they don't just want the package she's carrying. They want her soul ...

## **The Night Sessions**

**by Ken MacLeod**

**Orbit, 2009**

A priest is dead. Picking through the rubble of the demolished Edinburgh tenement, Detective Inspector Adam Ferguson discovers that the explosion wasn't an accident. When a bishop is assassinated soon afterwards, it becomes clear that a targeted campaign of killings is underway. No one has seen anything like this since the Faith Wars. In this enlightened age there's no religious persecution, but believers are a marginal and mistrusted minority. And now someone is killing them. But who? And - perhaps more importantly—why? The more his team learns, the more the suspicion grows that they may have stumbled upon a conspiracy way outside their remit. Nobody believes them, but if Ferguson and his people fail, there will be many more killings—and disaster on a literally biblical scale ...

## **The Existential Detective**

**by Alice Thompson**

**Two Ravens Press, 2010**

William Blake is a private detective. When he is asked by an eccentric scientist to investigate the whereabouts of his amnesiac missing wife, Louise, Will finds himself entangled in layers of deceptions and disappearances that lead him inexorably back to an unsolved mystery in his own past: the loss of his six-year-old daughter Emily. The case takes Will to brothels, night-clubs and amusement arcades in the Scottish seaside resort of Portobello. Identities become con-fused as his sexual obsession with a night-club singer becomes entwined with sightings of Louise, his own torturous memories, and new visions of the lost Emily.

## **The Orphaned Worlds**

**by Michael Cobley**

**Orbit, 2010**

Darien is no longer a lost outpost of humanity, but the prize in an intergalactic power struggle. Hegemony forces have a stranglehold over the planet and crack troops patrol its hotspots while Earth watches, passive, rendered impotent by galactic politics. But its Darien ambassador will soon become a player in a greater conflict. There is more at stake than a turf war on a newly discovered world. An ancient Uvovo temple hides access to a hyperspace prison, housing the greatest threat sentient life has ever known. Millennia ago, malignant intelligences were caged there following an apocalyptic war. And their servants work on their release. However, Darien's guardians have not

been idle, gathering resistance on the planet's forest moon. Knowledge has been lost since great races battled in eons past, and now time is short. The galaxy will depend on the Uvovo reclaiming their past—and humanity must look to its future. For a new war is coming.

## **Escape from Hell!**

**by Hal Duncan**

**Monkeybrain, 2009**

A hitman, a hooker, a homosexual kid, and a hobo suicide make the ultimate prison break—escape from Hell itself. But when news of their attempted escape gets out, the souls of the damned are transformed into a rioting mob, and all Hell truly does break loose. It's *Escape from New York* meets *Jacob's Ladder*, by one of fantasy's rising stars.

## **Sputnik Caledonia**

**by Andrew Crumey**

**Picador, 2008**

Robbie Coyle is an imaginative kid. He wants so badly to become Scotland's first cosmonaut that he tries to teach himself Russian and trains for space exploration in the cupboard under the sink. But the place to which his fantasies later take him is far from the safety of his suburban childhood. In a communist state, in a closed, bleak town, the mysterious Red Star heralds his discovery of cruelty and of love, and the possibility that the most passionate of dreams may only be a chimera ...

## **From Glasgow to Saturn**

**the University of Glasgow's Creative Writing Showcase**

**to be launched 5 November, 2010**

*From Glasgow to Saturn* is an online literary magazine, based in the University of Glasgow Creative Writing Programme. We publish prose fiction, poetry and essays—book reviews, lyrical essays and articles on the craft of writing. We aim to publish as often as submissions allow. The more quality we receive, the more issues there will be. There are no dates set in stone, so please subscribe to our mailing list to have the latest editions of *From Glasgow to Saturn* delivered direct to your inbox. We are open to submissions from students, staff and alumni of the University of Glasgow. *From Glasgow to Saturn* is named after the collection of poems by Edwin Morgan, who sadly passed away earlier this year. As a tribute to his legacy at the university, we've included a page dedicated to his life and work.