

Phoenix

sequels issue

February
2023

Contents

Illustrated by Emilie Wiingreen

4 <i>House of the Dragon</i>	5 <i>Glass Onion</i>	6 <i>Star Wars</i>
7 <i>Black Panther</i>	8 <i>Bookshelf</i>	10 <i>Deathless & The Cursed Child</i>
11 <i>Word of the Month & Albion Abroad</i>	12 <i>Shrek 2</i>	13 <i>Dark Crystal</i>
14 <i>(Taylor's Version)</i>	15 <i>Playlist of my Life</i>	16 <i>Goncharov Madlibs</i>
17 <i>"What Sequel Are You?" Quiz</i>	18 <i>Fanfiction</i>	19 <i>Catching Fire & Why Sequels?</i>
20 <i>Tea Time</i>	22 <i>Fairy Tales & Wednesday</i>	23 <i>Phoenix Ranks Prequels</i>
24 <i>Creative Pieces</i>	26 <i>Gilmore Girls & Zodiacs</i>	27 <i>Galactik Football</i>

Phoenix 2022-2023. the Sequel

Written by Eva Bleeker - Edited by Helenie Demir

Dear readers, we are glad to have you back for the sequel to our first issue! Coincidentally, "sequels" is also the topic to which we have decided to dedicate this issue. As is often declared by writers, filmmakers, or other creators in great despair: "Everything has been done before." Originality is an impossibility. All new ideas are subconsciously inspired by previous creations. Then what else is one to do, but simply continue a story which has already proven successful? This is where sequels come into play.

We, the Phoenix Team, have dived into the success stories of some sequels and the utter failures of others. This is an issue with range. From *Shrek* to *Catching Fire*, from *Star Wars* to fairy tales; our sequel has it all.

We hope you enjoy this issue and conclude that it lives up to the 'original.' Even though you will hear everyone complain that sequels are always worse than the original, they can never resist the temptation of discovering what is to happen next to their favourite (or least favourite) characters and fictional worlds. Hopefully, this desire to explore also applies to whatever we have cooked up for our sequel of all sequels.

Word of the Board

Dear Albioneers,

At the time of writing this, the first semester is coming to an end and the second semester is already looming over us. For me, that means a couple of stressful months to look forward to because I'll be writing my thesis. Luckily, I got to relax a bit during the extra-long Christmas break, and I hope you did as well!

I guess we can call the second semester a sequel (probably not, but I'm rolling with it anyways). It's the second part of this academic year with new courses, new people to meet, and more Albion activities to join! I can't spoil too much, but our beloved committees have a lot in store for us.

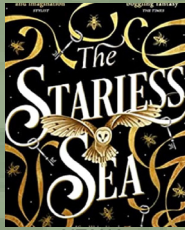
I absolutely adore sequels. As an avid fantasy reader, I'm always overjoyed when I find out that there is an entire series set in one of my favourite worlds, ready to be discovered. That's why I want to close this Word of the Board with a plea to George R.R. Martin to please, please, please, release the sixth book of *A Song of Ice and Fire*. I'm begging you.

Love,

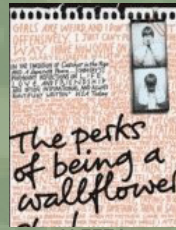
Lisanne, *Treasurer 2022-2023* (still patiently waiting for *The Winds of Winter*).



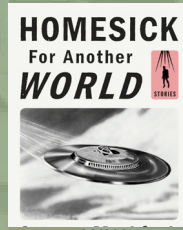
WHAT WE'RE READING



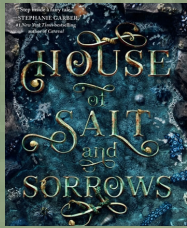
AITANA
The Starless Sea,
Erin Morgenstern



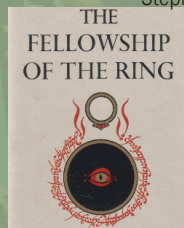
ALEEZA
*The Perks of Being
A Wallflower*,
Stephen Chbosky



ANNA
*Homesick for
Another World*,
Ottessa Moshfegh



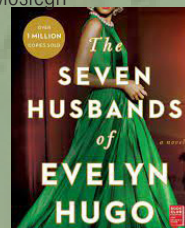
ANNA-MARIA
*House of Salt
and Sorrows*,
Erin A. Craig



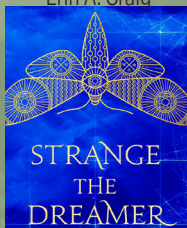
CHARLIE
*The Fellowship
of the Ring*,
J.R.R. Tolkien



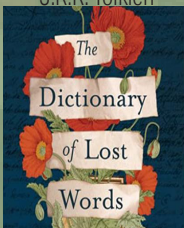
DANIEK
The Heart Principle,
Helen Hoang



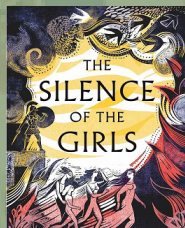
DIONE
*The Seven Husbands
of Evelyn Hugo*,
Taylor Jenkins Reid



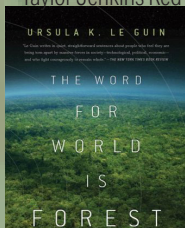
EMILIE
Strange the Dreamer,
Laini Taylor



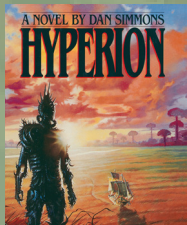
EVA
*The Dictionary
of Lost Words*,
Pip Williams



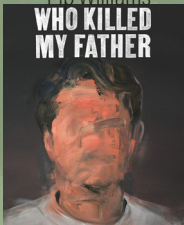
HELENIE
Silence of the Girl,
Pat Barker



HESTER
*The Word for
World is Forest*,
Ursula K. Le Guin



JONATHAN
Hyperion,
Dan Simmons



JUDE
Who Killed My Father,
Édouard Louis



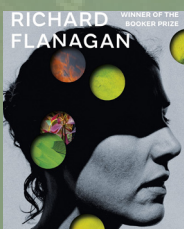
LUCA
*The Wind-Up
Bird Chronicle*,
Haruki Murakami



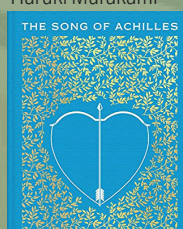
LUKA
Leech,
Hiron Ennes



MARIT
Wij Waren, Ik Ben,
Israel van Dorsten



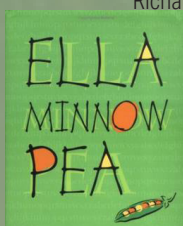
MOHANA
*Living Sea of
Walking Dreams*,
Richard Flanagan



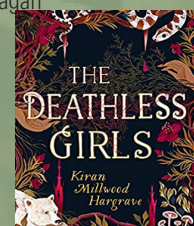
NINA
The Song of Achilles,
Madeline Miller



TESSA
Bloodmarked,
Tracy Deonn



YULE
Ella Minnow Pea,
Mark Dunn



ZOYA
The Deathless Girls,
Kiran Millwood



ZUZIA
The Enigma of Room 622,
Joël Dicker



PHOENIX
Magazine for students of English
Language and Culture
at Utrecht University.

SEQUELS Issue - February 2023

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Lisanne Nieuwendijk, Eline Nessen, and
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Special Thanks

DaFont, Pinterest and Pexels.

Subscriptions

Every issue will be published online at
www.albionutrecht.nl and hard copies can
be bought independently.

Contact Albion Utrecht

Trans 10
3512 JK Utrecht
030 - 253 66 69

The Shack
Drift 21, 2.08

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House of the Dragon

Written by Nina van Veen

Illustrated by Tessa de Bosschere

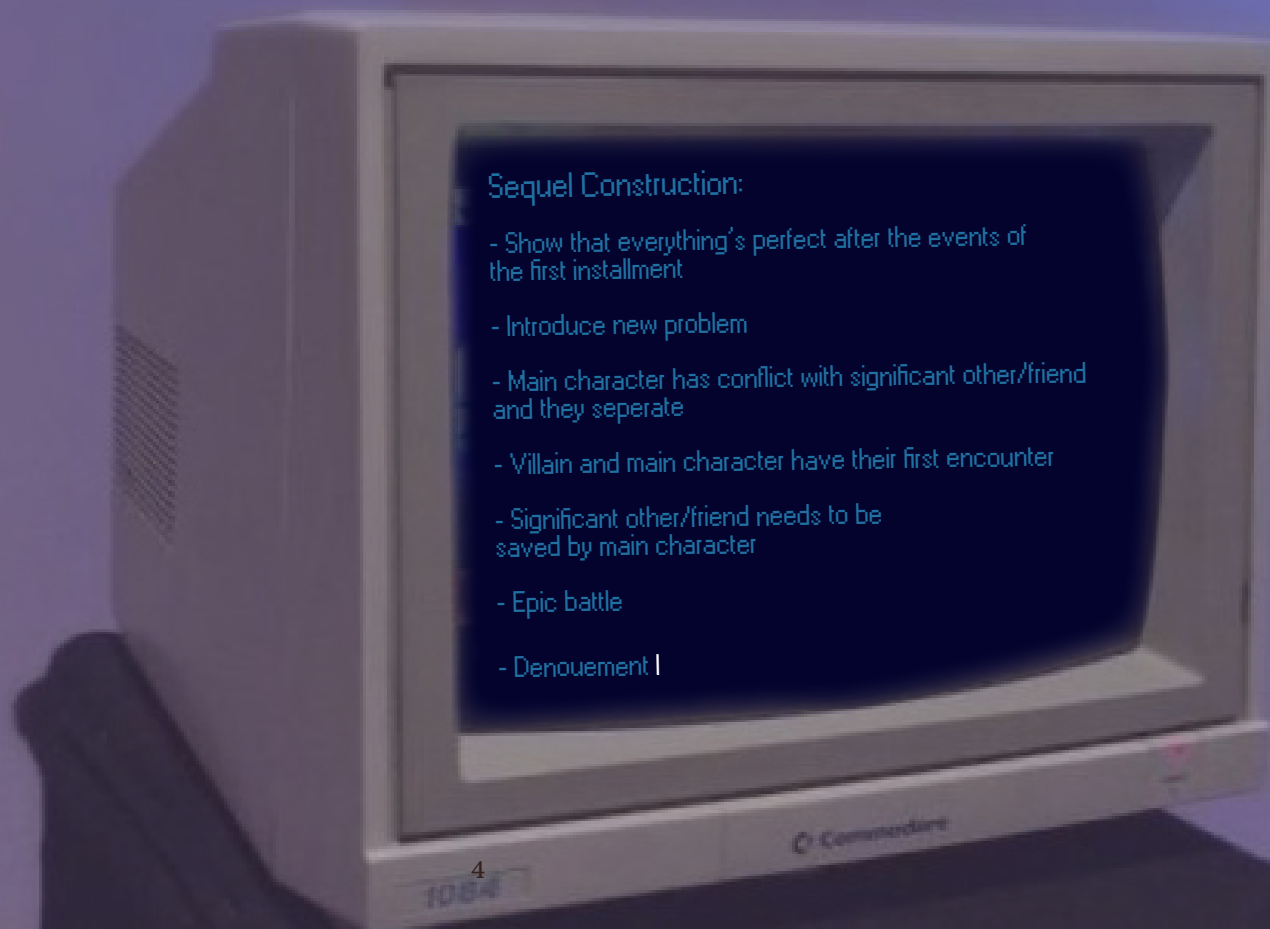
Edited by Helenie Demir



House of the Dragon is one of the biggest, if not *the* biggest series of 2022. The *Game of Thrones* prequel quickly became immensely popular, which is of course no real surprise with phenomenal acting performances by Matt Smith, Milly Alcock, Paddy Considine, Emma D'Arcy, and many others. The actors played a key role in the success of the show during the time jumps. Those who claimed they could never be happy with another Rhaenyra after Milly's version were easily convinced by Emma and their amazing portrayal of the role.

The series is not just a prequel created by HBO after the immense success of *Game of Thrones*. It is an adaptation of the book *Fire and Blood*, written by George R.R. Martin who also wrote the original series. Here, things get interesting. *Fire and Blood* is no ordinary novel, as it is written as a history book about the Seven Kingdoms. Archmaester Gyldayn, a fictional historian, cites primary sources that also exist within this world. What makes it really fascinating is that Gyldayn's narration is unreliable, and that, more often than

not, these sources contradict each other. This way of storytelling has caused the book to receive mixed reviews; some love it while others find it tedious and boring. For the makers of *House of the Dragon* there is, of course, also a challenge: which version is the truth? How they pick and choose from the source material remains a mystery, but they're doing quite well so far. Let's hope that the next seasons of *House of the Dragon* will live up to the expectations and be just as good as the first season was.



Sequel Construction:

- Show that everything's perfect after the events of the first installment
- Introduce new problem
- Main character has conflict with significant other/friend and they separate
- Villain and main character have their first encounter
- Significant other/friend needs to be saved by main character
- Epic battle
- Denouement I

PLAY

Watchlist: Spin-offs (movies/tv)

Angel
Minions
The Legend of Korra
The Originals
Puss in Boots
Penguins of Madagascar
Sharpay's Fabulous Adventure

Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery, as Requested

Written by Zuzia Gelauff

Illustrated by Emilie Wiingreen

Edited by Helenie Demir

At the beginning of July 2019, a trailer dropped. With it, Rian Johnson revealed his new star-studded murder mystery, and I, a lover of said genre, was immediately hooked and intrigued. "This Thanksgiving comes a Who-dunnit like no one has ever Dunnit," read the tagline in the trailer. A very bold statement; in a world with enough Agatha Christie and Arthur Conan Doyle stories to fill the Nile... here was *Knives Out*. A complete original, so it seemed.

In the end, *Knives Out* was the last movie I saw on the big screen before the pandemic hit and limited one's world to their living room. But even deep into whatever hyperfixation lockdown threw at me, I was still thinking about Chris Evans and his cable-knit sweater, among the many other things that the film ingrained into my mind. Because, with a cast like that and incredibly clever storytelling, how could I not do anything but love it? The movie was an undeniable hit, and everyone who had seen it seemed to be waiting for the sequel's announcement.

Because there was going to be a sequel, right? Right?

As opposed to many other franchises which we are waiting to see die out, *Knives Out* made people want more. I walked out of that cinema in November, and my first thought was, "I need more". More Benoit Blanc and his silly little southern drawl, please.

So, in May 2021, when the news struck of a brand new stellar ensemble being cast for the yet-to-be-ti-



tled *Knives Out 2*, it was met with online cheers instead of the usual groans and eye rolls that come with such announcements. This was something the people wanted and could not wait for.

There is a risk, however, with something so highly anticipated, and quickly the doubt started to trickle down the fan community's back. Could the second movie ever live up to its hype? To its predecessor? Could Rian Johnson do it again, or was the first film merely beginner's luck at playing detective?

What if this sequel just ruins the near-perfection that *Knives Out* was considered? Some might say that to be the case after watching *Glass Onion*. Some might even consider the first *Benoit Blanc* movie to not be as great as I am making it out to be. All very valid opinions. I am aware of my bias, but I can also say, because of my deep love for the film, that I was afraid of what *Glass Onion* would turn out to be.

It took me well over the first half of the new movie to get truly comfortable as well. The beginning just felt so off. It was nothing like the original?! I was ready to jump to conclusions, but then all the puzzle pieces started to take shape into the bigger picture, as they always intended to do, and I rested assured. Rian Johnson had done it again. Was it better than *Knives Out*? Perhaps not, but it had plenty of originality to stand on its own, which I find much more important. And now look, people are already fan-casting the next installments of the Benoit Blanc-verse. So, clearly, it did something right.

"I Got a Bad Feeling about This:" The Rise and Fall of the Star Wars Prequels

It has been forty-six years since audiences around the world travelled to "a galaxy far, far away" with the release of *A New Hope*. The *Star Wars* films started as a passion project for the then up-and-coming director George Lucas. He drew inspiration from many sources, including eastern philosophy and pulp hero characters of his childhood. The bizarre extraterrestrial setting and the ragtag band of misfits who unite against an insurmountable force struck a chord with theatregoers, and the Original Trilogy quickly became a cultural icon of the 80s. Despite the series' overwhelming success, Lucas was hesitant to continue developing the world of *Star Wars*. However, by the early 90s, the advent of CGI technology and a resurgence in interest in the *Star Wars* franchise—owed to the comic and book adaptations—prompted Lucas to reconsider.

It was May 1999 when the first episode of the Prequel Trilogy was released: *The Phantom Menace*. The decade itself oversaw an age in film-making fuelled by ultra-realistic CGI, enhancing the settings of movies with visually appealing renders such as the Boonta Eve Pod Race. Unfortunately, it also gave the world one of the most disliked characters, the CGI disaster Jar-Jar Binks. Overall, it made the movies look overdone. As the adage goes, less is indeed more, and the *Star Wars* Prequel Trilogy finely exemplifies this. It could have been perfect if not for the overdoing of special effects. Furthermore, older viewers who remembered the Original Trilogy felt

that real-life actors and setups made them feel more like they were a part of the movie.

Another significant point for criticism lies in the weak story plots, often interlaced with too much galactic politics. The Original Trilogy's idea was simple but effective: a group of rebels rises to take down an oppressive empire. Upon the release of the first of the Prequel Trilogy, many were confused as to why the story began with a theme as dull as trade routes and blockades. For many viewers, having so much of the story revolving around interplanetary disputes rather than action and characters was disappointing. However, some argue that there was no action-packed conflict between rebels and the empire simply because they both did not exist yet.

The Prequels were a major departure from the Original Trilogy in terms of style and tone. Because of this stark contrast, they have sat poorly with many veteran *Star Wars* fans. However, one can question if such a strong reaction is justified. Despite being a source of criticism, the CGI-generated landscapes and the intergalactic politics serve to broaden the setting. The plot has expanded beyond a group of mercenaries waging war against the Galactic Empire. Also, one must be aware that the Prequels suffer from the plagues of viewer expectation and childhood nostalgia. Fans of the series who grew up watching the Originals have a fixed idea of what *Star Wars* is. Some were bound to become upset when the Prequels came out and defied those conventions.

*Written by
Jonathan van Noppen
and Zoya Tashi*

*Illustrated by Emilie Wiingreen
Edited by Charlie Edelbroek*

PHOENIX RECOMMENDATIONS: SPIN-OFFS (BOOKS)

SIX OF CROWS - LEIGH BARDUGO

THE INFERNAL DEVICES - CASSANDRA CLARE

HEROES OF OLYMPUS - RICK RIORDAN

WAX & WAYNE - BRANDON SANDERSON





Black Panther: Wakanda Forever – Legacy

*Written by Anna Maria Popo
Illustrated by Dione Maarssen
Edited by Eva Bleeker*

The sorrowful absence of Chadwick Boseman, who portrayed King T'Challa in the first Black Panther movie, couldn't be replaced in the sequel, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022). After the sudden and sad loss of the young actor, it was doubtful whether the first film could be followed by a sequel. In *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, however, there was a chance to honour the memory of Chadwick Boseman, continue the legacy he left behind in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and try to create a story that would show the emotional effect and rawness of such a loss.

While the sequel introduced new characters with in-depth background stories of their own, the film also explored the process of grieving in each of the familiar characters: Shuri (Letitia Wright) and Queen Ramonda (Angela Bassett). From the very beginning of the movie, the two characters remind their enemies that the fictional kingdom of Wakanda is still standing, even after the tragic loss of their king. Yet, their mourning process is limited, as new enemies (the kingdom of Talokan) make their appearance. It can be argued that the subplots of the movie get tangled and are too complicated to keep track of throughout

the film. However, the main purpose of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* is to show the characters pay their tribute to the memory of their king and how they will protect their kingdom.

Instead of replacing T'Challa or trying to distract the fans with one-dimensional characters and unoriginal subplots, this sequel shows the characters and how they cope with the loss of their king; it allowed Shuri to have great character growth while king T'Challa remains unforgotten. That is why this sequel did not let the fans down. Knowing that technology couldn't save her brother, Shuri has to process the fact that she couldn't have helped him. The sadness and guilt are what shape her into becoming a great leader who finds her purpose.

Throughout the movie, the grief the characters are dealing with in the fictional world becomes fused with the grief of the public and the actors/creators. 'How do we move on from here?' – that is the main theme this sequel explores, which ends up making this movie a unique tribute to the legacy that Chadwick Boseman left behind.

Bookshelf of Eline Nessen

Written and Interviewed by Nina van Veen

Edited by Hester Schneider

For this issue's Bookshelf, I've asked Eline all about her books, including things like favourite book, or most hated ones, fictional characters, and much more. Because life is busy and schedules are cramped, we met online, but this didn't make our conversation any less interesting.

The theme of this issue is sequels, so let's ask the obvious questions first: what is your favourite sequel?

I honestly cannot remember the last time I read a sequel, apart from *Harry Potter* or the *Inkheart* series, when I was a kid. Those sequels were amazing, the whole series is great. It's called *Inkspell*, but I read it in Dutch. It's about Maggie whose father has a secret power. When he reads books aloud, characters come to life.

What sequel should never have been made in the first place?

I'm just looking at my bookshelf. I haven't read it, but I told you about the *Rivers of London* book, with the very misogynistic main character, and I did some research. Apparently he does not get better and there's a ton of sequels to that book, so I feel like those sequels did not have to be made. But then again, I did not read them myself.

What book should have had a sequel?

I love the book *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman. It's so much fun. It's about this hidden world in the subway system of London. I feel like there was just so much story left to tell or so much more opportunities in that world for stories to be told, so I would have loved to have a sequel to that one. The story itself was pretty well rounded off, but I feel like there was so much more potential.

They say you should never judge a book by its cover, but if we would ignore that for a second, which book on your bookshelf is the most beautiful?

That's really hard. *loud sigh* There are just so many nice books. I'm just grabbing a couple of books that I love.

I picked one that I think is not an obvious choice. This is the second book, in the *Illuminae Files* series, it's called *Gemina*. It's really cool. It's basically told in transcripts from camera footage and files and interviews. There is also a bunch of redacted stuff in the files, so you don't get all the information. Some things are just blacked out. The dust jacket has a roll in it where you can see letters and stuff which is really nice. There are three books in the series and all three of them have this, but I have a different edition of the first book, so I don't have that one.

What book are you most proud of to have on your bookshelf?

Most proud of? I was going to say one of those classics we have to read for school, but I don't put those on my bookshelf 'cause it makes me sad. Maybe a Stephen King novel, *The Stand*. I haven't read it yet, but I feel like I'm proud of myself for trying a horror story. I hope that I like it.

What book is not on your bookshelf that should really be there?

That's a really hard question. I think maybe more classics. Not a specific one, but really just more classics. I mostly love Young Adult fiction and fantasy, so I haven't read a lot of classics. Maybe I should read more of those.



What book do you think everyone should have read at least once?

Maybe also a book that I haven't read, that I should read. It should be something that has cultural significance, that reflects our society. I think *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a very good example of that.

What book would you give the most stars, if you could give unlimited stars instead of just five?

I really did like *The Binding* by Bridget Collins. I don't know if it was necessarily super good, 'cause it was

hard to get into, since nothing really happened in the first half. But then, for some reason, it just really stuck with me and I always think back on it, so it really left an impression on me. It's gay, which I like. It's sort of enemies to lovers, but not intense enemies-to-lovers where one of them tries to kill the other. It's just that they didn't like each other at the start. It was very soft, but then again also kind of harsh. It's about magic books and it's historical fiction. There are people in the world that can take people's memories of events and bind them in books, so that they forget them.

What is a book that you regret reading?

I'm not going to say *Rivers of London*, because I didn't finish it, but I'm happy that I gave it a chance. With everything I'm just happy that I gave it a shot, but I just finished *Mortal Engines*. My expectations for it were a lot higher, and maybe that wasn't good, going into it with expectations. It's Young Adult, but that apparently spans ages 14 to 24, which is just a ridiculous age range, and the way this was written was very much for the lower half of that age range. It was just a bit boring and the characters were very one-dimensional. The idea was very good. It

has really cool world-building with mechanised cities. It didn't really live up to it, but maybe that was also on me because I had high expectations for it.

If you could live the rest of your life in a storybook, which book would you want to live in?

Looking at my books, I think I would love to live in a *Neverwhere* setting because it's London and I love London. And I love urban fantasy; the idea of fantasy and magic living alongside the normal world. Plus, I love the aesthetic of the underground. So it seems like a lot of fun to be swept up in that.

If you would randomly have to choose an enemy out of all of the books you have read, and you could only exclude one character from the election, which one would that be? Who do you not want to be your enemy?

Probably a very powerful person with whom I would end up dead right away. I need a fighting chance. I wouldn't want Voldemort to be my enemy. A whole ass wizard. I'd be dead in seconds.

Which fictional character would you like to be your best friend?

I have a terrible memory, so I'm just trying to think

of any of the characters. Maybe I will go into *Harry Potter* territory. I just love Hermione Granger. She's a badass. Very basic answer, but I think it's the truth. Her views are the best of any of the characters.

What book should be made into a film or series?

This is so premature, 'cause I only just started this book and I'm fifty pages in. but I'm reading *The Library of the Unwritten* right now. It's about a library in hell where there's a librarian who looks after unfinished books that tried to escape the library and tried to wreak havoc on earth. The characters are very likeable and fun, even just in the first fifty pages. I really love the concept. I just really love magic books.

Which actor/actress would you like to be cast to play the main character?

That's hard. The main character is a person of colour. It's set in Britain, so it should actually be a British person or someone who could do a really good British accent. I just watched *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*. Janelle Monáe is very good in that movie. I feel like she could really do the role justice.

What book deserves more recognition?

Going back to *Neverwhere* 'cause I feel like it's one of the lesser known Neil Gaiman books. And the *Inkheart* series 'cause they're just so good. And maybe the *Library of the Unwritten*. My tiktok feed is filled with booktok videos and I've never heard anyone mention it there.

PHOENIX'S ANTICIPATED RELEASES

THE COLOR PURPLE (MOVIE)
THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS AND SNAKES (MOVIE)
THE LITTLE MERMAID (MOVIE)
DEFIANT - BRANDON SANDERSON
INDIANA JONES AND THE DIAL OF DESTINY (MOVIE)
BARBIE (MOVIE)
WONKA (MOVIE)
A DAY OF FALLEN NIGHT - SAMANTHA SHANNON
THE BOYS - SEASON 4 (SERIES)
SPIDER-MAN: ACROSS THE SPIDER-VERSE (MOVIE)
DAISY JONES AND THE SIX (SERIES)

Deathless: A Strange and Dark Love Letter to Russia and Slavic Folklore

Written by Mohana Zwaga – Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

"That's how you get deathless, volchitsa. Walk the same tale over and over, until you wear a groove in the world, until even if you vanished, the tale would keep turning, keep playing, like a phonograph, and you'd have to get up again, even with a bullet through your eye, to play your part and say your lines."

As a novel like no other, *Deathless* by Catherynne M. Valente reimagines the famous Slavic myths of Koschei the Deathless and his human wife Marya Morevna in a deeply poetic, alienating, and haunting language of grief, fantasy, and the hint of bravery only the naïve can have. This is a love story, but yet it isn't. It is a story of hope, and yet it isn't.

In the novel, set in the time the cold, iron fist of Stalin had Russia in its grip, the cult of fear and surveillance even manages to leak into the world of myth. Marya, a young girl who has witnessed the city she calls home change face and names many times over, makes a fatal mistake: to think about and to read Pushkin. With this, she draws the attention of none other than Koschei the Deathless, the Tsar of the realm of the living, who (as the myths say) has hidden his death inside the eye of a needle, inside an egg, inside a hare, inside a hound, and

further on. He takes her as his bride to his world, where Marya is confronted with the darkness of her time.

Strange, alienating, and frankly bizarre are the words most likely to rise in the reader's mind when tackling this novel. But, like the beautiful duality this novel tries to highlight, this is paired with awe, adoration, and a strong sense that this is unlike anything you've ever read before. With this novel, Valente has essentially written a 'sequel' to the myth, imagining a more powerful (and let's just say, *empowering*) ending to the heroine's story, while taking inspiration from the political myth of Pavlik Morozov—the boy who reported his own father to the police for treason. This sense of repression, censorship, and fearful obedience to the state has even reached the creatures of the world of myth. The dragon sleeps not on bones, but on execution orders, the Domovoy (Russian house elves, essentially) hold state-meetings amongst each other where they report on the unlawful behaviours of their humans, and the Tsar of life wages war with the Tsar of death. But death seems to be winning.

All in all, *Deathless* is a collision of magical history and actual history, of revolution and mythology, of love and death, which will bring Russian myth back to life in a stunning new incarnation.

A Very Cursed Sequel

Written by Charlie Edelbroek - Edited by Aleeza van der Giessen

"There's nothing to do. The Dark Lord is dead, Harry Potter wins, end of story."

"Yes, I know, I know. He marries Ginny, they live happily ever after, there is literally no way to move forward from this point. - But if we can't move forward, why shouldn't we move back?"

That is a direct quote from *A Very Potter Sequel (AVPS)*, though it is also the plot of *The Cursed Child*. Interesting to note is that *The Cursed Child* is supposed to be a professional play, while AVPS is a musical written and produced by a group of university graduates. Yet, AVPS managed to create a successful sequel while *The Cursed Child* didn't.

I'd say that is mostly because of two factors: the characters and the use of time travel. The characters from AVPS aren't supposed to be like their book counterparts, as it is a parody musical, but they still make sense. Like, yes, Remus *would* be the one cursing like a sailor and Snape *does* have a trumpety butt. However, Harry would NEVER tell his children that he wished they weren't his and I still don't believe they tried to make Cedric a death eater. This isn't even an alternate universe. Additionally, the Timeturners were always a potential plot hole. But while Starkid stuck to canon, *The Cursed Child* shows exactly why they are plot holes.

This just shows that big names and production value mean nothing if you don't know your material.

vibrancy

/'vʌɪbr(ə)nsi/

Noun

1. The state of being full of energy and life
2. The striking brightness of colour

WORD OF THE MONTH

SELECTED BY
ANNA PREINDL

EDITED BY
HELENIE DEMIR

February is objectively the saddest and most dimmest of the year. Good thing it's a short one. And, to remind us of how great the world can be, the word of the month is vibrancy. Think of brighter months, longer days and lush colours, all of which are sure to emerge again before we know it.

Albion Abroad

Written and photographed by Elise Brouwer – Edited by Luka van den Berg

Hi there! It's been a while...

I'm writing this right in the middle of exam/deadline season from a very busy library (open 24/7) in the lovely city of Newcastle upon Tyne. Everyone is frantically studying or fighting to finish their assignments in time—myself included—and we've more or less emptied the coffee machine by now. But, sitting here in the Phillip Robinson library, surrounded by shelf after shelf of books on politics, arts, language, and poetry, there's no place I'd rather be.

In January of 2022 I decided to take my chances and apply for the Harting scheme. It honestly didn't matter much to me what university I would be placed in if they accepted me, I just really wanted to study in England for a full year.

And here I am, after lots of chaos and breakdowns before setting off. Even though it's only been a few months, so much has happened already. In my first week alone I had to practically elbow people out of the way to get my name registered on the modules I wanted to take, found out that I'd be teaching Dutch to a small seminar group, and lived through the absolute madness of fresher's week.

Once things had settled down a bit, I found the time to realise how amazing my life had become. Back in the Netherlands I used to commute to university every single day, but now I live a 15 minute walk away from campus, and about 20 minutes from the city centre. Suddenly I have the time and energy to ac-



tually *do* stuff during the day, and I am no longer dependent on the antics of NS. Of course, I miss my family and friends (and the Jumbo), but being here has been so good for me.

I took three wonderful modules during my first semester (American Poetry Now, Literatures of Decolonisation, and Introduction to Creative Writing) and they've really made me excited about new areas within the English programme—I find myself wanting to do much more reading (and writing) than before. On top of this, I've been teaching on the module Beginners' Dutch and leading its seminar group. I absolutely love seeing all the progress that my students are making, and I'm really excited

to continue doing this next semester. The position even came with a shared office and the sweetest colleagues.

Another benefit of this country is the fantastic concept of charity shops. Not only do I now have an entirely new wardrobe, but these shops actually make English books affordable to me. I've been to one specific Oxfam where all books in their fiction section are 99 pence (I needed two bags to get all the treasures from that trip home).

I've seen so many beautiful places already, and when the Easter break starts I'll hopefully explore the country even more. I'm just incredibly grateful for the opportunity and for all the wonderful people I've met so far; I can't wait to see where this year will take me!





My Computer



My Network
Places



Recycle Bin



Internet
Explorer



File a bug
report



Outlook
Express

SHREK 2 - A SEQUEL WORTH WATCHING

WRITTEN BY NINA VAN VEEN - EDITED BY LUKA VAN DEN BERG

In a Phoenix issue about sequels, there is of course one topic that cannot be missed and has to be featured. A cultural phenomenon that left an impact all around the globe and somehow gave us a sequel that was even better than the original. I am, of course, talking about *Shrek*. Because what else could this possibly be about?

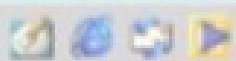
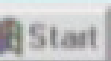
In *Shrek 2*, our beloved green ogre travels to Fiona's place of birth to be introduced to her parents and celebrate their marriage. As both King Harold and Queen Lillian are expecting a handsome prince who broke Fiona's curse, you can guess how well this meeting went. Besides Fiona's parents, other new characters are introduced as well, such as the Fairy Godmother (who later on gives us an iconic performance of 'Holding Out for a Hero') her son, Prince Charming, and Puss in Boots (who was hired by King Harold to try and kill Shrek).

The problems begin with Harold who is unfortunately stuck in a bargain with the Fairy Godmother who wants Fiona to marry Prince Charming. Even though Shrek was full of confidence at the end of the first movie, all of the events that are unfolding before him do not leave him untouched. He begins to doubt whether he is worthy of Fiona, and therefore sets out to Fairy Godmother's factory to steal a potion which will ensure that he is good enough for Fiona. If you want to know how this goes, you'll have to watch the movie. That is not a bad thing, though, 'cause if you haven't already seen *Shrek*, you really should. Really, what are you waiting for?

Luckily for us, *Shrek 2* is not the end of Shrek's adventures. I won't give away too much, for fear of spoiling how *Shrek 2* ends, but like the two movies that came before it, *Shrek the Third* is certainly a must-watch. Many old and well-known characters return, and they succeed in giving us even more iconic scenes and action. For all those who are saying that the *Wreck-it-Ralph* sequel is very special because it features several princesses together in one room, *Shrek the Third* did it first. And because I can't resist, here's a tiny spoiler: one of the princesses turns out to be not so nice after all.

Of course, the third *Shrek* movie also gives us new characters. An important role is for example reserved for Arthur 'Artie' Pendragon and his retired wizard teacher, Merlin. Though both of these characters are nothing like their namesakes, they are still very nice characters who might even be capable of delivering an inspiring speech. Or maybe they aren't capable of such a thing. Go watch this movie to find out.

All in all, we can conclude that *Shrek* has proven that it is, in fact, possible to make a sequel that is better than the original, despite all of the sequels that really shouldn't have been made because their only goal was to make more money. Now that this article has come to an end, I know exactly what I'm going to do for the next couple of hours. I'm going to say it one more time. If you haven't already, or even if you have: GO WATCH SHREK. It is amazing and you won't regret it.



Phoenix Watchlists:

Retellings (movies/tv)

Clueless (1995)

10 Things I Hate About You (1999)

Into the Woods (2014)

Once upon a Time (2011-18)

Easy A (2010)

Bridget Jones's Diary (2001)

BEGIN, END. ALL THE SAME.

WRITTEN BY AITANA MONTORO

ILLUSTRATED BY EMILIE WIINGREEN - EDITED BY NINA VAN VEEN

Another world, another time, in the age of wonder... from the valley of the mystics to the endless forest, the land of Thra remained full of buried treasures and secrets untold. In the forgotten ruins of the Stone-in-the-Woods' palace, the wall of destiny was covered by ivy and moss. The letters of the dead, forever carved into stone, told a tale of resistance and hope.

The Dark Crystal (1982) is the ending of a legendary prophecy, buried in the embers of a dynasty of heroes who tried to find the lost shard of the Dark Crystal and became whispers in the wind. But before the three suns came together and the two were made one, there was creation and destruction. Before Jen, other storytellers had played sweet tunes on the flute, and before Kira, other gelflings had known the language of the animals and the rocks.

The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance (2019) is the story of the beginning of an end. A tale that starts with the arrival of the urSkeks; when Aughra turned her eye to the heavens, to the labyrinth of metallic stars and planets from her orrery, and became deaf to the earthly song of Thra. What once was, in the Age of Harmony, a melodious and peaceful song, hummed by all the creatures of Thra, turned into the silent lament of a dying land. The skeksis became walking corpses of feeble ashes and began to drain the essence of the gelflings to be eternal. Hungry and rotten, they desired to live on stolen lives. Their rapacity led to the darkening of the roots of the trees and flowers, a poison deadlier than nightshade and dreadful as a murder of crows.

Once a long-forgotten mystery, the prequel explores the clans of the gelflings. From the Dousan, nomads of the Crystal Desert who worshipped death, to the Sifa, traders and fortune-tellers

who sailed in the shiny waves of the Silver Sea. Seven clans of song tellers, farmers, and dreamers. From these tribes came the heroes of the resistance: lionhearted and proud gelflings who lit candles of hope in the hollow darkness. Like Brea, lost in constellations of ink and gold, Deet, bearer of the prophecy of the sanctuary tree, and Rian, who ignited a fire with the silver blade of his sword.

The prequel contains beautiful details and references to the legacy of Jim Henson. The ascendancy of spiders, for example, evokes the talking hands of the movie *Labyrinth* (1986), and the squabbles of the Heretic and the Wanderer are inspired by the bickering of the Wiseman with his bird hat. *The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance* manages to capture the eerie and enchanting essence of the original movie; like a butterfly in a glass coffin whose wings still have fairy dust. The brilliant minds behind the prequel have rescued the decaying art of puppetry from the ashes of oblivion, as they have crafted more than one hundred and seventy-five puppets for this prequel of epic proportions. The bewitching aesthetic of Brian Froud, conceptual designer and illustrator of fairy books like *Good faeries/ Bad faeries*, is present in every wrinkle and line of the vast and sentient world of the Dark Crystal.



Retellings (books)

A Thousand Ships - Natalie Haynes

Villains series - Serena Valentino

Legendborn - Tracy Deonn

The Night Circus - Erin Morgenstern

Ulysses - James Joyce

These Violent Delights - Chloe Gong



(TAYLOR'S VERSION)

WRITTEN BY ZUZIA GELAUFF - EDITED BY EVA BLEEKER

Following an unfortunate dispute with her former record label, it seemed like Taylor Swift was pushed into a corner. The world expected her to say goodbye to the music she had spent a decade working on. The masters, her official recordings, were sold; there was nothing else she could do... or so it seemed.

In 2019, the singer made an announcement that would shock and turn the music industry upside down: she would re-record all six of her first albums. A task of herculean proportions that very few thought would be worth it or even possible. Could she recreate the magic the originals contained? Who would listen to, let alone buy, an album that has already existed for almost 15 years (in the case of her self-titled debut record)?

The answers came with the release of the first (Taylor's Version) album. Initially recorded in 2011, *Fearless* consists of many Swift classics, such as "Love Story" and "You Belong With Me," so the pressure was on. Luckily, the results did not seem to disappoint. The re-recordings were masterfully done with the only significant difference being how Taylor's voice has naturally matured since the first recordings. Besides that, the music doesn't seem to stray from the original by even one note.

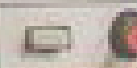
The fans were in for a treat, however, as the re-recorded albums seemed to consist of more than just the original tracks – because who said the new albums had to be 100% true to the source? The re-recordings allowed Taylor to shine a light on the songs that had been locked away in the vault. These "Vault Tracks" were all written at the time of their corresponding albums' origin, but had been cut due to not fitting in. So far, Swift's discography has gained 16 new songs from the two (Taylor's Version) albums, including features by artists like Phoebe Bridgers – who was not even making music at the time of *Red*'s initial recording.

Another opportunity the singer discovered in the re-recording of her albums was using the feedback she had received from her fans over the years. "I get to do things they wish I would have done the first time," she said in an interview with Seth Meyers around the time of the release of *Red (Taylor's Version)*. One such thing was the long-anticipated reveal of "All Too Well," the ten-minute version: a song for which fans had been begging Taylor ever since they heard her mention the story of its creation back in 2012. This time, Miss Swift didn't only deliver the lengthy tune, but it was released with a fully produced, 15-minute short film starring Dylan O'Brien and Sadie Sink.

"I get to do things they wish I would have done the first time."

Phoenix Watchlist: Adaptations

Emma. (2020)
Little Women (2018)
Lord of the Rings (2001-2003)
The Last of Us (2023)
West Side Story (2021)
The Sandman (2022-)
The Hunger Games (2012-2015)
Pride and Prejudice (2005)
Far from the Madding Crowd (2015)
Stardust (2007)
Tuck Everlasting (2002)



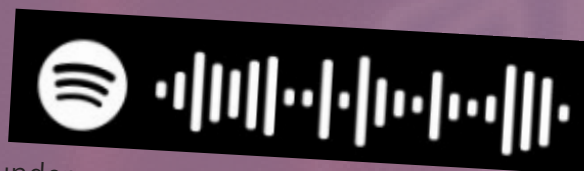
The (Taylor's Version) albums are a fantastic way for Swift to regain ownership of her work. Each re-recorded album is like a time capsule of its initial era. It is also an excellent way for people who might have missed out on the original eras to catch up, while the older fans might see their dedication to the artist be paid off. The inclusion of the vault tracks also helps make the albums feel fresh and new, adding new layers to the stories the records have been telling for all those years.

Playlist of my Life

Charlie

A Sequel Music

1. "Sorry" by dodie
2. "When" by dodie
3. "Jolene/Hallelujah" by Jessica Ricca
4. "Diane" by Cam
5. "October Passed Me By" by girl in red
6. "Here Comes The Moon" by George Harrison
7. "Love Will Tear Us Apart" by Joy Division
8. "Let's Dance to Joy Division" by The Wombats
9. "Seven Seas Of Rhye - Remastered 2011" by Queen
10. "Holding Out For A Hero (From "Shrek 2")" by Jennifer Saunders



From movie sequels, to album sequels, to songs that are sequels of other songs... this list has it all! Starting the list off with Ethereal Vibes™, song #1 comes from the latest *Avatar* sequel, followed by the infamous "Evenstar" from the second *Lord of The Rings* film. On #3, we have the highly memed but no less beautiful *Frozen 2*'s "Into the Unknown" (ft. my all-time favourite AURORA), with #4 bringing us the Barden Bellas' Finale song from *Pitch Perfect 2*. To stay with the pop 'n' rock feel of a capella goodness, #5 gives us Paramore's "Part II", followed by a return to movie sequel music with a heart-string-pulling song à la *Toy Story 2*. *Planet Earth II* was not just a mind-blowing movie to watch, but thanks to a score by the incredible Hans Zimmer you can't help but feel the emotions while listening to its suite on #7. With a truly inspiring song from *Mulan II* on #8 about how "one is not enough", we close the movie sequels with *Lion King 2*'s "We Are One." Last but not least, I end this list with the last track from the album "D-2" by Korean artist Agust D.



Yule

The Sequels Playlist

1. "The Songcord" by Zoe Saldana
2. "Evenstar" by Howard Shore, Isabel Bayrakdarian
3. "Into the Unknown" by Idina Menzel, AURORA
4. "World Championship Finale 2" by The Barden Bellas
5. "Part II" by Paramore
6. "When She Loved Me" by Sarah McLachlan
7. "Planet Earth II Suite" by Hans Zimmer
8. "Lesson Numer One" by Lea Salonga
9. "We Are One" by Cam Clarke
10. "Interlude: Set me free" by Agust D

THE CONTINUATION OF SCORSESE'S MASTERPIECE, GONCHAROV

Written by Helenie Demir – Edited by Charlie Edelbroek

Goncharov (1973) ended with the titular character's tragic end. A story driven by love, secrets, and betrayals, its sequel is no different. Ambrosini (1976) follows Sofia who managed to escape the bloodshed that nearly drowned her in the past. Give your own twist to this iconic classic!

Sofia noticed Paolo was hidden on the boat just when they had almost reached her destination, _____. It was time to leave the past behind and start anew. Nothing would stop her, not even a coward like Paolo. He had explained what Katya had done to him, but Sofia knew the truth. Katya always told her everything. Sofia left him fending for himself and continued on her own.

For weeks, her new life went by smoothly: she got a job as a _____ and got herself a little apartment. She was finally a normal person, away from Andrey and his schemes. But her idyllic life was cut short when she came face to face with her again... Katya. Time felt like it stood still as she stared into her familiar face, but that wasn't what really happened. Time was going backwards. As Sofia looked at Katya, her red scarf blowing in the wind, she realized that her past followed her everywhere she went, there was no escaping it.

As they sat at the kitchen table in Sofia's apartment, Katya explained she was here to finish her job: kill Paolo. She came here as soon as she found out his location. Katya reached for the bowl of fruit, grabbing _____. She handed it to Sofia who stared at it for a long time until she ultimately accepts it and cuts it into pieces. Katya asked if she managed to find her family. Sofia scoffed, "I'm as close to finding them as I am to regrowing this leg." She put her hand on her prosthetic leg. "The past torments me as much as it provides me comfort," she said, eying Katya.

Katya found Paolo in _____. She followed him until there were no more people around and cornered him. Paolo never stood a chance and was cut into pieces by Katya who left his body to rot. She went back to Sofia's apartment, hands bloodied, red scarf limply falling from her neck. Sofia looked at her disheveled state and blocked her from coming in. "Leave," she whispered. Katya didn't know what to think until she heard Andrey's voice. "Let her in, Sofia."

As Katya closed the door behind her, she realized Andrey had _____ in his hand. She tried to get closer to Sofia whose conflict showed clearly on her face time—she had to choose between her husband or her soulmate... Andrey gestured both of them to sit down in the living room while he remained standing, looking out of the window onto the street. Sofia, hands resting on her knees, was like a statue. Katya, on the other hand, could not contain her unease about Andrey being with them. "You've betrayed my husband, you're gonna do the same to your wife?" The words were out of her mouth before Katya could stop herself.

Andrey turned with lethal quickness to Katya, hissing threats in her face. But before he got two words out, Sofia _____. He fell to the floor. "This isn't how our time ends," Sofia said, repeating those old words from so long ago. Katya snapped out of her shock and pulled Sofia by the hand. "We need to go."

WHICH SEQUEL ARE YOU? - QUIZ TIME

Written by Helenie Demir – Edited by Anna Preindl

To find out which sequel you would enjoy watching most, take this quiz and go see it if you have not already!

ANIMATED		LIVE ACTION	
Do you have a god complex?		A goofy or stressed and depressed main character?	
YES		GOOFY	
NO		STRESSED & DEPRESSED	
Fight by combat or with tech?		Choose your sidekick: a butler or a deranged astronaut	
COMBAT		BUTLER	
TECH		DERANGED ASTRONAUT	
What's scarier? A fat man who walks like a penguin or Tom Cruise?		What's scarier? A peacock or a white farmer?	
PENGUIN		PEACOCK	
TOM CRUISE		FARMER	

PLAY



00:00:00

FANFICTION

Written by Zoya Tashi

Photographed by Yule Brückner

Edited by Hester Schneider



At its core, fanfiction is a literary genre involving stories based on pre-existing material. These are often fan adaptations of TV shows, novels, manga, movies, and other media types. Sometimes fanfics are even based on real people! Unfortunately, one of the biggest misconceptions of today is that fanfiction writers are just a weird niche community on the internet. In this article, I will discuss fanfiction at an analytical level. It is surprising to know just how much fanfiction writing has an effect on modern literature!

At the mention of fanfiction, many connotations are sadly negative. Much of this is due to the common perception of writers using fanfics to explore strange and often inappropriate alternate worlds from original stories and/or people. This can be especially troublesome for various original content writers, as their stories can be 'bastardised' or twisted in a way that just makes them

cringe. Furthermore, with fanfictions based on real people, primarily celebrities, one can only imagine how unsettled they could feel reading a stranger's unique interpretation of themselves.

There is a bright side, however: many fanfiction writers are simply people who want to explore wholesome and creative alternative endings to the stories they enjoy. With fanfiction, writers and readers alike can let themselves spend more time in the world of a particular story and experience their favourite characters in new situations. Like with good music, you sometimes just need to dig a little deeper before finding something you like.

As a whole, fanfiction is a type of sequel that allows individuals to explore different aspects of original works that they love. This way, fans can extend the life of and maintain interest in various types of media.

AM 00:00

5 REASONS WHY *CATCHING FIRE* IS BETTER THAN *THE HUNGER GAMES*

Written by Marit Vogels
Illustrated by Tessa de Bosschere
Edited by Hester Schneider

It is a common consensus that the middle book of a trilogy is not usually the best book. In fact, it often functions as a transition, so that the author can tie together the first and last book. No matter how hard authors try, these sequels often repeat the formula of book one and thus completely fail in their attempt at being new, or they alter the story too much. Thus, Suzanne Collins' odds weren't in her favour, but I am pleased to say that she nailed the assignment. *Catching Fire* has become the best book in the trilogy. Here's why:

1. While *Catching Fire* repeats the formula of book one, the book contains scarier, more developed, and more intelligent competitors for the two protagonists.

2. The stakes are higher, the tension rises. The urgency is much greater than in the first book. It has become more than a battle of life or death. It has become a conflict between staying who you are and becoming your own enemy.



3. The side characters are well-developed, and we learn about their lives and sorrow. They become more crucial characters to the plot rather than just helping the Peeta and Katniss storyline.

4. The change of director. Of course, we will always love Gary Ross for bringing *The Hunger Games* alive on screen. However, his use of shake scenes just did not work. The switch to Francis Lawrence was a good call and gave us the incredible last three movies.

5. And last but not least, the fashion. The costumes are fiercer, more mature and better fitted to the occasion. It was clear that the budget was much bigger for this part of the movie.

SEQUELS: THE EASY WAY OUT?

Written by Anna Maria Popo
Edited by Anna Preindl

Surely, it is not easy to create a sequel that not only is faithful to the original plot, but also one that expands a story in new ways. But as it remains, the most difficult parts of making a sequel are convincing the audience that one is needed and having it live up to their expectations. Thus, the bugging questions remain: why are many sequels so disappointing to fans who have been looking forward to them for years? Are sequels just an easy way to make money faster? Is everything now a sequel? Are there no original stories to tell anymore?

While so many original movies have been the centre of attention, their sequels disappointed their audiences with hyperbolic changes. On the one side, they tend to go big while following the same recipe with no exception; a more intimidating villain, a more intricate conflict, more action, more subplots, etc. On the other side, a lot of sequels' successes are based on bringing back the original, beloved characters, but without the guarantee of a character development. It's a fine line to cross. Even if the 'go big' attitude can be overlooked, because there is nothing wrong with wanting to 'go big,' there seems to not be enough time put behind those scripts. Truthfully, it is almost expected that the quality of a sequel will not live up to the original. An original movie can take a long time to be created in the writer's mind, and an even longer period to be brought to life. There is a sense of fidelity and vision behind the creation of the story. However, sequels are created at a much faster pace, so they can be digested faster. They seem to be in the spotlight for a little while, but the issue of quality seems to not be taken into consideration. So, where is the line between quality and quantity? That is for the fans to decide!

Undoubtedly, there are great sequels out there. Some that come to mind are: *Toy Story 2* (1999), *Spider-Man 2* (2004), *Shrek 2* (2004), and a more recent one *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* (2022). Quality and originality do not have to deteriorate, if the creators give time to the development of their stories. But the 'bad' ones seem to outnumber the good ones. Because even though we cannot seem to have enough of Keanu Reeves, there was really no need for another *John Wick*, and the same goes for a franchise such as *Taken*.

When sequels are based on providing a couple of hours of adrenaline and forgetful, repetitive plots, they're doomed to be disappointing.

Tea Time with Rosalinde Supheert

Written/Interviewed by Daniek Garst

Photographed by Jonathan van Noppen – Edited by Marit Vogels

In this issue's Tea Time, we invited Rosalinde Supheert. Rosalinde was actually Tea Time's very first guest back in 2013. Unfortunately, unlike in 2013, we didn't meet up in person due to sickness and it 'raining cats and dogs' the day of the interview. So, we grabbed our cups of tea and got cosy behind our laptops. We had a lovely talk nonetheless, and chatted about Rosalinde's journey to Utrecht University, her current (research) projects, her hobbies, and more.

Let's have Pickwick tea decide on our first question of the interview. The tea bag asks: where do you prefer to drink your cup of tea?

I often drink it behind my computer. I go downstairs and make my tea, and then I feel guilty about staying downstairs, so I come up again to drink my tea behind my computer. It feels better drinking it behind my computer, but if I could really choose: in summer, out in the garden with a book in my favourite chair.

What did you study and where? And how did you end up teaching at Utrecht University?

Utrecht was close to where I lived, my mother and I lived in Amersfoort. First, I wanted to study veterinary science and Utrecht is a good place to do so. Alas, my mathematics and physics wouldn't allow for it. Then I wanted to study musicology, which you could also do at Utrecht University. So, I started studying musicology for one and a half years and then I failed my piano entrance examination for the Conservatorium. At this point I didn't want to study musicology anymore either. After realising I couldn't become a vet and I couldn't become a pianist, I wanted to do something I could do, which was English. So, I started studying

English in Utrecht and I haven't been sorry because it was a really good choice. My Masters took me to England and my PhD to America, but I kept coming back to Utrecht. It's a big university that gives you a lot of opportunities to branch out to all kinds of things. I like the way it's organised; you can always reach out to people but at the same time you don't have to.



Block two is almost over, which means you're almost done teaching "Adapting to the Novel." What will you be focusing on in block three?

I will be focusing on two things; one is my new research project. As you may know I now have a website – Map Your Hero(ine) – and it's about mapping characters from novels and comparing them to film characters. Because books I had been waiting on to be published are now published, I can focus on this research project. I also need to focus on the committee for English and Education. There's a TLC-committee which aims to facilitate teaching in English because so many departments now have English language tracks. This committee assesses the teaching of our colleagues in English and gives advice on how they can improve. These are the two things I definitely want to do.

Let's talk 'Mapping Your Hero(ine).' This project aims to map the representation of hero(ines) in fiction and their adaptation across cultures and media while simultaneously creating a database that students and general readers can participate in by mapping their favourite hero(ines) using data visualisation tools. Essentially, this project is an example of the field of Digital Humanities, incorporating information technology in humanities research. Why did you want to incorporate this field in your research/teaching?

We all close read, it's something you do throughout your studies, and digital humanities of course is new and popular. I'm not saying that digital humanities can replace close reading, but I think it adds something. It's a shame that very few courses use tools from digital humanities. I'd like to bridge the gap between the humanities and digital text analysis. I know that some universities in the U.S. have an enormous corpora of texts, and digital text analysis is such a new and interesting way of looking at texts. We can do it now because of digital developments, so let's use them! With this project I want to use digital humanities myself, but also get students involved and introduce them to the field of digital humanities. It's a work in progress, so I'm still finding my way, but it's a start and I'm proud of this website and having people contribute.

I saw that the 'Adapting to the Novel' syllabus gets updated regularly. What inspires you in formulating a syllabus? Do personal favourites usually make it onto the list?

To a large extent it's the people teaching it who decide what gets on the course. Because we have a policy that big courses should be



taught by a number of people, the disadvantage is that you cannot decide on the syllabus all by yourself. The advantage, however, is that you get a larger diversity of texts. It's so important to have your colleagues teach their passions. Teach something you like! I have experimented over the years, so I've taught *Tarzan*, *The Great Gatsby*, and a number of other texts but not all of them worked well. J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* have worked really well for me. I have done *Peter Pan* for a number of years now, but I would also like to do *The Wizard of Oz*, so maybe next year that will make it onto the syllabus. However, I'm not sure because when you've done a novel, you gather a lot of information. If you change, it's one novel a year and no more. But maybe next year the Wizard of Oz.

What are your hobbies/passions aside from literature?

That's easy, I love music, so going to concerts and listening to music. Classical music, pop

music, everything. Also, ballet and dancing, I love ballet performances. And walking, I love going for walks on the beach and in the forest with my dog. I guess those are my hobbies.

I read that you've been working on a project called 'The Land of Heart's Desire,' which is a musical performance of W.B. Yeats poetry. Are you an avid reader of Irish literature/poetry?

Oh, yes! My PhD is on W.B. Yeats and he's still very close to my heart. He was one of the first literary loves of my life. I was approached by a composer, Cees Thissen, and he wanted to create a performance about Yeats and show his life through his poems and compose music for the poems. Cees contacted me for advice on which poems they should use and how they should be interpreted. This performance is called 'The Land of Heart's Desire' and is a way of spreading literature to a broader audience. It was really interesting to do, to apply your knowledge and close read and have more people benefit from it. So, yes, I love Irish literature and especially Yeats.

In line with this edition's theme, what is your favourite sequel and why?

Is it okay if I consider an adaptation as a sequel? It is, isn't it? Because I think it's one of the novels I teach: *Heart of Darkness*. I think *Apocalypse Now* is a really great adaption or sequel of that novel. It's fantastic as a film in itself; of course, it has its faults and there's too much Brando towards the end, but I think it's a wonderful film that really makes you think. I really like the director's, Francis Coppola, passion.

Equally, what is your least favourite sequel?

I'm looking at my bookcase now. This is not really a sequel; it's called *Mary* by Anne Eekhout. It got very good reviews and I read it. It's about Mary Shelley and the writing of *Frankenstein*, but it didn't work for me. I guess also for Harry Potter. I like the first two because they're still young and cute, but then I go, "please, no more." I tend to like the first and second works of a multi-volume series. Authors seem to run out of steam if they go for so many sequels.

At last, do you have any recent reads you want to give a shoutout for Phoenix readers?

The one I'm reading right now is *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida*. It's a fantastically weird fantasy set in the afterlife. It's also set in Sri Lanka, which was a challenge for me because it's a country I'm not familiar with. Also, I would recommend *Shuggie Bain*, it's really well written but so depressing. So read it but go and have some fun afterwards.



THE GRUESOME ORIGINS OF FAIRY TALES

Written by Aleeza van der Giessen
Edited by Marit Vogels

Once upon a time—before Walt Disney turned them into magical stories where everyone lives happily ever after—fairy tales were better fit for mature audiences. Because Peter Pan did not just invite boys over to have the time of their lives, Cinderella did not leave her stepmother unharmed at the end of the story, and Sleeping Beauty may have given birth during her ‘eternal’ slumber. These kinds of classic fairy tales have developed over time and have become associated with a much younger audience. However, why did they used to be so gruesome? What changed?

Fairy tales all started as an oral tradition that taught morality, mainly to children. These tales were passed on from generation to generation, but many did not get written down. This changed in the 17th century when fairy tales were exchanged in French ‘salons,’ including those of Charles Perrault—the Father of Fairy Tales, if you will. Then Perrault’s successors, the well-known Brothers Grimm, came into view at the start of the 19th century. And this is where it gets interesting. The Grimms collected folktales—including Perrault’s—to reflect a certain German cultural identity, as nationalism bloomed in these Romantic ages. They changed up existing tales to reflect their culture and marketed them as cautionary tales for children. Even though they contained vicious infanticide, cannibalism, rape, and other cruelties that may be a remnant of the medieval oral origin. I will spare you the details.

In the 20th century, after the brothers’ death, scholars decided that children should be shielded from all this brutality and concluded that a ‘happy ever after’-story was more appropriate to read to kids. Nowadays, fairy tales still have a sense of didactics, but with a much brighter outlook on life. Cinderella’s stepsisters do not get their eyes pecked out by birds, Hansel and Gretel do not actually get eaten, and Rumpelstiltskin does not end up in two pieces. But we do learn not to take food from strangers, not to judge on appearance, to speak the truth, and to trust our instincts.

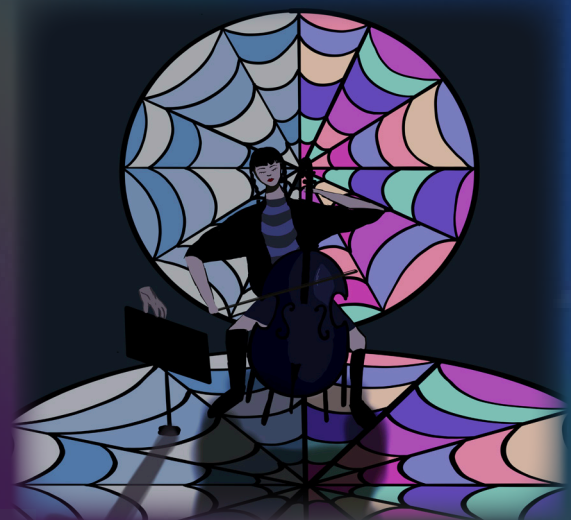
WEDNESDAY: A TIKTOK SENSATION

Written by Daniek Garst
Illustrated by Dione Maarsen
Edited by Nina van Veen

One of the good things to come out of 2022, in my opinion, is this little show called *Wednesday*. I’m kidding, of course, with 341.2 million hours of viewing time, *Wednesday* has become the most-watched series on Netflix in the first week of its release; that hardly warrants being called little. Its presence has been equally huge across multiple social media platforms. Leading up to the release, people started reminiscing past versions of Wednesday Addams. *Wednesday* is not an original story, but a spin-off of the concept of the Addams family, originally created by cartoonist Charles Samuel Addams. *Wednesday* is not the only reboot either. Across decades, multiple TV show adaptations, cartoons, and (animated) movies have been created. The most popular is probably the 1991 movie and its sequel.

I have lost count of how many times I have seen this fragment from *The Addams Family Values* (1993) on my feed: “Wednesday is at that very special age when she has only one thing on her mind.” “Boys?” “No, homicide.”

Though iconic, this line didn’t convince me to watch the movie. Therefore, since I hadn’t seen what I initially thought was the original, I also wasn’t planning on watching the Netflix adaptation. This is where the power of TikTok comes into play, however. I am talking about the viral Jenna Ortega/Wednesday dance scene. For weeks all I saw online was people imitating Wednesday’s goth-inspired dance moves. Apart from intriguing me enough to add the show to my watchlist, it also had the effect of making people that had been written off by society as ‘different’ feel celebrated online. The sad twist was that when they joined the trend they were often, once again, ridiculed in the comment sections for being/looking different. Some people clearly missed the point of the show, and I hope that a rewatch (and the future season two) will teach them to be better.



PHOENIX RANKS: PREQUELS

WRITTEN BY MARIT VOGELS – EDITED BY LUKA VAN DEN BERG

This Phoenix Ranks features: prequels! I can hear you thinking, prequels? But the issue is all about sequels. That's right! However, prequels are made after the original film, to provide an origin story or extra information to satisfy the fans. That's why we're including and ranking some of our favourite prequels!

THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS AND SNAKES (THE HUNGER GAMES)

I would like to begin with the most recent prequel on this list: *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*. This prequel came out more than 10 years after the original trilogy, but oh my, what a buzz it got! People (me) could not wait until the book was finally in their hands. This book follows President Snow, when he is just eighteen years old himself, as a mentor in the 10th annual Hunger Games. Collins' writing is simplistic, straightforward, but very touching. She provides background information of how Panem and the Hunger Games came to be. Sounds good, right? Fun fact: the film adaptation of this novel comes out on November 17th, 2023!

MONSTERS UNIVERSITY (MONSTERS & CO)

Personally, I loved this film more than the original one! The backstory of these monsters is so well-thought of, unique, and incredibly funny; it's just a lot better than the first film! In this film, we follow the monsters and their journey to becoming the 'screamers!' As expected, Sully was the more popular monster of the two while Mike always gets left behind. However, their friendship wins in the end, and their unique college journey is definitely worth a watch!

FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM (HARRY POTTER)

Harry Potter fans: who hasn't watched this film? I remember watching this film in the cinema without knowing a single thing about the plot, and I actually enjoyed it a lot! However, while the story is unique and the film is incredibly beautifully made, it didn't feel like a true *Harry Potter* film to me.

MAMMA MIA! HERE WE GO AGAIN (MAMMA MIA)

The costumes, the songs, the actors: this film is amazing! We learn about the story of young Donna through flashbacks, joined by an incredible cast portraying the iconic characters we got to know in the first film. In the present, we see Sophie navigating life after Donna's death and rebuilding the hotel on the Greek island. It is interesting to see how that summer went where Donna got together with these three men, causing the confusion over who was Sophie's father. Everything just clicked in this film. And as a cherry on top, we even got a short scene with the one and only Cher!

THE KILL ORDER (THE MAZE RUNNER)

This might be the least known prequel on this list because this one only exists as a book and was never made into a film. What a shame, though! This book gives an incredible insight in how this story, world, and plot became what they are. *The Maze Runner* provides more questions than actual answers. How did they get

there? Why can't they remember anything? Why were they chosen? Important questions which were never really answered, but this book does exactly that! It is a quick read, so if you're a fan of *The Maze Runner*, I would highly recommend this book.



A STORY TO BEHOLD: PREQUEL

Written by Anna Maria Popo

Edited by Luka van den Berg

The screams echo in the heart of the damp forest. The trees stand tall, but their cries cannot get through. What once brought her happiness and joy, brings her only despair and madness now. Her hands – tight grips around their fragile arms. She drags them through the muddy forest. Her only sons, her motherly lover, her familiar warmth has disappeared behind the veil of madness. But infidelity brought her to despair. The love of her life... who broke her home. Her so loving family, her dreams and hopes bruised for a moment of unfaithfulness. The betrayal that pushed her to the doorstep of torment will drag her and her sons to the never-ending void.

Her pace quickens, the wind blows past her long hair on her pale face, but she can see clearly in the night – her one and only purpose. She is getting closer now. The cries get louder, wails of lost hope.

She is there – standing before the river. The deepest part of the forest, where every breath feels like the last. Once more, she drags her two sons by each bruised hand in the sweet water where the only glimpse of light is the silver moon – a witness to the horror that unfolds.

Now, only stillness in the water, as her sons' last breaths left their lungs. She feels their heartbeat in her hands from their lifeless bodies, like cold shadows spreading in the river. When will the curtain of despair be lifted?

She wails, she weeps, she screams, she calls for help, but only the wind through the branches calls back. The same person who gave light to their lives, guided them to the deep end. She stands there, in the water, past her knees, with her wet white dress. Only the moon is her witness, reflecting in the stillness of the river. She walks deeper into the warm and inviting waters. Past her stomach, she keeps going deeper. Tight ropes around her ankles will not let her go back. It is the price you pay for turning mad. She closes her eyes, feels the water all around her and in her lungs. She inhales it like a cure while the last sound in her ear echoes... the cries of her sons. The trees are getting closer, surrounding

her, the thickness of the air will not let her breathe, the waters gripping her hair. The silver light of the moon is now blurry, and further away. She falls deeper in the tartar of her fate. The wails sound loud between the branches of the trees and beyond the wetness of the mud for all to hear. This is a horror to remember... this is a story to behold.

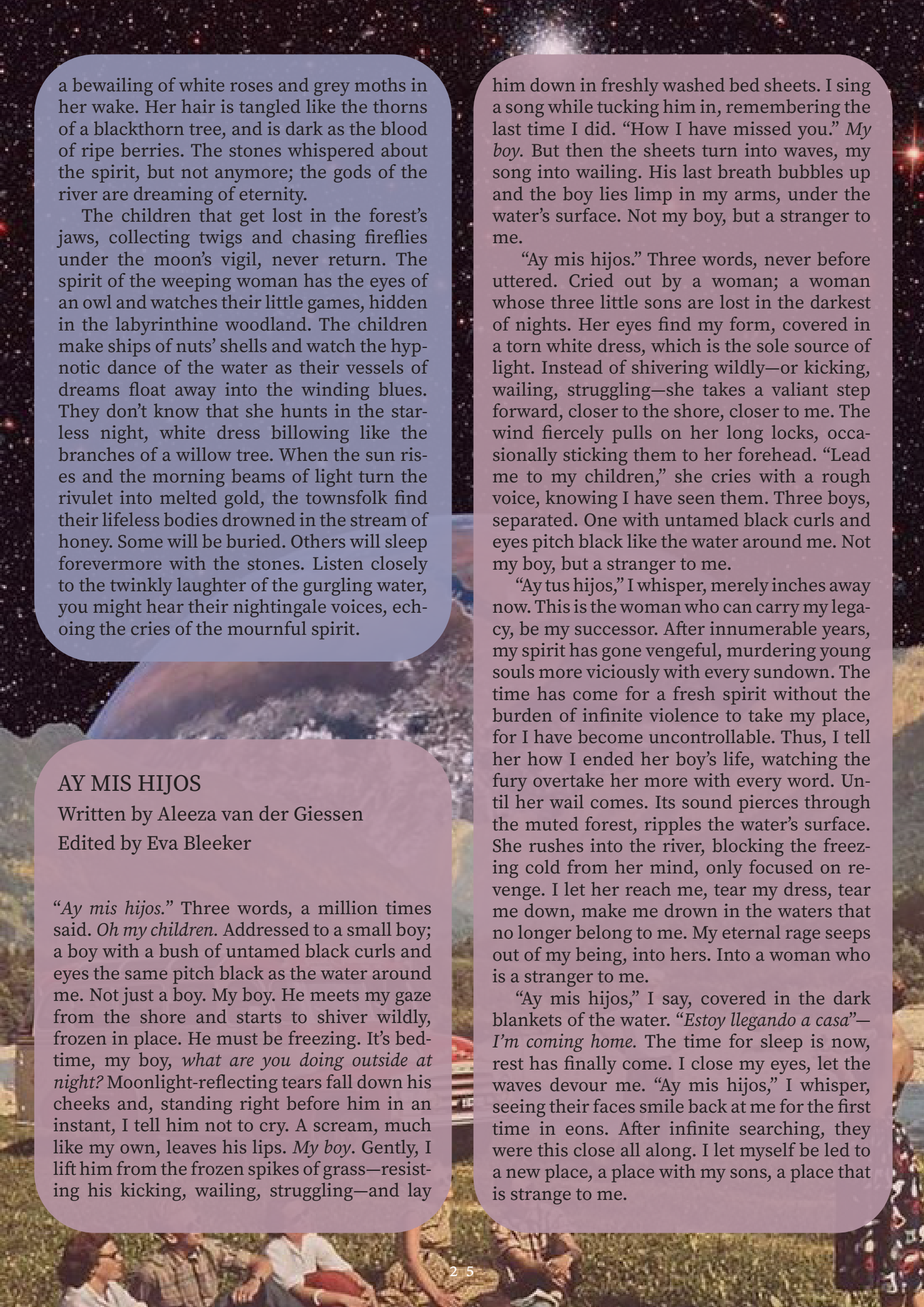
THE STONES AND THEIR SPIRIT

Written by Aitana Montoro

Edited by Anna Preindl

In the deepest part of the river, the stones sleep in an ancient and heavy slumber. Old creatures, older than the roots of trees and the mumbling of prophets. They are guardians of the river and keepers of the endless circles of the time. They are storytellers, and tell tales of boats and sweet-blooded sailors. The stones of the river know the song of the water and the sorrows of the wind. They have seen it all, the faeries that bathe in drops of dew, the beasts of the forest, and the flowers in the hair of Ophelia's believers. In the mud and moss of the riverbed, rest the bones of drowned children and wingless birds, thin as needles and white as ivory. Eroded by the water's gentle flow, nothing remains of the corpses, only pebbles of bone like blind eyes or fallen snow. The stones remember the name of those long-forgotten vestiges, shadows of the decayed flesh.

Every midnight, when a pearl is sewn on the dark velvet night and moonlight shines on the stardust paths of snails on the soil, the stones hear the laments of a spirit. The spirit roams the bank of the river, the stream where she drowned her sons. She weeps for their poor little souls, howls of despair and wildness tumbling from her cracked lips. Ragged screams, mouthfuls of agony that tear her throat with feral claws. A piercing sound, a banshee's wail. There is a death omen in her voice. Incorporeal tears and dried flowers, they wither and dry, falling softly from emaciated cheeks and raw-boned stems. She wears the rags of a frost-pale gown, leaving



a bewailing of white roses and grey moths in her wake. Her hair is tangled like the thorns of a blackthorn tree, and is dark as the blood of ripe berries. The stones whispered about the spirit, but not anymore; the gods of the river are dreaming of eternity.

The children that get lost in the forest's jaws, collecting twigs and chasing fireflies under the moon's vigil, never return. The spirit of the weeping woman has the eyes of an owl and watches their little games, hidden in the labyrinthine woodland. The children make ships of nuts' shells and watch the hypnotic dance of the water as their vessels of dreams float away into the winding blues. They don't know that she hunts in the starless night, white dress billowing like the branches of a willow tree. When the sun rises and the morning beams of light turn the rivulet into melted gold, the townsfolk find their lifeless bodies drowned in the stream of honey. Some will be buried. Others will sleep forevermore with the stones. Listen closely to the twinkly laughter of the gurgling water, you might hear their nightingale voices, echoing the cries of the mournful spirit.

AY MIS HIJOS

Written by Aleeza van der Giessen

Edited by Eva Bleeker

"*Ay mis hijos.*" Three words, a million times said. *Oh my children.* Addressed to a small boy; a boy with a bush of untamed black curls and eyes the same pitch black as the water around me. Not just a boy. My boy. He meets my gaze from the shore and starts to shiver wildly, frozen in place. He must be freezing. It's bedtime, my boy, *what are you doing outside at night?* Moonlight-reflecting tears fall down his cheeks and, standing right before him in an instant, I tell him not to cry. A scream, much like my own, leaves his lips. *My boy.* Gently, I lift him from the frozen spikes of grass—resisting his kicking, wailing, struggling—and lay

him down in freshly washed bed sheets. I sing a song while tucking him in, remembering the last time I did. "How I have missed you." *My boy.* But then the sheets turn into waves, my song into wailing. His last breath bubbles up and the boy lies limp in my arms, under the water's surface. Not my boy, but a stranger to me.

"*Ay mis hijos.*" Three words, never before uttered. Cried out by a woman; a woman whose three little sons are lost in the darkest of nights. Her eyes find my form, covered in a torn white dress, which is the sole source of light. Instead of shivering wildly—or kicking, wailing, struggling—she takes a valiant step forward, closer to the shore, closer to me. The wind fiercely pulls on her long locks, occasionally sticking them to her forehead. "Lead me to my children," she cries with a rough voice, knowing I have seen them. Three boys, separated. One with untamed black curls and eyes pitch black like the water around me. Not my boy, but a stranger to me.

"*Ay tus hijos,*" I whisper, merely inches away now. This is the woman who can carry my legacy, be my successor. After innumerable years, my spirit has gone vengeful, murdering young souls more viciously with every sundown. The time has come for a fresh spirit without the burden of infinite violence to take my place, for I have become uncontrollable. Thus, I tell her how I ended her boy's life, watching the fury overtake her more with every word. Until her wail comes. Its sound pierces through the muted forest, ripples the water's surface. She rushes into the river, blocking the freezing cold from her mind, only focused on revenge. I let her reach me, tear my dress, tear me down, make me drown in the waters that no longer belong to me. My eternal rage seeps out of my being, into hers. Into a woman who is a stranger to me.

"*Ay mis hijos,*" I say, covered in the dark blankets of the water. "*Estoy llegando a casa*"—*I'm coming home.* The time for sleep is now, rest has finally come. I close my eyes, let the waves devour me. "*Ay mis hijos,*" I whisper, seeing their faces smile back at me for the first time in eons. After infinite searching, they were this close all along. I let myself be led to a new place, a place with my sons, a place that is strange to me.

Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life Proves That Some Things Are Better Off As They Are

Written by Luca Salman – Edited by Anna Preindl

The original *Gilmore Girls* series revolves around the Gilmore mother-daughter duo Lorelai and Lorelai, though nicknamed Rory. Lorelai has gotten pregnant at 16, left home, or what she calls hell (S1 E20), shortly after giving birth. She refuses the proposal of marriage and builds up her own life in Stars Hollow — a small, slightly crooked town about 30 miles away from her parents.

She raises Rory on her own, works her way up and runs an Inn (very fittingly called "The Independence Inn") by the time the show starts.

The protagonists of the show, Lorelai and Rory, are characterised by speaking in pop culture references, fast-paced conversation, and an insatiable need for coffee. This is pretty much what keeps the show going for 7 seasons. From Rory's Chilton days to her Yale years, throughout her much disputed Yale break to her leaving to go follow Obama around on his presidential campaign, we see Rory grow up. The show ended in 2007 and after nearly 10 years, its sequel was released in 2016, called *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*. This show was divided into four episodes which simultaneously also represented the four seasons of one year. After following Lorelai and Rory for these 7 years, bidding them farewell and waiting endlessly, the anticipated reunion leaves most fans depressed and unsatisfied. Instead of meeting an older, wiser and developed Lorelai and Rory at ages 48 and 32, they are forcibly put into old patterns of who they were at 16 and

32. This results in them feeling dated and as if they are stuck in the versions we had last seen in season 7. A short list of aspects which stuck with me: the musical in the summer episode (I don't understand why shows feel the need to cosplay as musicals - it never works), Rory's boyfriend Paul (?), the missing theme song, the sad reality of Luke and Lorelai's relationship, too many vain lines which lie flat and uncomfortable, not enough Jess, Lane, and Suki. Not even Paris and Doyle were allowed to stay together.

Despite their best efforts, Lauren Graham and Alexis Bledel fail to melt back into the Lorelai and Rory that they once were. The magic of buying into the idea that Lorelai and Rory are out there, flesh and blood, and that you might stumble across them, is lost. It is now plain and obvious that they are two actors, reciting lines and pretending to be. We can hear the director yell cut, we can see the characters drop from their faces, we can imagine them walking back to their trailer, back home, back into their real lives. Stars Hollow is plastic and paper, a set full of lights and crew, not the bizarrely wonderful small town people could lose themselves in when needed.

Luckily, *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life* ventures so far out of what the actual show was that most people cross the sequel from their memories, ignore it, and leave it to rot away, hoping (still) for another, a different, and a more magical sequel.

Zodiac Signs as Sequels

Written by Anna Preindl – Edited by Helenie Demir

Aries - *The Dark Knight* (2008)

Taurus - *Thor: Ragnarok* (2017)

Gemini - *Spider-Man 2* (2004)

Cancer - *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York* (1992)

Leo - *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* (2018)

Virgo - *The Godfather Part II* (1974)

Libra - *Jurassic World* (2015)

Scorpio - *Wednesday* (2022)

Sagittarius - *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (2013)

Capricorn - *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (2002)

Aquarius - *The Matrix Reloaded* (2003)

Pisces - *Shrek 2* (2004)

Phoenix
Watchlist:
Reboots

The Office (US)
High Fidelity (2022)
Vampire Academy (2022)

Jurassic World (2015)
Karate Kid (2010)
Mortal Kombat (2012)

The Amazing Spider-Man
(2012)
Jumanji (2017)

Literal Stars in the Universe: The Strange Case of the Cancelled Snow Kids

Written by Helenie Demir – Edited by Anna Preindl

On every planet of the galaxy, you'll find a show that deserved a proper ending. A spectacular, throat-gripping story. Here on Earth, we call it *Galactik Football*. This show was so strong that it had to be banned, except in the hearts of those with the best taste in the universe. Twelve years ago, capitalism attacked Earth, swept *Galactik Football* away and destroyed our chances of a happy childhood. Twelve years without a decent show and nothing but retellings and random sequels. Hope is yet to live again. In a world full of reboots, our fate is, once again, in capitalism's hands.

Long before Messi and Ronaldo were in the lime-light, two other strikers were competing on the main stage for the title of best player alive. D'Jok and Sinedd have fought over *the* football cup, the one cup that your precious Neymar and Kane have and will never win. I am, of course, talking about the Galactik Cup, a competition reserved for the elite of the elite. While we know what the current World Cup title holders are up to, the three time champions of the Galactik Football Cup are missing and we'll never find out what happened to them. After three seasons, the story of the Snow Kids came to an abrupt end with two players and a complete junior team being sucked into space.

"They left us with the biggest cliffhanger the world had ever seen since the season one finale of American Dragon: Jake Long."

Jetix proved time and again that they were ahead of their time. With quality shows such as *Atomic Betty* and *Monster Buster Club*, Jetix showed what true storytelling was all about—a bunch of kids doing the most batshit things ever and literal adults still being entertained by the complete insanity unfolding on

their screens. *Galactik Football* is no different. Every season of the show followed an exciting plot with sensational world building. From criminal parents to bad boys who scream *"I can fix him,"* we were entertained for three seasons straight until the demons of capitalism decided to stop funding this show. They left us with the biggest cliffhanger the world had ever seen since the season one finale of *American Dragon: Jake Long*.

This show is where science-fiction peaked. The characters may have whacky names like Micro-Ice and Clamp, some graphics might be reused a million times, and the characters seem to only have one outfit, but does that mean the story's not there? An ugly cover of a book does not mean that the story is crap too. I mean, look at the *Vampire Academy* books. Those covers look like they're inspired by 00's erotica novels... but the story is great!

Who knows, maybe in this age where original ideas are lost to human kind, we'll get a live-action reboot. At least that gives me the opportunity to refocus my attention from a crushed childhood to a fantasy fancast. Imagine, Virgil van Dijk as Rocket (and I will go into heavy detail if you dare question me), Dylan O'Brien as Micro-Ice (because this is basically Stiles 2.0), Steven Yeun as Ahito (these guys are too unbothered by any drama) and HoYeon Jung as Mei (she'd manage that double life as a model and football star like the icon that she is, let's be real).

Until I'm getting a fourth season or a reboot, I'll be on YouTube, rewatching the existing three seasons for the hundredth time and wallow in my self-pity. This is your sign to step into a deep pit of darkness with me. Come on, it's not so scary. You'll get used to the disappointment...



Phoenix's Favourite Sequels

Illustration by Zuzia Gelauff