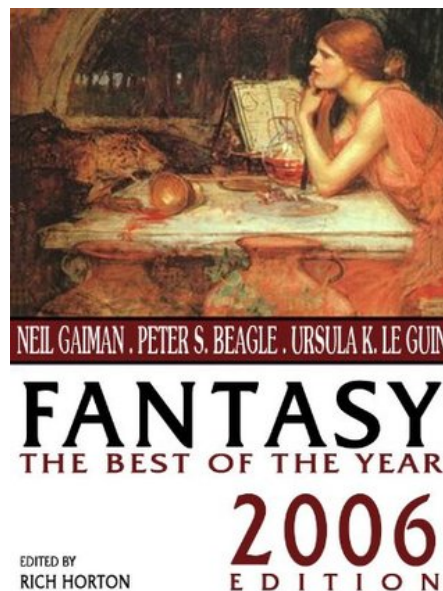




Fantasy: The Best of the Year, 2006 Edition

Rich Horton (Editor) , Gene Wolfe (Contributor) , Theodora Goss (Contributor) , Pat Cadigan (Contributor) , Peter S. Beagle (Contributor) , Sonya Taaffe (Contributor) , Marc Laidlaw (Contributor) , Michael Canfield (Contributor) , more... Richard Parks (Contributor) , Steve Rasnic Tem (Contributor) , Holly Phillips (Contributor) , Matthew Hughes (Contributor) , Elizabeth Bear (Contributor) , Paul Di Fillipo (Contributor) , George Saunders (Contributor) , Joe Murphy (Contributor) , Neil Gaiman (Contributor) , Eric Schaller (Contributor) ...less

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The best stories of the year: here is a collection of the year's best fantasy stories, by some of the genre's greatest authors, and selected by Rich Horton, a contributing reviewer to many of the field's most respected magazines. In this volume you'll find stories Peter Beagle, Paul Di Filippo, Neil Gaiman, Theodora Goss, Kelly Link, Gene Wolfe and many more!

Complete contents:

PIP AND THE FAIRIES, by Theodora Goss

COMBER, by Gene Wolfe

THREE URBAN FOLK TALES, by Eric Schaller

WAX, by Elizabeth Bear

THE EMPEROR OF GONDWANALAND, by Paul Di Filippo

COMMMCOMM, by George Saunders

FIVE WAYS JANE AUSTEN NEVER DIED, by Samantha Henderson

FANCY BREAD, by Gregory Feeley

SUNBIRD, by Neil Gaiman

THE SECRET OF BROKEN TICKERS, by Joe Murphy

ON THE BLINDSIDE, by Sonya Taaffe

JANE, by Marc Laidlaw

IS THERE LIFE AFTER REHAB? by Pat Cadigan

TWO HEARTS, Peter S. Beagle

SUPER-VILLAINS, Michael Canfield

EMPTY PLACES, by Richard Parks

INVISIBLE, by Steve Rasnic Tem

BY THE LIGHT OF TOMORROW'S SUN, by Holly Phillips

THE GIST HUNTER, by Matthew Hughes

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From Reader Review Fantasy: The Best of the Year, 2006 Edition for online ebook

Amy says

Another venture into the LeVar Burton reads podcast. This is light fantasy (just a whiff of magic) where a thief is compelled to help a wizard break into a castle, with an unexpected but satisfying ending.

Cduncan says

"Empty Places" is the story that Levar Burton reads in the third and fourth episode of "Levar Burton Reads." It is a fantasy story about a wizard and a thief. Although not my favorite of the three I have listed to so far, I still found it enjoyable. In the postscript, he tells of his 3rd grade teacher Mrs. Twigs and his role in class as the story reader. Being an educator, the thought of little Levar sitting on a stool in the front of class warmed my heart. I am addicted to "Levar Burton Reads."

Anne Bradley says

Charming story from Levar Burton Reads. Kinda like someone wrote down a story from a D&D campaign.

Andrea Turner says

This book/short story was told during episodes 3 & 4 of 'LaVar Burton Reads.' I really enjoyed this particular story for several reasons. I liked that it took place in a fantasy world with wizards and such, but magic wasn't the driving force of the plot, and also because the story didn't have the ending I expected.

Brenda says

I enjoyed this so much, I am definitely looking for more stories by Richard Parks. I loved the banter between Timon and Jayn, I could see a whole series built around these two, kinda hoping there is one to be honest.

Michael says

Excellent two part story on the LeVar Burton Reads Podcast.

Cynthia says

A fun and entertaining story about having the choice to make decisions, even if the choice already seems picked out for us.

Thief Jayn against the Wizard Timmon. They make an unlikely duo as they set off to save the Kingdom of Wallandia. It's with the Wizard's brains that they make it to the castle, but it's with Jayn's slight of hand and silent vigilance that the deed is done.

The third piece of short fiction read by LeVar Burton, in the LeVar Burton Reads podcast series.

Dave says

Some worthy stories in this bird, including Neil Gaiman's Sunbird, but the best story has to be Peter Beagle's Two Hearts, a sequel to The Last Unicorn.

Patrick says

Twists & turns.

Maygin at Not Quite a Literary Critique says

This is a rare short story which feels truly complete to me. There is a message to this story that is perfectly conveyed in the length of the story. In addition, this story first appears to be about a magician and thief, yet there is something else to this story. That underlying aspect to the story is absolutely beautiful and makes this a must read, or listen.

I listened to this on the LeVar Burton Reads podcast and his performance is excellent. Not only is his voice amazing, but there are added sound effects which truly add to the telling of the story. I love these performances and highly recommend the podcast. There are two aspects that are not ideal: one, that there is an ad in the middle of each story which comes with enough of a pause that it first appears that the story is over and 2: when a character speaks out loud, Burton reads those lines with an effect, like he is in a distant chamber or something, that can be distracting and sometimes makes it a bit challenging to fully grasp what the character is saying. I understand why there is an attempt to make it clear when a character is speaking versus when there is narration, but as someone who listens to audiobooks fairly often, I have not once been confused in other readings. Outside these critiques, which are consistent across the episodes I've listened to, these are by far the best audio performances I have listened to.

Blue says

[A wizard blackmails a thief into going on a quest, but then

Chrysten Lofton says

3.0? "You're in a sorry pass, Majesty, when a thief like me serves you better than your own."

In a special 2-part installment of Sticher podcast's LeVar Burton Reads , we're gifted with a good short story by Richard Parks. I don't have much to say outside of Burton's review - I think he hit the nail on the head when it came to his personal perspective on the story, and I strongly urge anyone reading my review to listen to the podcast for an enjoyable reading and intimate analysis. The only thing I'd like add on, is that I'm impressed with how much this story was able to accomplish within its brevity.

I think the story worked because it assigned the reader a couple of trope characters. The word 'trope' is sometimes profane to readers and writers, but I'm not so disturbed by it. If I tell you that we're looking at a moral/honorable thief, that might call to mind the likes of Malcolm Reynolds, Han Solo, Aladdin, or The Dread Pirate Roberts. So many stories borrow this trope. In Empty Spaces, we're introduced to The Honorable Thief, and, The Wise Wizard - who, as the trope demands, knows the cards in everyone's hand and much more than he's letting on.

I think in leaning on these tropes, the author was able get more done in a short time. The characters settle into the frame and so all that's left in a dash of personality. These characters had good personalities and it gave the story its own warmth. I had a nice time, especially through LeVar Burton's personal reading. If you'd enjoy a simple fantasy fable, add this to your to-read list.

Read on logged dates in 2017, backdated to exclude from the Goodreads Reading Challenge.

Jen says

Love Levar, but not sure about his short story choices. This one wasn't bad, but I really didn't like Timon completely forcing Jane to do what he wanted on pain of fiery death. And JANE kept harping on it, to the point where I kinda wanted Timon to get a bit trigger happy. Seriously? EVERY time you open your mouth, you tell your captor that you don't trust that he's not going to waste you once you complete the mission? Why give him ideas/annoying him?

The ending was sweet and the way they got into the castle was unique and I liked the political intrigue, but the characters kind of grated on me.

3, not bad, but not fantastic, stars.

Christopher James says

I really appreciated the dialogue in this story, as it revealed the gaps that humans and characters often have between who they think they are and the perception that those around them hold. I loved following two "evil" characters and using my own moral compass to, in a sense, test theirs. I found it really captivating overall.

Eva Ebert says

Third installation in the LeVar Burton Reads podcast series.

Very nice! Very traditional fantasy setting with a wizard and a rogue and a royal couple, but never felt stale. Good banter, a tense little plot and an interesting ending.
