

**חדשות האגודה – מאי 2024 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy**

**תל אביב:** מועדון הקריאה יעסוק בספר "הבית בים התכלת" מאת טי-ג'יי קלון. ויתקיים ביום חמישי 23.5, בשעה 19:30 בדירה בת"א. לקבלת המיקום יש להירשם במייל של דפנה קירש. בדף האירוע בפייסבוק.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1041913523811981>

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1758700637764422/>

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לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף לרשימת התפוצה או בדף האגודה בפייסבוק.

Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site: <http://www.sf-f.org.il>

**This month's roundup:**

- Special Wartime Issue (#8): Some thoughts
- 2 Book Reviews: *A Thousand Pieces of You* – by Claudia Gray & *The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet* – by Becky Chambers

Our usual tidbits from the Web.

– Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

# Special Wartime Issue #08

**Dear Readers:**

... And another month has gone by ... the 6<sup>th</sup> ...

This week (yesterday – [Yom HaZikaron](#)) we commemorate the fallen – soldiers, police, and security services personnel, as well as the many innocent civilians that have died in the defense of Israel or as victims of our enemies, since the founding, 76 years ago – just for wanting to live in a Free and Democratic Jewish State.

Last week, was Holocaust Memorial Day ([Yom HaShoah](#)) for the Six Million who were murdered just for being Jewish.

**Several thoughts:**

- The first was sent by a high school classmate, Michael:

**Jews have two memorial days:  
#YomHazikaron to remind us of the cost of having Israel.  
#YomHashoah to remind us the cost of not.**

- The second, a long banner carried by a row of clueless and/or plain hate-filled students marching at a US university anti-Israel protest rally said:  
"76 Years of Occupation"  
They just forgot to mention to add:  
"76 Years of War to Drive the Jews into the Sea"  
– a war started by Arab countries who rejected the UN-sponsored Free Jewish state in their midst, and wanted to ethnically (and physically cleanse the Middle East of all Jews – or at least those Jews who returned to their indigenous ancient homeland (the Land of Israel) and refused to die or submit.

- For those familiar with Marvel's X-Men comics (and films) – created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby – the story is about mutant humans who are hunted and ostracized by and shunted from society – to the point of pogroms waged against them. Recently, an animated TV series that ended sometime in the late 1990s has been reborn as "X-Men '97" and an interesting writeup about the series and its storyline and the relationship to recent current events, was written up by Benjamin Elterman on AISH.com.

See: <https://aish.com/x-men-97-reflects-the-fears-and-hate-jews-are-feeling>

Leybl Botwinik, Editor

## Reader Reflections:

**Just read your review of "Loki" [Marvel Universe TV series], and you really missed a few things.**

The TVA [Time Variance Authority] deals with anything that strays off the chosen "sacred timeline" (so that there will be no branching into a multiverse, since it will create variants of Kang [a time-travelling bad guy from the future], which would restart the Multiverse War).

Of course it had to be Loki. Loki has a tendency to not fall in line, making him the TVA's most frequent troublemaker.

Yes, he started his life as a villain, but throughout Marvel's so-called Infinity Saga (the story from the beginning of the MCU till the end of Avengers End Game), we saw different sides of him.

In the Thor Ragnarok film, we saw him joining his brother in defeating their evil older sister Hela (goddess of death) by destroying Asgard (the only way to stop her) and saving as many of his people as he could.

In the beginning of Avengers Infinity War, when Thanos massacres Loki's fugitive people (to get to the stone he stole before Asgard was destroyed), he chooses to give it up for his brother's life, and also tries to kill Thanos, in a futile attempt, knowing the universe will suffer by him. An attempt that leads to Loki's death.

This variant of Loki (from Avengers End Game, the one that escapes, while they went back in time to borrow earlier versions of the destroyed stones, to undo Thanos' SNAP), didn't go through all that personal growth.

He is still that hotheaded godling, who just failed to take over the Earth as his kingdom.

However, getting to watch his entire story, seeing how his actions accidentally led to his mother's death (in Thor 2), how he rekindled a relationship with his brother, became a hero to his people, and gave up his life for others. That's a pretty big change for a person (seeing how your life was supposed to happen).

This is a redemption story, but this time, it's finding redemption in freedom to all, with a horrible personal price.

For years his line was always *"I am Loki of Asgard, and I am burdened by a glorious purpose!"*, which always referred to his megalomaniac side, the one seeking to rule over others.

Through this journey, he acknowledged his loneliness, his desperate need to be accepted and loved, his need for others, for friends and family, and his fear of ending up alone.

Which makes it all the more bittersweet, when he realizes the only way to save everyone (since Sylvie, who becomes too important to him, will not agree to go back to a "sacred timeline" that gets to live, when all the others get destroyed, since it basically takes away free will), is to isolate himself and become the gardener who tends to a tree of the ever expanding multiverse.

In the comics, Loki, the god of mischief and lies, understands that a lie is nothing but a story, and evolves to become the "god of stories".

This is where Loki becomes that, a god of endless stories. keeping these worlds, and all the stories they hold.

He will spend an eternity all by himself (his worst fear), burdened as a keeper of stories.

And he will do that for the sake of everyone else, for all time, always.

Ziv Gur-Arye

### MORE from Ziv:

Loki was always playing between a Megalomaniac and the adopted child who just wants to feel as loved as his brother [Thor, son of Odin. Loki is an adopted son of Odin].

He was always complicated, and I think this variant of Loki (remember, he's not even "our" Loki), simply made a full circle.

He's not the Red Skull (who got punished as the eternal keeper of some desolate mountain in space, keeping watch over a stone).

He's someone who was always able to change. He was meant to get there, and it played beautifully.

He's chosen redemption, he's chosen everyone else but himself. His eternal burden, and it is as glorious as he's always wanted, but nothing like he would have wished for.

His final moment was heartbreaking...

**LB's response:**

Thanks for this explanation (most of which I knew 😊).

I still miss the 'old' Loki.

Marvel (DC too) used to be very 'black and white'. It's true, that there is a great deal of grey in life, but when I keep seeing the '**good/human(e)**' side of all the evil people - it reminds me of how nice and 'normal' a 'family man' many of the Nazis were with their friends and relations – but in their daily activity (i.e. when they were 'on the job' in the concentration camps and elsewhere), they carried out the cruelest and most brutal tortures and murder of Jews and others.

## ***Book Review: A Thousand Pieces of You (Firebird series 1 of 3) – by Claudia Gray***

**Reviewed by: Leybl Botwinik**

**Plot summary:**

Marguerite Caine's father is murdered, and the young lady has vowed to track down the (suspected) murderer - her father's protégé student. This is no easy task, considering that her parents – genius physicists – created an inter-dimensional travelling device, stolen by the killer, thanks to which he has escaped our world. As she hops from parallel world to parallel world, she occupies the body of that world's current version of herself (that's the way the device works).

As she chases after the killer – from dimension to dimension – she begins to doubt that the murderer is in fact that star student, and it may in fact be someone else – probably because she is beginning to fall in love with the suspected killer...



In short, the novel (part of a trilogy) is a mix of young adult romance and light sci-fi. I found it to be an interesting read and would certainly try the next two books should they fall into my hands. However, I wouldn't call it a 'wow' book and am not in any suspense as to what happens next, as I might be from other 'to be continued' stories.

Here are two reviews that will give you a better input into the contents:

<https://readatmidnight.com/2015/09/12/book-review-a-thousand-pieces-of-you>

<https://ratedreads.com/thousand-pieces-firebird-young-adult-book-review/>

BTW: Claudia Gray is, apparently, the pseudonym of Amy Vincent, an American writer, who also wrote the Evernight series and multiple Star Wars novels.

## ***Book Review: The Long Way to a Small Angry Planet (2014, Wayfarers series 1 of 4) – by Becky Chambers***

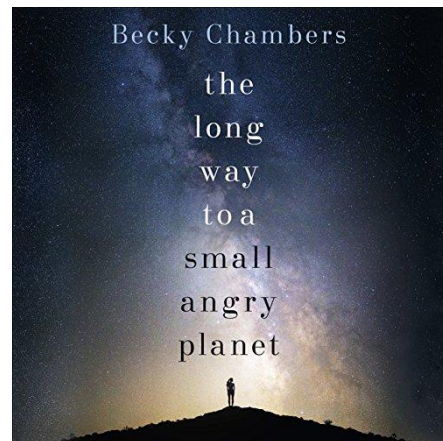
**Reviewed by: Leybl Botwinik**

**Plot summary:**

A young lady, Rosemary Harper, joins a mixed crew of humans and non-humans as a simple clerk on a private spaceship, *Wayfarer*.

She has some secrets and seems to be running away from her former life. Expecting a relatively quiet and stable life's journey on the beat-up ship, she with the crew, are hired to carry out a once-in-a-lifetime lucrative project that throws them into a space adventure like no other. The job is to tunnel wormholes through the ethers of space to open a route to a distant planet.

It's a fun, light-hearted book, about space travel, both friendly and dangerous aliens, and a lively intriguing crew with the sharp main protagonist – Rosemary Harper – at the helm of the story (though not of the spaceship).



This is the kind of SF that would make a great film or better yet, a TV series (even though I haven't read the follow-up books I'm pretty sure, that if they follow in this book's path, that they would be highly enjoyable).

Winner of 2019 Hugo Award for Best Series – it also won or was nominated for other awards.

Read more reviews and writeups (including on Wikipedia):

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/22733729>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Long\\_Way\\_to\\_a\\_Small,\\_Angry\\_Planet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Long_Way_to_a_Small,_Angry_Planet)

## Fun from the Web

- **How long would it take to walk around Mars?**  
<https://www.space.com/how-long-would-it-take-to-walk-around-mars>
- **Dune: What the climate of Arrakis can tell us about the hunt for habitable exoplanets**  
<https://www.space.com/dune-climate-arrakis-hunt-for-exoplanets>
- **Get a sneak peak at Universal Epic Universe's Celestial Park, coming in 2025 (images)**  
<https://www.space.com/celestial-park-universal-epic-universe-2025>
- **Western US residents report the most UFO sightings – What are they actually seeing?**  
<https://www.space.com/ufo-sightings-western-united-states>
- **Is it time for a new Outer Space Treaty? Reports of Russian nuclear space weapon raise questions**  
<https://www.space.com/new-outer-space-treaty-russia-nuclear-space-weapon>
- **Could these big expandable habitats help humanity settle the moon and Mars?**  
<https://www.space.com/max-space-expandable-habitats-moon-mars>
- **Sorry, little green men: Alien life might actually be purple**  
<https://www.space.com/alien-purple-bacteria-new-catalog-expands-search-for-life>

## TV&MOVIES

- **Watch 'Doctor Who' visit the Victorian Era and the age of dinosaurs in new Season 14 trailer**  
<https://www.space.com/doctor-who-season-14-trailer-disney-plus>
- **'The Signal' is a sci-fi miniseries with clever twists**  
<https://r.smartbrief.com/resp/rQoKCKmagYDzsFvrCifOtUBWcNYNrO?format=multipart>

- 'Constellation' creators on ghostly voices and piecing together a satisfying sci-fi puzzle  
<https://www.space.com/constellation-apple-tv-harness-maclaren-interview>
- The Lost Star Trek Spin-Off  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gN6Z6yC26E0>
- '3 Body Problem:' How Netflix's sci-fi saga employs the famous Wow! SETI signal  
<https://www.space.com/3-body-problem-seti-wow-signal>
- 'Star Wars: Tales of the Empire' sets surprise May the 4th debut on Disney Plus (video)  
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-tales-of-the-empire-trailer-release>
- See new trailer for NatGeo's 'The Space Race' documentary saluting Black astronauts (video)  
<https://www.space.com/natgeo-the-space-race-documentary-black-astronauts-trailer>
- Netflix releases official trailer for Jennifer Lopez mech combat sci-fi film 'Atlas' (video)  
<https://www.space.com/atlas-netflix-official-trailer>

## COMICS

- Marvel Comics' new series celebrates Boba Fett's Mandalorian dad  
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-jango-fett-marvel-comics-series>
- 'Star Wars' fan-favorite Sith returns in 'Darth Maul: Black, White & Red'  
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-darth-maul-black-white-red-comic-anthology>
- Sneak peek: Browncoats grab victory in Boom! Studios' upcoming 'Firefly: Verses' comic  
<https://www.space.com/firefly-verses-browncoats-sneak-peek>

## GAMES

- Wage interplanetary war in upcoming space strategy game 'Falling Frontier' (video)  
<https://www.space.com/falling-frontier-game-trailer>
- New 'Star Wars: Unlimited — Spark of Rebellion' trading card game strikes our galaxy  
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-spark-of-rebellion-trading-card-game>
- NASA launches its 1st official tabletop roleplaying game campaign (video)  
<https://www.space.com/nasa-roleplaying-game-the-lost-universe>

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