

# Fantasy

In addition to the usual stuff—tall castles, fire-breathing dragons, magical swords, powerful wizards and brawny barbarians—Young Adult fantasy fiction dramatizes the problems and decisions teenagers face. Teens plotting their future will appreciate the agonizing choices Cerinthe faces in *Dia Calhoun's Aria of the Sea*, while those whose futures are chosen for them may relate to Will in *The Ruins of Gorlan* (*John Flanagan*).

Most but not all of the books here are set in imaginary places such as *Terry Pratchett's* hilarious Discworld. Feudal Japan also makes an appearance (*Kara Dalkey*), as does a realm based on Chinese mythology (see *L.G. Bass*) and an underground kingdom that lies beneath Victorian England (see *Clare B. Dunkle*).

For books set in the modern day, try *Holly Black's Valiant* (New York), *Scott Westerfeld's Midnighters* (small-town Oklahoma) and *Cinda Williams Chima's* Heir books.

Older readers might like *Kurt Busiek's* graphic novel adaptations of the Conan stories, *Holly Black's* hard-edged stories about fairy folk, or *Herve Jubert's* hard-to-categorize melding of science fiction, fantasy and horror. Well-imagined and well-written, *Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials* trilogy is rewarding for younger and older readers alike.

For books featuring chivalry, love, heroism and betrayal in Camelot, see *Vivian Vande Velde* and *Jane Yolen*. Books in which the setting seems realistic except for a few fantastic occurrences, creatures or characters—referred to as "magic realism"—are sprinkled throughout different booklists. English author *David Almond* has won awards for works of magic realism such as *Skellig* and *Kit's Wilderness*.

Y BAS

## **Sign of the Qin**

by L. G. Bass

When the Emperor's first son is born, he is marked with the sign of the Qin—the brand of the outlaw. Could the child be the new Starlord, destined to restore justice to a demon-haunted land? The first book in the **Sign of the Qin** series. (2004)

Y BEL

## **The Last Knight**

by Hilari Bell

A teenaged knight errant and his squire save a noble lady from imprisonment in a tower, only to learn that she is an accused murderess. Bell convincingly creates a quasi-medieval world imbued with "magica," a strange force that alters the laws of probability, and which makes the daring exploits of Sir Michael and Fisk seem plausible. (2007) The first book in Bell's Knight and Rogue series.

Y BLA

## **Valiant**

by Holly Black

Seventeen-year-old Valerie runs away to New York City, settling with street kids who live in the subway tunnels. But the kids are no ordinary runaways, they're fairy folk who distribute life-saving but intoxicating potions for a troll named Ravus. When some of the fairies receiving deliveries start to die, Ravus comes under suspicion, and Valerie must investigate to prove his innocence. (2005) Also try **Tithe** (2002) and **Kin** (2008) by Black. The former is on the Y fiction shelves, the latter in the graphic novels area.

Y BUS

**Conan : The Frost Giant's Daughter and Other Stories**

by Kurt Busiek

Using Conan creator Robert E. Howard's original stories as source material, comic writer Busiek and artist Cary Nord breathe life into the thickly thewed barbarian. In this collection, a young Conan ventures into the icy north, where he joins a bloodthirsty war party seeking revenge a band of enemy warriors. (2005) Followed by **Conan : The God in the Bowl and Other Stories** (2005) and **Conan : The Tower of the Elephant and Other Stories** (2006). *Look for these books in the Young Adult graphic novels area.*

Y CAL

**Aria of the Sea**

by Dia Calhoun

When Cerinthe Gail is chosen to attend the Royal Dancing School in the magical kingdom of Windward, she can hardly believe it. But problems arise, forcing Cerinthe to make some difficult decisions about her life. Should she follow her dream and become a dancer or take up her previous career as a healer? (2000)

Y CAS

**Graceling**

by Kristin Cashore

Born with a "grace" – a special power for – fighting, Katsa teams with Po, another young warrior, to topple a corrupt king. Will they succeed? Will they fall in love? Read the first book in Cashore's new series, which blends fantasy with romance, to find out ... (2008)

Y CHI

**The Warrior Heir**

by Cinda Williams Chima

His body overflowing with magic, 16 -year-old Jack learns that his destiny involves sorcery rather than soccer practice in this tale that takes him from small town Ohio to England, and pits him against a secret society comprised of warriors and spellcasters. (2007) Followed by **The Wizard Heir** (2007) and **The Dragon Heir** (2008).

Y CON

**The Singer of All Songs**

by Kate Constable

Calwyn and her fellow priestesses sing magical songs to create a barrier of ice along the borders of their land, protecting them from attack. One day, a young man slips through to warn the ice priestesses that a power-hungry sorcerer wants to seize control of their land—and others—by learning each land's magical songs. Together, Calwyn and the young man embark on a lengthy and dangerous quest to thwart the sorcerer's plans. (2004) Book one in the Chanters of Tremaris trilogy, followed by **The Waterless Sea** (2005) and **The Tenth Power** (2006).

Y CRO

**The Naming**

by Alison Croggon

Rescued from slavery by a bard, teenaged Maedra accompanies him on dangerous journeys to bardic centres of learning, where she develops fighting skills and exhibits strange powers that point towards her possible destiny. Could she be the One who was Foretold? Like Tolkien, Croggon builds a remarkable, densely detailed fantasy world. (2006) Followed by **The Riddle** (2006) and **The Crow** (2007).

Y DAL

**Little Sister**

by Kara Dalkey

Thirteen-year-old Fujiwara no Mitsuko, daughter of a noble family in 12<sup>th</sup> century Japan, enlists the help of a shape-shifter and other figures from Japanese mythology in her efforts to save her older sister's life. (1996)

Y DIC

**The Ropemaker**

by Peter Dickinson

When the magic that protects their valley starts to fail, Tilja and her grandparents journey into the evil Empire to find the ancient magician Faheel, who originally cast the protective spells. (2001)

Y DUN

**The Hollow Kingdom**

by Clare B. Dunkle

While walking in the country, teenaged Kate comes across some strange, magical creatures in a clearing. Soon after, her sister disappears, so Kate, thinking the creatures are responsible, agrees to marry one of them—Marak, the hideous goblin king—in the hopes that he will release Emily. But she soon finds that she has misjudged Marak in more ways than one ... (2003)

Y FLA

**The Ruins of Gorlan**

by John Flanagan

While learning to be a forest ranger, 15-year-old Will must use his newly acquired skills—including a heightened awareness of his surroundings—to help defeat creatures that are attacking his kingdom. (2005) The first book in The Ranger's Apprentice series, which is up to five titles and counting.

Y HAD

**Escape from Memory**

by Margaret Peterson Haddix

While hypnotized, 15-year-old Kira reveals memories of another time and place that may eventually cost her and her mother their lives. (2003)

Y HIL

**The Cry of the Icemark**

by Stuart Hill

When her father dies, teenaged Thirrin becomes Queen of the Icemark. With her warlike neighbours planning a devastating invasion, Thirrin forges alliances with werewolves, vampires and snow leopards, setting up a bloody final battle. (2005) Book one of the Icemark Chronicles, followed by **Blade of Fire**.

Y JON

**Dark Lord of Derkholm**

by Diana Wynne Jones

The wizard Derk and his magical family try to put a stop to the devastating world tours led by the tyrannical Mr. Chesney. (1998) In **Year of the Griffin**, Derk's daughter Elda arrives for schooling at the Wizards' University, where she encounters friends, pirates, assassins, sabotage, bloodshed and magic misused.

Y JUB

### **Dance of the Assassins**

by Herve Jubert

In the future, London, Paris, Venice and Versailles have been turned into virtual reality theme parks that attempt to bring the past to life. When a murderer—bearing all the hallmarks of Jack the Ripper—strikes in London, a sorceress named Roberta and her assistant, Clement, investigate. A weird mingling of genres, this book for older teens (due to graphic content) is part fantasy, part science fiction, part mystery, part horror. (2004)

Y LEE

### **Wolf Tower**

by Tanith Lee

Sixteen-year-old orphan Claidi is forced to serve as a handmaiden to cruel royal families in the oppressive House. Outspoken and ready for romance, she becomes embroiled in a plot to rescue a handsome, intriguing prisoner. Written in diary format. (1998) Book one of the **Claidi Journals**, followed by **Wolf Star**, **Wolf Queen** and **Wolf Wing**.

Y MAL

### **The Legend of Lady Ilena**

by Patricia Malone

Upon the death of her father, 15-year-old Ilena realizes that if she is ever to know her true identity, she'll have to solve the mystery herself. Grimly determined, Ilena sets out on a dangerous journey through Britain, encountering fierce warriors from the north, malevolent Druids and a loyal, resourceful dwarf. (2002)

Y MEL

### **The Hunter's Moon**

by O. R. Melling

Three heroines caught between Ireland and Canada, and between this world and another, face dire consequences while embarking on quests. (1993) The first book of **The Chronicles of Faerie** series, followed by **The Summer King**, **The Light-Bearer's Daughter** and **Book of Dreams**.

Y NIC

### **Wind Singer**

by William Nicholson

When her family is ostracized because of her non-conformist behaviour, Kestrel Hath flees from the stifling Amaranth society. Along with her twin brother and a tagalong classmate, she follows an ancient map to find an artifact that may be able to heal Amaranth and its people. (2000) The first book of a trilogy, followed by **Slaves of the Mastery** and **Firesong : An Adventure**.

Y NIX

### **Sabriel**

by Garth Nix

Daughter of the necromancer Abhorsen, Sabriel must journey into the mysterious, magical Old Kingdom to rescue her father from the Land of the Dead. (1995) Followed by **Lirael, daughter of the Clayr** and **Abhorsen**. Also look for Nix's other series: **The Seventh Tower** and **The Keys to the Kingdom**.

Y PIE

### **Treasure at the Heart of the Tanglewood**

by Meredith Ann Pierce

Hannah is a healer with unusual powers. When she leaves the wizard whom she has always worked for, she embarks upon a journey that uncovers the truth about who and what she is. (2001) Also try Pierce's **Firebringer** and **Darkangel** trilogies.

Y PIE

### **The Will of the Empress**

by Tamora Pierce

The shrewd, strong-willed empress of Namorn forces Sandry, Daja, Tris and Briar—four youths with magical powers—to live and work in her country. (2005) The **Circle of Magic** series (1997-99) introduces the four young misfits. The titles include: **Sandry's Book**, **Tris's Book**, **Daja's Book** and **Briar's Book**. In the **Circle Opens**, teenaged Sandry and her student Pasco investigate a mystery involving invisible killers. Other books in the series include **Magic Steps**, **Street Magic**, **Cold Fire** and **Shatterglass**.

Y PRA

### **The Wee Free Men**

by Terry Pratchett

Armed with only a frying pan, witch-in-training Tiffany Aching must protect her home from the creatures of Fairyland. Luckily, some little blue men decide to give her some help. (2004) Also look for **A Hat Full of Sky**.

Y PUL

### **The Golden Compass**

by Phillip Pullman

Lyra Belacqua sets out to find a close friend who has been kidnapped from the streets of Oxford, one of many children that have gone missing. After escaping from her guardian, the wicked Mrs. Coulter, her quest for their whereabouts leads her to a lab in the Far North, where gruesome experiments took place. (1996) The first book in the acclaimed **His Dark Materials** series, followed by **The Subtle Knife** and **The Amber Spyglass**.

Y SMI

### **Crown Duel**

by Sherwood Smith

To fulfill their father's dying wish, teenage Countess Meliara and her brother Branaric organize a revolution against a greedy king. (1997) Followed by **Court Duel**. Full of fights, narrow escapes and absorbing magic, the **Wren Trilogy** (1990-95) includes the titles **Wren to the Rescue**, **Wren's Quest** and **Wren's War**.

Y TUR

### **The Thief**

by Megan Whalen Turner

Imprisoned for life, a gifted young thief named Eugenides is offered one chance to win his freedom. (1996) Also look for the sequels, **The Queen of Attolia** (2000) and **The King of Attolia** (2006).

Y VAN

### **The Book of Mordred**

by Vivian Vande Velde

Three women who knew King Arthur's son Mordred tell their stories about the traitor of Camelot, often treated as a one-dimensional villain. A fascinating portrait of a man full of bitterness on the one hand, and virtue on the other, emerges. (2005) In **The Conjurer Princess**, a young princess learns magic from a wizard in order to rescue her older sister, who was kidnapped during her wedding by armed knights. (1997) In **Dragon's Bait**, 15-year-old Alys is wrongly condemned for witchcraft and left as a sacrifice to a dragon. When the dragon turns out to be friendly, she has the opportunity to turn the tables on her accusers. (1992)

Y WES

### **The Secret Hour**

by Scott Westerfeld

After moving to Bixby, Oklahoma with her family, 15-year-old Jessica Day joins a group of teenage misfits who are battling an ancient evil that only they know about. Can they defeat the shadow creatures that roam Bixby at midnight, when the clock magically stops for one hour? (2004) The first book of the **Midnighters** trilogy, followed by **Touching Darkness** and **Blue Noon**.

Y YOL

### **Sword of the Rightful King**

by Jane Yolen

In this reimagined version of the King Arthur legend, the young king sits precariously upon his throne, surrounded by conspirators. Hoping to strengthen Arthur's hold on the crown, Merlinus plants a sword in a stone and announces that only the true king can retrieve it. But his plans go awry when Arthur isn't the one who pulls the sword free ... (2003)

## **Fantasy Series**

### **DRAGONLANCE** series

Set in the fantasy world of Ansalon, this series features characters and creatures from the Dungeons & Dragons role-playing game. Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman are notable authors. "Dragonlance: The New Adventures" features stories for middle school readers.

### **FORGOTTEN REALMS** series

R.A. Salvatore is a notable author of this series set in another Dungeons and Dragons fantasy world.

## **A note on finding books ...**

Young Adult fiction is filed from A to Z under the first three letters of the author's LAST NAME. To find Holly Black's **Valiant**, you would need to look for the letters BLA, near the beginning of the YA fiction area.

All fiction books (and a few non-fiction books) that are less than a year old go in the **new books** area, which is marked by a sign. At Poirier Library, **graphic novels** are on a shelving unit in the corner of the Young Adult area. At City Centre Library, the graphic novels are underneath the teen magazines, just to the left of the new books.

Collections of **short stories**—themed around a certain topic (ghost stories) or by a particular author—are filed just after the Z authors.

If a Young Adult book you want ISN'T ON THE SHELF, try looking on the **paperback spinners** in the Young Adult area. Most of the paperbacks are filed under the first letter of the author's LAST NAME. For Tamora Pierce books, you would look for P. Signs on top of the paperback racks tell you which author letters are in each spinner.

Books on the paperback spinners DO NOT APPEAR in the online library catalogue. In other words, you cannot find them on computer. So when the computer says a book is out, it means just the copies it knows about. You might still find it on the paperback spinners.

Note that the paperback spinners include special categories, such as **series books** (Sweet Valley High, Dragonlance, Cirque Du Freak), **mysteries**, **science fiction** and **classics** by authors such as Jane Austen and Charles Dickens. Look for the headings above each spinner to make sure you're looking in the right place.

If you have any trouble finding a book, please consult a librarian at the reference desk. They are happy to help you.

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