

2018: The Third Quarter Summary



Figure 1: Word Cloud

It wasn't too bad a quarter, at least not as measured by the number of books completed. I was helped along by the fact that many of them contained Elric stories, and I developed an interest in these stories, and a desire to finish them. (I didn't quite finish *all* the Elric material, but I got through the majority of the older stories.)

Books Completed

- *Down and Out in Paris and London* by George Orwell
- *Icehenge* by Kim Stanley Robinson
- *Daughter of Dreams* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric of Melniboné and Other Stories* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric: The Fortress of the Pearl* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric: The Sleeping Sorceress* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric: The Revenge of the Rose* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric: The Sailor on the Seas of Fate* by Michael Moorcock
- *Elric: Stormbringer!* by Michael Moorcock
- *Jhereg* by Stephen Brust
- *Yendi* by Stephen Brust
- *Butcher Bird* by Richard Kadrey

I've written extensively about the Elric books in the blog. Several of these really did not seem to be worth my time, especially *Elric: The Fortress of the Pearl*

and *Elric: The Revenge of the Rose*. Also, as I have discussed, it did not seem to improve the Elric stories to read them in their in-universe chronological order, the way the Gollancz Michael Moorcock Collections volumes present them.

Butcher Bird was unimpressive, and is on the giveaway pile. The Stephen Brust novels were not bad, but not really great, either. These are the first two books in a series. Maybe I should jump ahead and try a later book in the series, to see if they improve.

Icehenge was a surprise standout — a better book than I expected, and I recommend it to anyone who is a fan of Kim Stanley Robinson’s work. And *Down and Out in Paris and London* is a fascinating classic; it troubles a contemporary reader with some bigoted and misogynist bits and pieces, but it remains an interesting study of the subculture of the underclass. The author’s insights into poverty and its causes and effects are still very much worth reading.

Books in Progress

- *The Centipede Press Library of Weird Fiction: Arthur Machen* by Arthur Machen
- *Mistaken Identity: Race and Class in the Age of Trump* by Asad Haider
- *The Complete Cosmicomics* by Italo Calvino
- *Tekla* by Steven Brust
- *The Chapo Guide to Revolution: A Manifesto Against Logic, Facts, and Reason* by Chapo Trap House
- *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook* by Mark Bray
- *The Conquest of Bread* by Peter Kropotkin

These books were bedtime reading for the kids in quarter three:

- *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L’Engle
- *The Wild Robot Escapes* by Peter Brown
- *The Fellowship of the Ring* by J. R. R. Tolkien
- *Dragons at Crumbling Castle and Other Tales* by Terry Pratchett

Films Watched

- *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968 film, 2018 4K restoration for IMAX)
- *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin* (1978 film)
- *Dragon Ball Z: Broly – The Legendary Super Saiyan* (1993 film, 2018 Fathom Events theatrical release)

TV Shows Watched

- *Lego Ninjago: Masters of Spinjitzu* Season 1, Episode 8: “Once Bitten, Twice Shy”
- *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* Season 1, Episode 3: “Shadow of Malevolence”
- *Babylon 5* Season 1, Episode 8: “And the Sky Full of Stars”

- *Babylon 5: The Gathering* (1993 TV movie and series pilot)
- *Star Trek: The Next Generation* Season 5, Episode 24, “The Next Phase”
- *Star Trek: The Next Generation* Season 5, Episode 22: “Imaginary Friend”

Ypsilanti, Michigan

January 2nd, 2019 (yes, very late — I started this summary months ago, but completely forgot to finish it).

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