



Strangers Among Us: Tales of the Underdogs and Outcasts (Laksa Anthology Series: Speculative Fiction)

Kelley Armstrong, Susan Forest, Lucas K. Law, A.M. Dellamonica, Amanda Sun, Edward Willett, Gemma Files, Hayden Trenholm, Suzanne Church, Sherry Peters, Ursula Pflug, A.C. Wise, James Alan Gardner, Tyler Keevil, Rich Larson, Mahtab Narsimhan, Derwin Mak, Lorina Stephens, Robert Runte, Bev Geddes, Erika Holt

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There's a delicate balance between mental health and mental illness . . .

Who are the STRANGERS AMONG US?

We are your fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, friends and lovers. We staff your stores, cross your streets, and study in your schools, invisible among you. We are your outcasts and underdogs, and often, your unsung heroes.

Nineteen science fiction and fantasy authors tackle the division between mental health and mental illness; how the interplay between our minds' quirks and the diverse societies and cultures we live in can set us apart, or must be concealed, or become unlikely strengths.

We find troubles with Irish fay, a North Korean cosmonaut's fear of flying, an aging maid dealing with politics of revenge, a mute boy and an army of darkness, a sister reaching out at the edge of a black hole, the dog and the sleepwalker, and many more.

After all, what harm can be done...

AUTHORS: Kelley Armstrong, Suzanne Church, A.M. Dellamonica, Gemma Files, James Alan Gardner, Bev Geddes, Erika Holt, Tyler Keevil, Rich Larson, Derwin Mak, Mahtab Narsimhan, Sherry Peters, Ursula Pflug, Robert Runté, Lorina Stephens, Amanda Sun, Hayden Trenholm, Edward Willett, A.C. Wise

Introduction by Julie E. Czerneda

Praise for Strangers Among Us

"Strangers Among Us . . . is important, shining a much-needed spotlight on issues that get far too little attention. A wonderful anthology, one of the major SF&F books of the year. Bravo!" -- Robert J. Sawyer, Hugo Award-winning author of *Quantum Night*

"The writing is excellent throughout, and even the few not-as-strong stories make for a good read. This is a unique collection that should attract readers of all genres. --Foreword Reviews

"The stories in Strangers Among Us are as varied in tone and approach as their authors. The power of the collection derives from this variety; while each story can be read in isolation, the assemblage of outsiders feels, on a whole, exultant. There is, indeed, strength in numbers, when each individual is accorded space and respect." --Quill & Quire

"Much of speculative fiction explores how we deal with forms of an "other." Sometimes the outsider is a monster or an alien. The 19 stories collected here tackle the idea of people who are other, even to themselves, as a result of mental health issues. The authors, all Canadians, take different approaches, some addressing the concept straight on, some exploring it slantwise, with characters whose differences created challenges or granted fresh insights. The excellent opener, Kelley Armstrong's "The Culling," concocts a dark, resource-starved future in which those who are deemed too unusual are culled from society. In Tyler Keevil's "The Weeds and the Wildness," a man in the grip of extreme paranoia believes malevolent gardeners are stalking his neighbors. And "The Dog and the Sleepwalker" by James Alan Gardner has a hero

named "Dog" whose difference might save an entire spaceship's crew. -VERDICT Mental illness is an exciting theme for an anthology, leaving plenty of room for variety. The volume also includes an appendix of mental health resources." -- Library Journal

Recommended as one of the "August 2016 Science Fiction and Fantasy Book You'll Want to Read" by Kirkus Reviews.

"The writers of these stories address such varied subjects as agoraphobia, depression, schizophrenia, autism, anxiety, and addiction. Though this book has some shortcomings, readers who have mental illnesses may find themselves somewhere in these pages and as a result may no longer feel so alone or isolated. " -- School Library Journal

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From reader reviews:

Dennis Johnson:

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Clarence Lowery:

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Kevin Masterson:

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