

Rustblind and Silverbright

A Slipstream Railway Anthology

Published by Eibonvale Press

www.eibonvalepress.co.uk

"...You are yourself a railway track, rusty, stained, silver, shiny, beautiful and uncertain. And you are divided into sections and bound between stations. And they have sign-boards whereon is written women, or murder, or moon. And then that is the world.

You are a railway -rumbled over, cried over -you are the track -on you everything happens and makes you rustblind and silverbright.

You are human, your brain giraffe-lonely somewhere above on your endless neck. And no one quite knows your heart."

-Wolfgang Borchert (1921-1947), from *Railways by day and by night*, translated by David Porter

Language: **English**

Closing Date: **31 December 2012**

Open to: **Everyone, anywhere, the wider the better.**

Submissions to: submissions@eibonvalepress.co.uk

I hereby make confession under oath that I, David Rix of Eibonvale Press, am a train addict. I know too well the slightly *puzzled* look that comes into people's eyes when I start getting too enthusiastic on that subject, but hey, just think about this a moment! Can you think of a better way to watch the world go past? Relaxed in a window seat as you pull slowly out of the city, then start flying through the countryside. It is a time of enforced shut-down, in spite of this age of laptops and wireless internet. It is almost meditational – a time of peace and solitude when nothing should be demanded of you – ideally one of the few times of quiet in our hectic modern lives. Trains occupy a special place in the human psyche, the twin threads of the rails forging ahead from place to place, the ultimate symbol of travel and connection and all the hopes, fantasies, fears, reasons, romance and excitement that come with that. There must surely be no archetype of travel greater than the train.

In that mood of warm train-love, it is therefore a pleasure to release a call for works for a new anthology of horror/slipstream/SF stories dedicated to the railway. The brief is largely open for you to do anything you like provided that trains and railways play a central part in the stories. It covers travel and journeying – the unusual and hidden environments of the railway (those hidden and inaccessible places that you see from the train and nowhere else but can never reach) – the self-contained world of the train carriage. It covers everything from massive long-distance journeys and high-speed /

bullet trains to local services and half-asleep branch lines to commuter trains to underground metros to trams to tourist / miniature trains to funiculars and other things. Not to mention toy trains and model railways, virtual railways and of course the infinite more surreal and fantastical possibilities, which are pretty much limitless. Consider:

- The new high-speed lines being built all over the world. Driving those things is like being in the cockpit of a fighter jet. You go streaking along bleak, new rails that subordinate the hills and blast through mountains as though they weren't there. These are cropping up all over Asia and Europe, and even rolling into London now.
- The Channel Tunnel – you are riding a train under the freakin' sea, in case you hadn't noticed! Also, for that matter, the Seikan Tunnel, the Great Belt Link, etc. – massive connection points around the world where entire worlds come together in some sort of antidote to national boundaries.
- Chuntering modern commuter trains – in all their 'ordinary' glory. Have you ever sat on a busy station at rush hour and just *watched*?
- Out of the way branch lines like the haunting railway on the Cumbrian coast taking in the Sellafield Nuclear Powerstation.
- And talking of that, consider the small but regular service of nuclear flask trains that ply the British rails. If you have an eco-activist's heart, those trains are sinister. Just a couple of dull boxes hauled along by disproportionately powerful locomotives.
- The Underground and other metros – the city's dark arteries. The strange romance of the tube tunnels has seduced plenty of writers! And beyond England, consider all the other places in the world with metros – Moscow, Tehran – even Pyongyang!
- American freight where multi-mile long monsters slowly cruise across some of the most hostile wildernesses in the world.
- Indian services where you have to cling on to the outside because there is no room inside, or Ecuador services where you can ride on the roof through spectacular mountains.
- Private trains
- Political/royal trains
- Ludicrous future train services – actual concepts put forward that may even be built one day include floating tunnels connecting London with New York, the rail link from the US to Russia including the Bering Strait bridge and high speed lines from London to Beijing.

Technical Details:

Stories should have some connection to slipstream, magic realism, surrealism, the fantastical or horror/macabre/SF. In this case, I am rather more open to more traditional genres than is usual for Eibonvale books – contemporary horror or SF themes are welcome. My only real bit of advice is that I do not wish to receive only a whole slew of classic “steam train and dark tunnel” ghost stories. In other words, do not simply associate trains with classicism. That is nice enough in its own way but the subject has much more to offer than this alone. I am most likely to be interested in tales that bend the genres and defy classification and annoy critics that want to pigeonhole. Tales may also be outrageous or shocking. Unless it will get me arrested or in trouble with the printers, ‘content’ alone is never a reason for me to reject a story.

The maximum word count per story is around 15,000 words, which is not to say that I am only looking for novellas. I am hoping to get a good variety of sizes. Poems are also welcome, providing they still fit the content guidelines.

The book will be published in an indefinite edition with no set amount of books (i.e. print on demand rather than limited), but authors can do what they like with their stories alongside that with no moratorium period.

Contributors will receive one hardcover copy of the anthology and can get copies of any binding for their own use discounted to the cost price (i.e. – what the printers charge me for them rather than the general sale price).

The closing date for submissions is the end of the year – 31 Dec 2012

Please send submissions to submissions@eibonvalepress.co.uk in DOC, DOCX or RTF format.

