



Song of Time [pb]

By *Ian R. MacLeod*

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SYNOPSIS

A man lies half-drowned on a Cornish beach at dawn in the furthest days of this century. The old woman who discovers him, once a famous concert violinist, is close to death herself... or a new kind of life she can barely contemplate. Does death still exist at all, or has it finally been obliterated? And who is this strange man she's found? Is he a figure returned from her past, a new messiah, or an empty vessel? Is he God, or the Devil?

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Editorial Review

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Starred Review Near the end of the twenty-first century, an old woman in Cornwall rescues a nude young man from the ocean, somehow dragging him from the beach to her well-appointed house. She is a world-famous violinist, who, despite having taken full advantage of life-prolonging therapeutics, knows death is near. He is obviously educated but lacks all personal knowledge. She calls him Adam. It suits her needs to reminisce and his to listen. Her remembrances are punctuated by daily life with Adam until she has told him all. Her colorful, eventful life almost distracts us from the exceptional tumult amid which it is lived. Her brother, more musically gifted than she, dies young. Her mother becomes, after her son's and husband's sudden deaths, a world-famous, tireless humanitarian. Her glamorous husband's conducting career never recovers after a trumpeted world premier is upstaged by natural disaster. Yet brother, mother, and husband all are victims of macroevents that we in 2008 look on as dreaded possibilities but that she treats as only so much context. Another book, equally fascinating, could be written just to fully describe and explain MacLeod's envisioned twenty-first century. This book forefronts a personal story within that vision and artfully suggests that, in human terms, the personal trumps the historical every time. --Ray Olson

About the Author

Ian R. MacLeod (born 1956) is a British science fiction and fantasy writer. He was born in Solihull near Birmingham. He studied law and worked as a civil servant before going freelance in early 1990es soon after he started publishing stories, attracting critical praise and awards nominations. He is the author of the novels *The Light Ages* and *The House of Storms*, which are set in an alternate universe nineteenth century England, where aether, a substance that can be controlled by the mind, has ossified English society into guilds and has retarded technological progress. MacLeod's debut novel, *The Great Wheel*, was published in 1997, and won the Locus Award for Best First novel. MacLeod's novella *The Summer Isles* (Asimov's Science Fiction Oct/Nov 1998) won the Sidewise Award for Alternate History for and the World Fantasy Award. It is an alternate history where Britain, having been defeated in the World War I, develops its own form of fascism in 1930s. The narrator is a closeted homosexual Oxford historian who had known the leader in youth. It was written as a novel, which however could not sell; MacLeod published the cut version, with the full-length version only being published in a limited edition in 2005. This novel version also won the Sidewise Award for Alternate History, thus becoming the only story to win the same award twice in two differing formats, novel and novella. MacLeod won the World Fantasy Award again in for his 2000 novelette *The Chop Girl*. His shorter fiction has been collected in *Voyages by Starlight, Breathmoss and Other Exhalations and Past Magic*.

No Bio

Users Review

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