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BARBARA MCMICHAEL | A twist on traditional holiday themes



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SPOTLIGHT

Kitsap Christmas Trees



KITSAP FRAMES

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Grandson allegedly researched murder laws before stabbing 92-year-old

Joy to the Worlds — Maia Chance, Janine A. Southard, Raven Oak, G. Clemans



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Grey Sun Press — 298 pp. — \$9.99

Looking for an antidote to the commercialized preoccupation with treacly holiday traditions? If you're a dystopian at heart, "Joy to the Worlds" may be the remedy for you.

Seattle's Grey Sun Press has rounded up four Western Washington writers — Maia Chance, G. Clemans, Raven Oak and Janine A. Southard. Each contribute two stories to this speculative fiction anthology. Variouslly employing time travel, space travel, fantasy and folklore, each of these tales gives the holiday theme a contrary twist.

Mind you, this penchant for perverting holiday mirth is nothing new. E.T.A. Hoffmann's story about "The Nutcracker," written in 1816, featured an evil Mouse King, after all, and Charles Dickens' ghosts in "A Christmas Carol" still can chill the blood.

So Clemans' psychotic Frau Holzheim and Oak's mob-affiliated Santa are variants in that literary tradition, as are Southard's delinquent pixies and ~~Chance's cloven-hoofed Krampus~~

Man who pointed gun at trooper sentenced

Proposal could double number of pot stores in Kitsap

Navy seeks injunction to prevent document release

Coach Kennedy files official complaint against Bremerton School District

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Salmon Watching Guide

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Chance's cloven-hoofed Krampus.



The story is set in Old Yorktown, a faux Victorian-era village reconstructed on Earth following a Nuclear Fusion Incident “way back in 2101.”

To teenage Lizzie, whose mom manages Old Yorktown as a living history museum, it is just a hokey tourist trap for visitors from around the galaxy, a place “where misplaced sentimentality and technological repression are alive and well.” It’s especially unbearable at Christmastime, when Lizzie is pressed into service as a hoop-skirted, bonneted caroler.



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But when the good-looking son of the Galaxy President crash-lands in Yorktown and enlists Lizzie to help him evade the security detail coming after him, she begins to realize that behind those anachronistic storefronts, her town holds deep secrets.

This is a nice mashup of cozy mystery and science fiction.

Seattle writer Raven Oak's "The Ringers" is a winter's tale of a town that is held in the thrall of a demented Yuletide tradition. The Ringers are fearsome, horse-riding specters that annually terrorize the populace during the darkest days of

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