



The Cycle of the Red Moon
a trilogy by José Antonio Cotrina

Welcome to Rocavarancolia.

Welcome to the Kingdom of wonder and fright, of monsters and nightmares.
Welcome to a Kingdom at death's door.

After a long, hard-fought war, Rocavarancolia languishes, a city in ruins. There are no more dragons in the skies; vampires are dying of thirst; and magic is but a pale reflection of what it used to be.

Twelve teenagers from around the world are pulled into this mystical realm of devastation and cruelty. Here, they must survive until the Red Moon rises, hardly an easy feat. For the last thirty years, no one has ever made it. Because death awaits in every shadow and Rocavarancolia has no mercy, no place for the weak.

THE CYCLE OF THE RED MOON

From the Trilogy reviews

“I think this story is destined to become a classic of young adult literature in the near future. The narration is brilliant, the depth of each character is careful to the last detail, the description of the city is amazing, and the plot could not be better woven.”

Javier Ruescas

“The great achievement of these books is not that they are the best works of young adult fantasy written in recent years – which they are – Cotrina’s biggest triumph is his creation of Rocavarancolia, that city so alive where magic never ceases to surprise us. This trilogy possesses some of the best worldbuilding designed in Fantasy – young adult and adult.”

Ana González Duque, Libros Prohibidos

“If I write a trilogy someday, I would want it to be like this one. Because of its characters, because of its imagination, because of all the stories behind it. So monstrous, so human, so horrible, and so close to us.”

Carla Campos, Origen Cuántico

“Besides being brilliant, they are novels suitable for both a young adult reader and an unprejudiced adult (from followers of Philip Pullman to fans of Stephen King).”

Qué leer magazine

“It is a thrilling read, void of cliché and platitude, that maintains the young adult tone while still appealing to the masses; a novel that moves, that surprises, and that you will be sad to finish.”

Santiago García Soláns, Sagacomix

“I decided to tell you about this trilogy because I really loved it. From the moment you read the first words, there is no going back. Cotrina has an enviable capacity to make your mind travel through the streets of his world and listen to the voices of its inhabitants. That is magic.”

M.P. Moles



The Story

José Antonio Cotrina

The Cycle of the Red Moon

Book 1 - synopsis

THE HARVEST OF SAMHEIN

Every year, on the night of Samhein, a portal opens that connects Earth with Rocavarancolia. And every year, Denestor Tul crosses into the human world looking for teenage boys and girls who will be useful to the Kingdom. This year he's returned with twelve human subjects, the most promising Harvest in years, far exceeding the Royal Council's expectations. One of these teenagers, Hector, surprises them all with his amazing potential, emanating a fierce energy. Old Belisarius, a revered sorcerer on the Royal Council, calls it the Essence of Kings.

The Royal Council knows there is a law of non-interference, the Harvest must learn to survive Rocavarancolia's trials if they are to develop their true potential. However, two members of the Council refuse to leave everything in the hands of fate. They know that if none of the teenagers are alive when the Red Moon comes out, Rocavarancolia is doomed.

Lady Scar casts a spell on Hector, enabling him to perceive dangerous areas in the city and therefore avoid them. Mistral, the shapeshifter, is more efficient: he murders one of the boys and infiltrates the group so he can help them from the inside. If either one is discovered, all will be lost. The law of non-interference will be considered broken, the Harvest will be considered contaminated and the Council will kill them all. And that will truly be the end of Rocavarancolia.

Most of the teenagers unite, facing the risks they may encounter in the city together. But one of them decides to go it alone: Dario, a boy from Sao Paulo whose essence is second only to Hector's.

Soon the mysteries that surround the city and the Harvest's precarious situation unfold. Why have they been brought to Rocavarancolia? What is special about them? They seem to be just a handful of ordinary teenagers. But there is so much more to them than meets the eye. Hector discovers that Natalia, a young Russian, can see strange shadowy creatures that the others cannot. And there is something strange about Marina, another harvested teenager, who back on Earth used to write stories about a dark city that is eerily like Rocavarancolia. And what about the intelligent Italian, Bruno, who seems expressionless and cold like a robot?

The group manages to survive its first day in the ruined city by taking refuge in Margalar Tower, a well-protected building. Of course, it was Mistral who led them there.

As time passes, the climate grows tense. Were it not for the sense of humor and striking personality of Alexander, a young Australian, the situation would be even worse. Adrian, the youngest of the group, is so frightened that he refuses to leave the tower. The one day he does venture out in search of food, he clashes with Dario, who, for no apparent reason, wounds him severely with his sword. Adrian, close to death, is taken back to Margalar Tower. Soon after, Natalia is poisoned by one of the many creatures that roam the ruins.

Mistral can only watch as everything collapses. He realizes he cannot prevent Rocavarancolia from slaughtering these children, one by one. But if he doesn't do something soon, the wounded will die, and then the others will follow. He makes a hard decision: he will sacrifice Alexander so that the group will have a greater chance of survival. He leads the boy to an abandoned tower that used to belong to a powerful sorcerer, and poor Alexander falls prey to the deadly curse that protects its entrance. His friends cannot save him; they can only be with him in his final moments. But his death is not in vain: now that they know of the curse, Bruno is able to deactivate it with the help of Rachel, a girl who is immune to magic.

That same night, the group enters the tower. Rocavarancolia is a cruel city and has already proven it is willing to destroy them. If they want to survive, they will need a miracle... or magic. And this tower is full of powerful treasures.

Alexander is not the only one to die this day. In the castle in the mountains, servants to the Council find the body of old Belisarius. Could his passing have anything to do with Lady Scar and Esmael, Lord of Assassins, who both wish to obtain the Regent's position for themselves?

In desperation, Denestor Tul visits Lady Dream, an old enchantress, who shows him a fatal vision:

"You can't hear it, can you? The roar, the death, the battle. The blood, the fire and the dragons. Don't you hear them? Oh, my wonderful demiurge. You still don't know what you have brought us from the human realm...

You have brought us the end."



THE SECRET SONG OF THE WORLD

A fantasy novel by José Antonio Cotrina

Her name is Ariadna.

Four years ago, police found her in a burning house full of corpses and mutilated bodies. She was the only survivor among the massacre. And the only thing she could remember was her name.

Four years later, she's rebuilt her life. She's happy with her adoptive family and her perfect boyfriend. Everything's fine, everything's working out. So what if she never dreams? So what if her left eye is totally black, without a trace of iris or pupil? Ariadna is happy.

Until her past comes back to claim her.

And now, Ariadna begins her descent into the depths of hell, on a terrifying journey that will lead her to the other side of reality, to the secret world that hides behind shadows and mirrors. To a place where monsters dwell and cruelty is rampant, a place where she will be forced to confront her true identity.

THE SECRET SONG OF THE WORLD

From the book reviews:

"One of the best books I've read in a long time. The journey was spectacular. I cried, I laughed, I was afraid, and I was full of wonder. A masterpiece."

Alexander Páez

"Dark, oppressive, addictive, bursting with imagination. Cotrina at his best. This is a novel that grabs you and turns you inside out, spun with a mastery that leaves no loose ends."

Virginia McKenzie

"If you like the fantasy genre then *The Secret Song of the World* is for you. But if you suffer from a delicate stomach, then you better keep your distance."

César Mallorquí

"It's not just that I enjoyed the book, it's way more than that. I was totally hooked; suffering along with the main character. I got so worked up I felt like ripping my skin off! I experienced both horror and sadness. I felt compelled to reread entire passages because they were so powerful... I have been captivated by Cotrina."

L. M. Mateo

"This book traps you, stabs you in the guts with a dagger made of ice; and then you need to finish the book to get rid of that feeling, that urge to read it, to know it all, to reach the end and realize that you haven't finished the book: it is the book that's finished you."

The Best Read Yet

"The reader is forced to make a dreadful decision: to either follow the urge to devour one page after the other, or take small occasional breaks and savor each scene properly. I think I've never experienced this feeling before – between yearning to know more and needing to digest so many different emotions – but I loved it."

Elías F. Combarro

"Planning this book must have taken a titanic effort, because, despite its complexity, it doesn't have a single plot hole. Not one."

Libros Prohibidos



THE SECRET SONG OF THE WORLD by José Antonio Cotrina

The Story

Ariadna remembers nothing of her past. She doesn't remember that she was born dead, and that a ghastly creature breathed life back into her. She doesn't remember her master, the dark magician Count Sagrada; she doesn't remember the Umbra, a dark dimension that coexists with our normal world.

Now she lives in Madrid, with her adopted family. She adores her boyfriend, Marc. She's just an ordinary eighteen-year-old and her life is perfect.

Until Evan comes back into her life.

He belongs to her past. When they were part of *The Carrion*, a brotherhood of thieves and assassins. He recalls how one night, four years ago, they were ambushed during a robbery and Ariadna cast a forgetting spell on herself to protect the brotherhood's secrets. Evan left the brotherhood because he suspected that someone in their own group had betrayed them.

But now Evan is in danger, pursued by a relentless monster that can only be defeated with a sword named Slaughter. This very sword is soon to be auctioned off, and Evan needs Ariadna to steal it. With her help, he can elude *Elias's Six*, a band of mercenaries hired to protect the sword.

The plan works. But what was supposed to be a simple heist turns into a bloodbath: Evan's cruelty and violence are without mercy. Once it's all over, Ariadna rejects Evan and her past.

Elias's Six takes Ariadna's family hostage until she tells them where Evan and the sword are. Ariadna's father intervenes, assuring them that he and his family are under the protection of Edgar Müller, a powerful sorcerer. But his words are wasted. The mercenaries kill Ariadna's family... and then they kill her.

However, death is not the end for Ariadna.

She's not human. She's a Vhirago, same as Evan: a creature made with dark magic by Count Sagrada, master of *The House without Windows* and leader of *The Carrion*. Vhiragoes can die, but they return to life shortly after. This is their curse.

Ariadna decides to search for this sorcerer, Edgar Müller. She finds him and his wife, Sonia, and discovers they've been searching for her! They tell her how the police found her four years ago, in a mansion where a great battle had been fought, and there was only one survivor: Ariadna. Edgar and Sonia were part of the investigation. They knew that the mysterious *Carrion* was involved, and that Ariadna was their golden opportunity to take the brotherhood down. But without her memories, she was of little use when they found her.

Now Müller and Sonia ask Ariadna for any information she can give them that can be used against *The Carrion*. Before she can help, they are attacked by the monsters from *The House without Windows*. Ariadna dies once again.

She resurrects in Umbra, land of shadows, where more memories start flooding back to her. She remembers the frustration she and Evan felt under the power of *The House without Windows* – where they were little more than tools in the Count's hands. Once they tried to escape, but quickly understood they weren't yet strong enough to break those bonds.

She recalls that shortly after their failed escape, *The Carrion* were assigned to steal the Azardian Fist, a necklace of pure dark magic. Unfortunately, they weren't the only ones interested in the necklace, and the mansion turned into a colossal battleground. Somehow, the Fist ended up in Evan's hands, and he saw the opportunity for he and Ariadna to fight for their freedom and finally break the chains that bound them to Sagrada. But Evan, maddened by the Fist's power, unleashed the artifact's magic onto friends and foes, laying waste to everything.

Now, back in *The House without Windows*, the place that used to be Ariadna's home, Evan contacts her. He threatens to kill her boyfriend Marc if she won't meet with him. Ariadna feels she must first talk to her former master, Sagrada, who assures her they can reach an agreement. Ariadna is wary of the dark magician, but realizes she has no choice.

She meets up with Evan, who tells her he now has accumulated enough power to destroy *The House without Windows*. Nothing is out of their reach, they're free! But she holds no love for her old companion and lets him know she despises him. He realizes he has lost her and, much to her surprise, decides to let both her and Marc go.

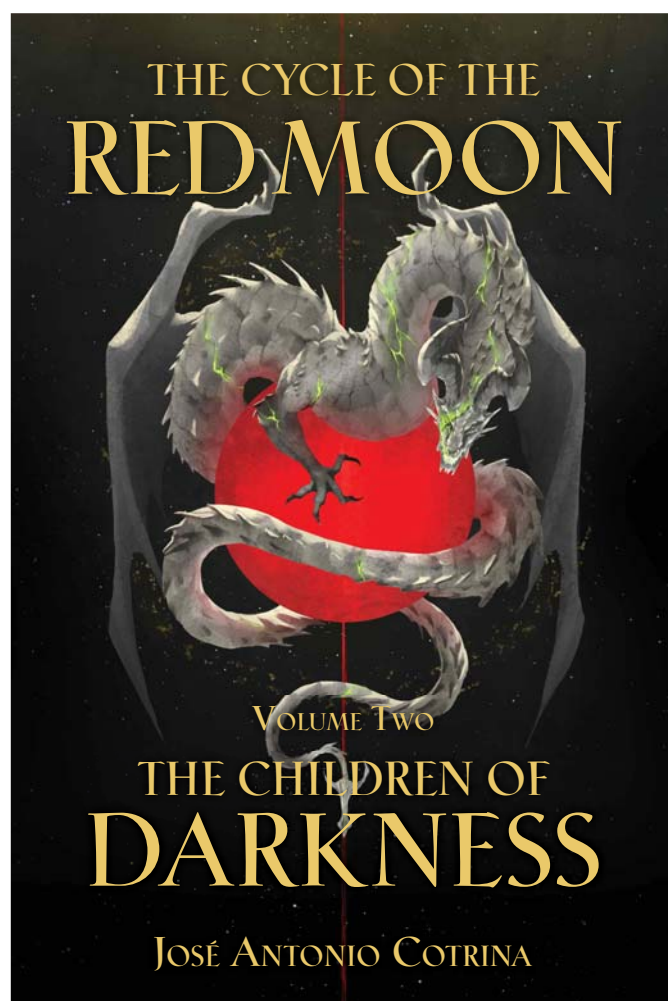
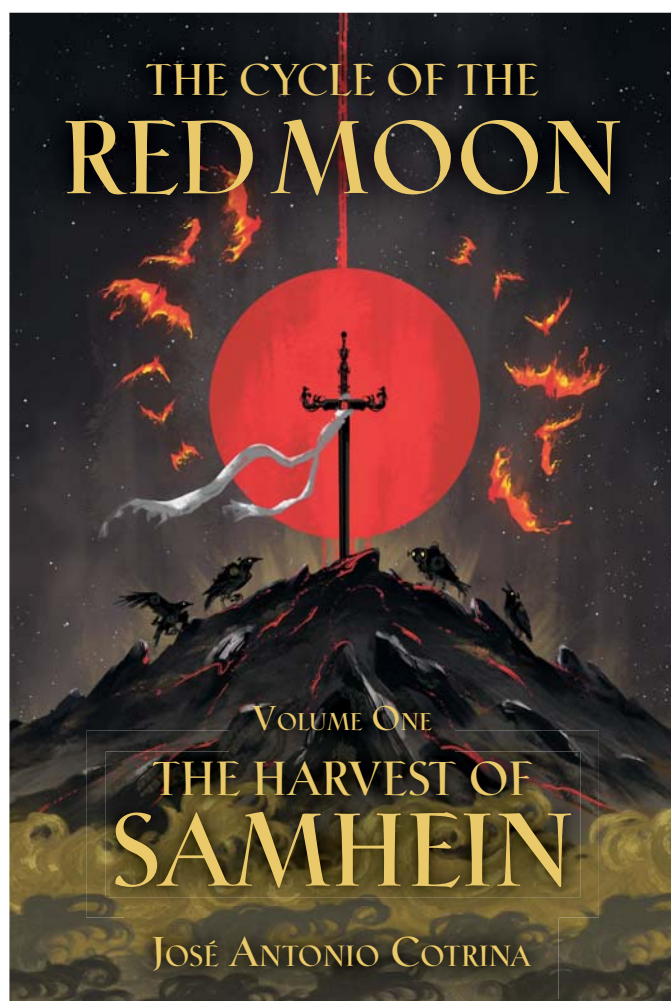
Marc and Ariadna return to the normal world where she explains the agreement she made with Count Sagrada. He will allow her to live a normal life with Marc, but only one life: once Ariadna dies and resurrects she must return to take her place in *The Carrion*. Ariadna accepted but knows that something is not quite right, something doesn't fit.

Is she still tied to her past, or is she free to maybe have a future? Nothing is what it seems in this world of dark magic.

And nothing in this book happens the way you think it might.



José Antonio Cotrina, the author of *The Secret Song of the World*, is Spain's bestselling fantasy novel writer. The first volume of his YA fantasy trilogy, *The Cycle of the Red Moon*, was released in the United States on September 1, 2020 by Dark Horse Books, and distributed by Penguin Random House.



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