



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."

José Antonio Cotrina

Spain's bestselling fantasy writer (born in Vitoria, Spain, July 8, 1972) is best known for his novels set in the Between the Lines Universe – *The Secret Song of the World* is one of them – and for his cult young adult trilogy, *The Cycle of the Red Moon*.

The first volume of this trilogy was released in the United States by Dark Horse Books, and distributed by Penguin Random House, on September 1, 2020.

Cotrina graduated with a degree in Advertising and Public Relations, but quickly found a passion for fantasy writing, in all its variations. His stories are characterized by a mixture of different genres, mostly fantasy and horror, which makes him a premier example of the Spanish dark fantasy writer.

The main characteristics of Cotrina's books are his unusual settings, the surprising plot twists, the depth of the characters, and a holistic worldbuilding.

For all rights, contact: rights@safbooks.com

Photos by Alberto Santos

