

News from SF writer Lance Robinson

New Publication

Five Camels for the Simplification

My latest publication, *Five Camels for the Simplification*, is available for pre-order as an e-book or paperback now. It's a near-future, social-ecological hopepunk story that weaves in climate science, rangeland ecology, environmental economics, and the political economy of a world falling apart.

Here's a snippet from the marketing description:

The world is racing toward a cliff, carrying you and your only child with it.

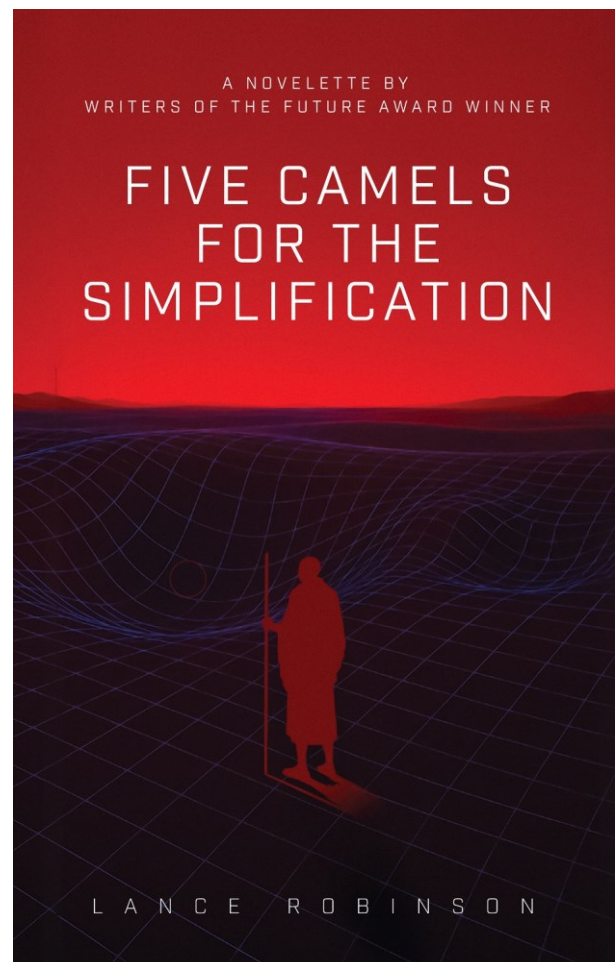
In the mid-twenty-first century, it is not difficult to see what direction the world is headed. But the exact destination is hazy, inviting procrastination and doubt. GPESS+NK.01 dispels the fog, giving Thomas a view of the coming years that is crisp, unequivocal, and frightening. What kind of world will his daughter inherit?

Five Camels for the Simplification is perfect for readers who believe science fiction should make you think and feel.

If you're like me and have a declining attention span, don't worry—this is a “short read,” a novelette rather than a novel. Just sayin'.

The release date is September 10th, but it's available for pre-order now. Pre-orders, by the way, can have an outsized influence on

eventual book sales, because they give an early indication to the algorithms which books deserve their attention. And if you're getting the e-book version, it's discounted during the pre-order phase—after September 10th, the price goes up. Check out this link to find it through your preferred bookstore (books2read.com/fivecamels).



Rangeland Ecosystems in Sci-Fi

Much of my career, my other career when I wasn't busy writing science fiction, involved working with pastoralists. Pastoralists are the mobile herding communities who use their livestock to create livelihoods in places where farming is precarious or impossible. They are masters of coping and adapting in harsh, unpredictable conditions. And they are stewards of the world's rangelands.

Rangeland ecosystem—savannas, grasslands, bushland ecosystems, and the like—cover about half the land area of the Earth, store vast amounts of carbon in their soils, and provide livelihoods to billions of people. And they are home to landscapes of soul-stirring beauty.

So I find it somewhat baffling that they so seldom feature in science fiction. When science fiction takes an interest in ecosystems, the gaze is most often turned toward oceans and forests. Rivers and wetlands show up from time to time, as well. Science fiction loves deserts of course, and not only in the *Dune* series—but rangelands not so much.

GEEK TANGENT: Definitions of both rangelands and deserts vary, but generally, rangelands are defined by vegetation type and land use, whereas deserts are defined by climate. So as categories, they overlap.

In celebration of the fact that the United Nations has declared 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, I have two rangeland-focused stories coming out soon. One, a short story entitled, "Restoring Reciprocity at Saskatchewan Station," will appear in an upcoming

issue of *Analog Science Fiction & Fact*. The other, *Five Camels for the Simplification*, will be released as a stand-alone novelette in paperback and e-book formats on the 10th of September. It's available for [pre-order now](#).

What I'm Working on Now

After a couple months focusing on short stories, I'm back into my novel.

You're probably familiar with *emergence*: the idea that, in complex systems, the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts, resulting in new, unexpected properties, dynamics, and capabilities. The premise of the novel is this: *What if, beyond certain thresholds of complexity, justice, harmony with nature, and cultural thriving, the global social-ecological system becomes conscious?* It's the Gaia hypothesis, but with humanity and its assembled cultures as necessary and integral components of the newly awakening superorganism.

My aim is to have a complete first draft before November.

What I'm Reading

- Iain M. Banks' *Excession*. It's part of his wildly successful *Culture* series of novels. One thing I appreciate about the Culture novels is the matter-of-fact imagining of humanity in the future having got its collective sh*t together. It normalizes the idea that our 21st century collective immaturity is just a passing phase.
- On deck: *Parable of the Sower*, by Octavia Butler. I've been meaning to read this one for a long time.

Recent Appearances

In the past couple of months, I've been a guest on [The Author's Quill](#) and the [Kino Isaac Podcast](#).

How to Support a Writer

If you've read my work and enjoyed it, please consider doing one or more of the following:

- Go into a bookstore with the ISBN number for *Chasing New Suns* (978-1-0688724-0-2) or *Five Camels for the Simplification* (978-1-0688724-2-6) and ask if they have it in stock or can get it.
- If you've read something of mine and enjoyed it, write an honest review on [Amazon](#), [Goodreads](#), or your favorite book site. Reviews drive the algorithms of these platforms and help other readers discover me.
- Share this newsletter with a friend.



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Email: LRobinson@lancerobinsonwriter.com

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