



Looking for Jake: And Other Stories

By China Miéville

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Step into a London ravaged by unearthly creatures at once utterly alien and chillingly familiar. In China Miéville's award-winning novella 'The Tain', we learn the reason for the invaders' terrible revenge. One survivor must trek through the ruins of the city with a desperate plan to stand against their assault. In addition to 'The Tain', this superb collection contains thirteen short stories, of visionary cityscapes and urban paranoia, ghosts, monsters and impossible diseases. Several of the stories are published here for the first time: these include one set in New Crobuzon, the location of the award-winning series of novels that began with *Perdido Street Station*; and one in comic-strip form, illustrated by top graphic artist Liam Sharp. This collection displays the sheer imaginative scope of China Miéville's work.

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Looking for Jake: And Other Stories By China Mieville Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

London is a dangerous and demon-haunted place, at least for the characters in the dark, finely crafted tales presented in Miéville's first story collection. Miéville, who has won Arthur C. Clarke, British Science Fiction and British Fantasy awards, writes of a city besieged by exotic forms of urban decay, monsters, sadistic and ghostly children, as well as, on a lighter note, the Gay Men's Radical Singing Caucus. In the novella "The Tain," the city has been conquered by vengeful creatures who have erupted from every mirror and reflective surface. In "Details," a story with subtle connections to H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos, a young boy meets an elderly woman who has looked too deeply into the patterns that underlie the universe. In "Foundation," perhaps the most powerful story in the book, a veteran must come to terms with the horrors he helped perpetrate during the first Gulf War. Though lacking the baroque complexity and extravagance of Miéville's novels (*Iron Council*, etc.), these 14 stories, including one in graphic-novel form, serve as a powerful introduction to the work of one of the most important new fantasy writers of the past decade.

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—Miéville's novels mix Dickensian settings, Lovecraftian terrors, and political theory, showcasing a style uniquely his own. This collection, which brings together a number of pieces previously unavailable in the U.S., displays an even broader range of styles and interests. The weakest offerings are those based solely on the authors political ideas. *'Tis the Season*, for example, is set in a futuristic London at Christmastime, and absolutely everything related to the holiday requires a license of some sort to participate. Although the story is a fun satirical read, it is not likely to be revisited. The author shows his true skill and imagination in the horror-oriented pieces. He has that rare gift of identifying those fears that flicker and lurk within the deepest recesses of our minds and dropping them down right in front of us. The Ball Room turns an everyday playroom in a furniture store into a haunted space of accidents, death, and mystery. The Tain, the longest and probably strongest story, features creatures living in a parallel world who are forced to mimic us as our reflections—until they burst free of their reflective prisons and start a violent war that threatens to destroy humanity. These tales all make wonderful use of elegantly described yet terrifying scenes, lifting them a notch above the standard horror fare. Fans may grumble that only one story is set in New Crobuzon, the fantasyland featured in the novels. Despite some of its flaws, *Jake* is well worth seeking out.—*Matthew L. Moffett, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale*

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Even the greatest admirers of Mieville's New Crobuzon novels (the award-winning *Perdido Street Station*, 2001; *The Scar*, 2002; and *Iron Council*, 2004) may feel that these stories really fulfill his big newcomer's promise. Several proceed in the best kind of uncertainty, sustaining the gnawing question, what is going on here? In "Go Between," a man finds things in, say, bread loafs, or chocolate bars, along with directions to convey them elsewhere. He always obeys, until one day he gets word that his work is done. Thinking he has been dumped, he pettishly refuses to post his last find. War breaks out: the end. Other stories concern inexplicable occurrences. In "Reports of Certain Events in London," papers mistakenly delivered to Mieville suggest that short streets in major cities are temporally and physically unstable. In "The Ball Room," cowritten with Emma Bircham and Max Schaefer, the extremely popular play cage in an Ikea-like store requires an exorcist. "An End to Hunger" and "'Tis the Season" are rich, sharp satires of "free market" capitalism. "Jack" is a note from the New Crobuzon underground. "On the Way to the Front" is a comics collaboration with the most impressive penciller, Liam Sharp. The book concludes with "The Tain,"

a powerful postapocalyptic novella about both sides of the looking glass. In every story, Mieville's way with voice and perspective is utterly captivating. Brilliant work. *Ray Olson*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Roxanne Jimenez:

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