

Mode : Multi
PSeq: ME

St/1

Explorations

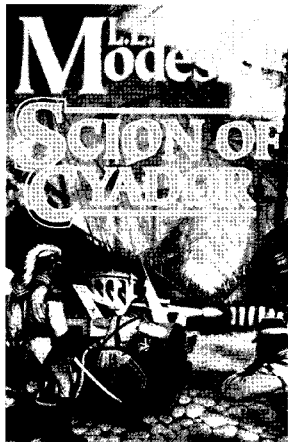
August/September

FOV: 24cm

Thk: 5.0

Imag: 15/02.50

The Best in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Graphic Fiction.



Scion of Cyador

L. E. Modesitt, Jr.

Tor Books

\$27.95; September

Welcome back to the wonderful world of Recluse! It's hard to believe, but *Scion of Cyador*, the sequel to *The Magi'l of Cyador*, is the eleventh book in Modesitt's wildly popular Recluse saga. The series, begun in 1991 with the publication of *The Magic of Recluse*, has spanned thousands of years on the fantastical planet where order and chaos are in constant struggle against one another and wizards do battle with firebolts and ice storms.

The Magi'l of Cyador brought Recluse fans back to the very beginning. In this history of Recluse, a young magus named Lorn becomes a Mirror Lancer officer of the White Empire of Cyador, hiding his magical talents, while fighting barbarians and the wild animals of the Accursed

Forest. Even though Lorn has his hands full, he still has time to fall in love with the Merchant Ryalth.

Scion of Cyador continues the story of Lorn and Ryalth and further details the history of Recluse. As Recluse fans already know, the Magi are not indigenous to the World. The kingdom of Cyador was founded by stranded starship crewman called firstborn. The "chaos towers" used to power civilization were actually the power cells from the crippled starship.

As many feared, over the years the towers have begun to fail at exactly the wrong time. This heralds the beginning of a frightening era in Cyador history. The First Magus Chyenfel has used the last of the working tower cores to temporarily sedate all the evils in the Accursed Forest. Lancers who previously guarded the forest are being sent to Cyador's border to fight against the ever-increasing hordes of barbarians.

Chaos power is becoming scarce everywhere. Along the granite highway that crosses Cyador, the fire wagons are fewer and less frequent. Lancers have fewer firelances, and the Magi are charging fewer and fewer weapons. In the canals and waterways, the chaos-powered tugs have all stopped. Animal teams now pull the ships and barges, but they are too slow. Produce, grain and foodstuffs are rotting on the docks and within the ships' holds. Everyone knows the tower cores are failing, but what will replace them?

Another question raised in this novel is: who will govern Cyador? The ail-

ing Emperor Toziel'eith'alt'mer and his consort Ryenyel now rule, but for how long? The Emperor has yet to choose a successor, and only Ryenyel is keeping him alive—barely. Ryenyel, who has helped the Emperor with many decisions of court, has seen special qualities in Lorn, but she wonders if he will survive to ascend to the throne.

Lorn is a target, in part, because of his love for Ryalth. The trouble is cultural: Lorn and Ryalth are from different classes, and classes rarely intermingle. Lorn is a Lancer and Ryalth a Merchant. It is power and politics that govern the matchmaking of consorts, especially to the peerage of the Magi. Because of this way of thinking, Lorn is not considered to be a valid threat to the throne, but more than a few in the Lancer caste want him disgraced and killed. He will need to be very careful. The Magi constantly watch him, but Lorn doesn't know who is watching him or why.

He is eventually promoted and transferred to the port town of Biehl where he must work with the Emperor's enumerators and help them gain more revenue for economically strapped Cyador. In his search, he will find more than he has bargained for, and will have to carry out decisions that will haunt him forever. The chaos towers are failing, barbarians are at the borders, more Lancers are dying every day, and there is an all-too-real chance that Cyador will be destroyed...

Fans of L. E. Modesitt, Jr.'s Recluse series are going to devour this newest story. I know I did! —Jason C.