

# Explorations

The Best in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Graphic Fiction.

## Countdown

I have some happy news for the new authors in our pages. We have decided to have an award for the best first novel from the "Maiden Voyages" section of our newsletter. It won't be a committee that decides the winner, but you, our readers!!! We want your help and your votes. Read the books from "Maiden Voyages." In a year, or so, you can vote for your favorite new author first published in 1997!

REMINDER: There is still time to send in your review for the "Rediscoveries" contest. Don't forget, your review must be of a book at least ten years old, NOT a classic like *The Hobbit* or *Dune*. It should be a "gem" that you would like to tell others about, and it must still be in print. Send in your 250 word review and maybe you will win \$250. (We own it once we print it and no reviews will be returned.)

Send entries and letters to:  
REDISCOVERIES CONTEST  
EXPLORATIONS/DeMaiolo  
Barnes & Noble, Inc  
122 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10011

From now on, readers' most frequently asked questions will be answered here.

Q: Can I get EXPLORATIONS delivered to my home?

A: I am afraid at this point the only place to get our newsletter is in our stores. Sorry! —J. DeMaiolo

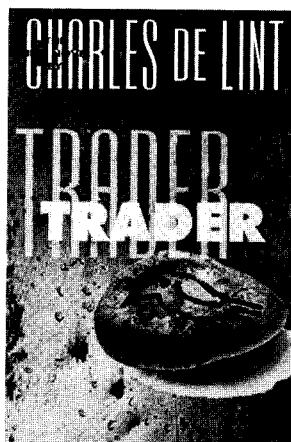
## Bad Day, Worse Life

### Trader

Charles de Lint  
very late January

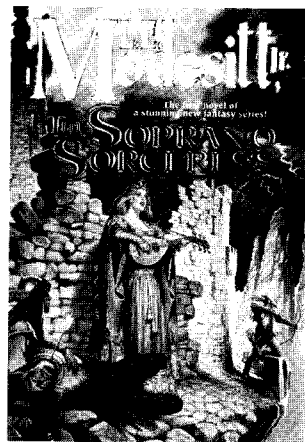
### Soprano Sorceress

L. E. Modesitt, Jr.  
Tor/St. Martins  
\$24.95; \$25.95; Early January



I HATE REVIEWS that sound like a nagging parent, but you really should read these authors, and these books in particular, pronto. It will be good for you. It will be fun. It will be better than chicken soup when the temperature outside is howling at minus 25 degrees F. and the temperature in your insides is roasting

at 101.9 degrees F.; better than therapy gift certificates; better than a four-day work week. (Well, better than the first two, anyway.)



For those of you who have never read a book by Charles de Lint (*Moonheart*, *Yarrow*, *Riddle of the Wren*) or the novels of L. E. Modesitt, Jr. (*The Magic of Recluse*, *The Order War*, *Of Tangible Ghosts*), I have two things to say: 1. Shame on you. 2. How wonderful for you that you get to begin today, now, with the very readable *Trader* and *The Soprano Sorceress*. Go on. Go get them. I'll wait...

Take *Trader* for example. Fantasy is the house that Chuck built, and his worlds are the result of his

continued on page 2

Trader & Soprano Sorceress  
continued from page 1

unique and juicy imagination. Don't try to skip ahead and don't look back. Let the story unfold and enjoy the adventure, one page at a time.

Have you ever visited an old friend and felt, at first, that you didn't

have as much in common as you had remembered? But over time you eventually began to pick up each other's shorthand, like in the old days. Then, by the time you started enjoying each other's company, it was time to say good-bye, all too soon? That's how the characters will affect you in this fairy tale of the Nineties.

Though *Trader* takes place "today," it manages without strain to be as fanciful as any fantasy novel peopled with dragons and dotted with castles. This is a story that could happen to far too many of us, a story of magic well within arm's reach, of claiming your life by truly living it, and of accepting and forgiving.

Simply put, two men—one hating his life, the other taking his for granted—wake up to discover that they have somehow switched bodies in the night: traded places, so to speak. They've never met and were completely unaware of the other's existence before this point in their lives. One of them is now very happy while the other is most definitely not happy. The supporting characters that you meet along the way are an admirable mixture of everyday folks just trying to find their way through the childishly simple, mad-deningly complex maze of life.

As in *Trader*, the old adage "Be careful what you wish for" is definitely a key to *The Soprano Sorceress*, as is the struggle for power. Of course, I'm a sucker for music and fantasy; the power of music has always been a part of my life, and those who can't hear the magic in music leave me speechless. Modesitt Jr. has wrapped a well-seasoned idea in a new cloth of many colors and hues.

Anna is having a very bad life. She has just lost a child; her ex-husband is a creep; and she reports to a

royal bitch at her job in a school. When she accepts an invitation from the Dean to sing at the Founder's Dinner, it just starts to pour down rain. Wishing she were "anywhere," Anna finds herself in a tavern on a world known as Erde. She was spelled to this tavern by a young player, Daffyd, and a young sorceress with only small powers. Daffyd wants revenge on the local sorcerer, Brill, for turning his father into a pile of red dust. It appears that in Erde the power of sorcerers and sorceresses derives from their singing. Anna is a powerful sorceress.

Caught in a world that is nothing like her own—except that men are still pigs; power is in the hands of men; war is the way of the world; and it is entirely too hot—Anna takes her time trying to figure out where and what has happened. She is asked to kill a sorcerer, who turns out to be her first helping hand in this new world. He also ends up dead in a fight that Anna finds herself in after an attempt to murder her. All of Erde watches this soprano sorceress from the mist worlds—she upsets the harmonies and is harmony at the same time. Anna must fight. She lives and learns. Power is the key in *The Soprano Sorceress*, and who has it is the key question.

De Lint and Modesitt, Jr. are two writers who should never be overlooked. They write in different styles and have crafted many, many books, but have been overlooked for far too long. They deserve to receive recognition and popularity for their wonderful, brilliant stories.

If you won't buy these books for yourself, then at least make the purchase for your mother. It would make her feel better to know you were reading such nice books. And she might like them too!

—S.P.; J.DeM.

Navigation

LEADING VOYAGE  
Two books, two  
unforgettable authors .....1-2

LAUNCHING  
Nine great new books .....3-5

SECOND LANDING  
From "pregnant man" to King Arthur,  
from the Multiverse to the Black  
Company .....6,7

THE HIGH SEAS  
The Power & the Pattern Trilogy and  
Redwall .....8,9

MAIDEN VOYAGES  
Two exciting new authors with strong  
stories .....10

UNCHARTED TERRITORIES  
Happy Birthday HAL and sexy vam-  
pires .....11

REDISCOVERIES  
Find out about an old book .....12

ON THE HORIZON  
Lists upon lists upon lists .....13-15

FINAL APPROACH  
Chris Bunch goes it alone and wins .16

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De Lint and Modesitt Jr....deserve recognition and popularity for their wonderful, brilliant stories.