

Ed Nelson's Newsletter

Author of fictional novels

Home of "The Richard Jackson Saga" & Ed's new book series "Cast in Time".

POWER UP YOUR ADVENTURE

[The Books](#)

[The Author](#)

Home of the *Richard Jackson Saga*; *Ever and Always*; *Mary, Mary*; *More Mary, Mary* and the in-progress *Cast in Time* series.

Series 4, Volume 3

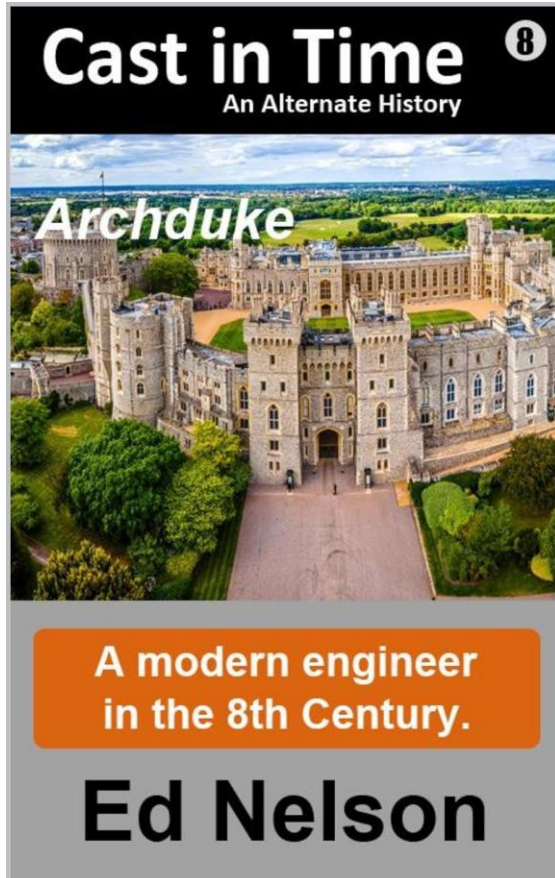
June 15, 2026

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Book 8

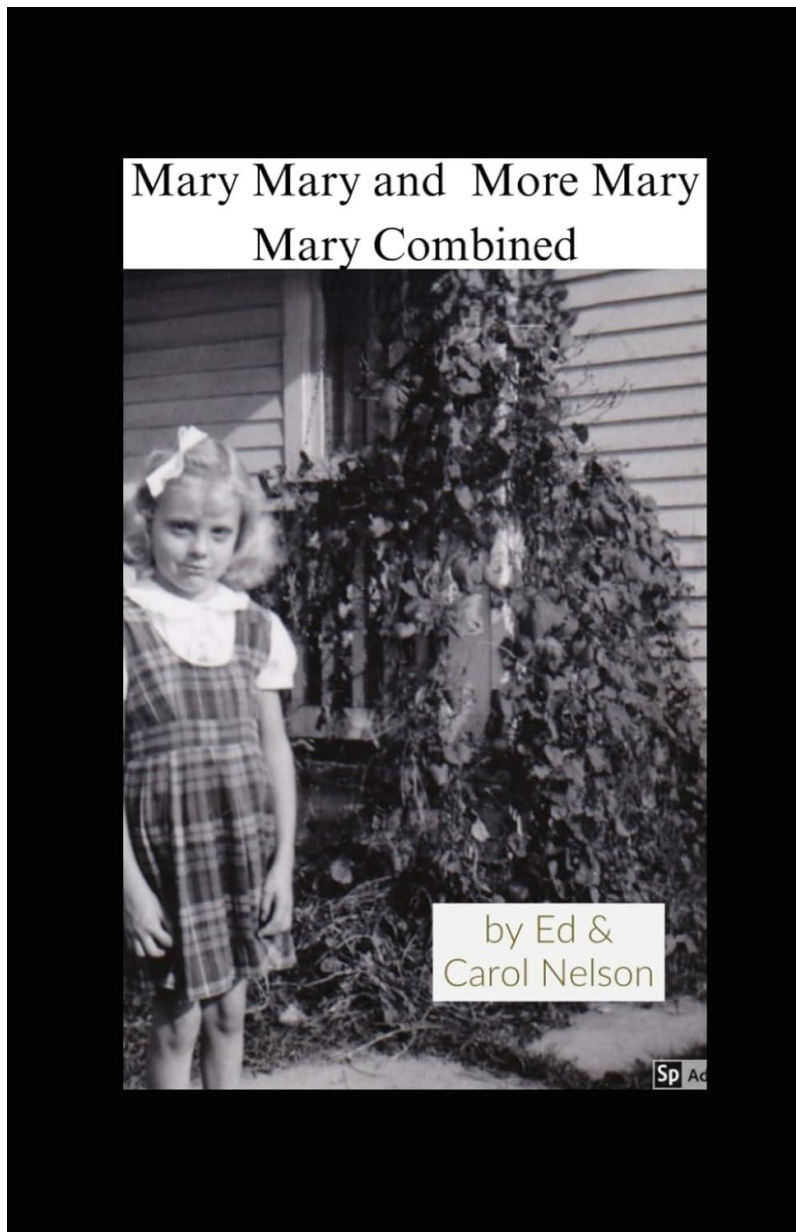
It's here! [Book 8, Cast in Time: Archduke](#) is available on Kindle and in paperback and hardback at Amazon.



Now James is adding eastern Europe and what would become Russia to his territories. He continues inventing and providing information to improve the lives of all his people. His granddaughter wants to imitate Amelia Earhart's journey around the planet, hopefully without the disappearing and dying part. Then there is major detective work to try to solve a bank robbery. Join the journey

with this wild ride through the eighth century.

Mary Mary and More Mary Mary Combined



- You asked for it! Two books, *Mary Mary* and *More Mary Mary* have been combined so that a paperback and hard cover book can be printed. There is no new material added.

Mary Mary is a short story, 10,000 words. Mary Jackson, younger sister of Richard Jackson, has her own growing pains in her five-year-old world. Mary has been described as five going on thirty-five. Follow Mary as she weathers the perils of kindergarten while making her mark on the world and earning the beginning of her own fortune. *Mary Mary*, how does your garden grow.

In *More Mary Mary* there are twenty-five Mary short stories in this collection.

Follow her growth during The Richard Jackson Saga. We see her develop from a precocious child to a young genius. From cheating at monopoly to calling Professor Einstein names to his face she is fun all the way. Her view of the world is different from most: don't all little girls carry a dagger and solve differential equations in their head? Be prepared for a wild ride in cuteness, deadliness and inventions beyond your wildest dreams.

More News

I had a bad fall a couple of months ago and have been in and out of rehab since, so the newsletter has missed two months. The good news is that the *Cast in Time* series book 1 through 8 has been translated into French, German, Dutch, Italian, Castilian Spanish, and Latin American Spanish. They are available or soon will be available as eBooks on their respective Amazon websites as well as on Amazon.com. The Richard Jackson series will be slowly rolled out in those languages.

They have new covers, too!





In the [*Cast in Time*](#) series an engineer finds himself in an alternate reality, Cornwall, in the year 715 A.D. He awakens in the body of a young baron.

Retired Lieutenant General James Fletcher, former head of the Army Corp of Engineers, lies dying at the age of ninety-two. Having led a full life, he is a decorated veteran of World War II, Korea, and Viet Nam.

His love of engineering has him taking university courses his entire life. When his health falters, and he can no longer continue his education, MIT awards him an honorary Ph.D. in Professional Studenting.

After a long illness, he lies dying. His last thought is, “What a waste of such wonderful knowledge.”

As he fades to black, the fun begins. He is to build a modern civilization without being burned as a witch!



[*The Richard Jackson Saga*](#)

Bank robbery, bull riding in the rodeo, a western movie, and rustlers, among other events, occur as young Rick is on a cross-country trip, hitchhiking from a small Ohio town to California. This alternate history is of what should have been rather than what has been.

With wit and humor and no teenage angst, we follow a young man's coming of age in the late 1950s. Starting in the summer before his freshman year, it follows him through his high school life, where he learns golf is his game. He finds fame and fortune as an inventor and wealth in Hollywood as he searches for a girlfriend. Wealth and fame prove far easier than girls.

The songs, movies, and books of the 1950s and 60s are nostalgic to some. The action and adventure thrill others. All readers enjoy the realistic flow of life, give or take a lie or two, in the 16-book series of *The Richard Jackson Saga*.

Follow Rick from the excitement of his summer to the dullness of high school life while he proves that school isn't always dull.

The first of my son's book series, *The Return from Cataclysm Saga*!

Michael L Nelson

Exordium Popule

A Compilation of Prequals from the
Return from Cataclysm Saga

In [*Exordium Popule*](#) these six short stories introduce an amazing world with a unique magic system, a new take on humanity, and an epic adventure that spans 10,000 years.

An excerpt follows the synopsis

Introduction

Exordium Popule

Introducing ***Exordium Popule***, the electrifying gateway to the 'Return from Cataclysm Saga.' Immerse yourself in a world teetering on the edge of disaster through six compelling prequels, each peeling back the layers of an intricately built universe.

Witness the first pulse- pounding tale, **Defender**, where pseudo- humans battle nature's fury and marauding threats. Then dive into **Terius**, the fourth story, where magical mechanics are unveiled in thrilling lessons, climaxing in a battle to the death.

By the fifth story, **Greta**, the narrative darkens, shifting to the sinister perspective of an antagonist. Brace yourself —this is not a tale for the faint -hearted. Meet our trio of protagonists in the remaining tales: **Teum** the immovable object, **Luscin**, the irresistible force, and **Malo**, the first natural human born in 6,000 years. Their paths intertwine in an epic saga where survival is anything but assured.

Synopsis

Defender

In a six-thousand-year flashback, follow along as Xirxis the first Defender does what he does best, protect the people of Val' Air. He's up against an army of genetically engineered humans built to conquer and colonize other worlds, a budding necromancer with red hair, and an all - powerful entity bent on destroying time eternal.

Luscin

The world has not been kind to her, but she had a light in her that it can't be extinguished. She's a born savant when it comes to the gift. Her best friend Wendy can't be trusted, and she knows it. When they get tangled up with a street gang that needs help protecting children, Luscin can't say no.

Teum

Not a care in the world, except some guilt over the situation of his birth. Skipping work and sneaking off to an overnight concert, he saves the day by learning how to be an Amp. Fear of facing the disappointment of his father, Teum decides to go for a walk to sort out his feelings. A year later he finds himself banging around the city on Mammatus Plateau fighting an irresistible force.

Terius

As Dean of Testing and Examinations he doesn't have a full-time teaching role, leaving him available to tutor struggling students. Especially late enrollees like Teum and Luscin. The Study of Mammatus is under contract to provide Defender services to the neighboring cities, leading to a deadly battle against Sholto. A flash of power draws his attention towards Brust Valley.

Greta

The good life of a Hedge Witch turned Devastator is all she's known for four hundred years. High society, parties, seduction, denigration, the stripping away of other peoples' spirits has allowed her to stitch together a powerful spirit of her own. She always needs more, but that all gets taken away when the redheaded man reappears. Stripped of everything, her opulent life, her dignity, and on the brink of insanity, she finds herself in an out-of-the-way valley looking at two perfect spirits, defenseless and ready to be consumed. Taking them could give her the strength to get her old life back. She couldn't have been more right and more wrong if she tried.

Malo

He didn't ask to be born a runt, it just happened. Most runts die at birth, but his auntie Ge'get saved him and has been looking out for him for as long as he can remember. Playing his favorite game, Defender, and building a fort with his best friend is bittersweet, because all the kids in the valley grow up three times faster than he does, forcing him to make new friends every year. Auntie Ge'get warned him not to reveal his spirit, for fear of attracting the attention of a hedge witch or worse. When his father's life was in danger, he couldn't help himself, with disastrous results.

Sample Chapter from “Greta”, *Exordium Popule*

Check Amazon to get this short story for free from June 13-16, 2026. Limited time offer.

Chapter Two – Entrances

The deputy governor’s estate is made up of a three-story living quarters and a pair of two-story outbuildings; one is living quarters for staff, and the other is for hosting guests. The shorter buildings sit on either flank of the living quarters and are connected by 20-yard enclosed walkways. Behind the estate are the less grand structures, kennel, garage, barn, and pool house.

The exterior of the living quarters is made of precision cut stone painted white in some symbolic gesture of purity. The style dates back more than a thousand years. In Greta’s opinion it’s a poor imitation of the architecture from a superior era.

The house staff assist Greta from the carriage and direct the driver to the kennel and garage. She watches her inu get back on their feet and stretch before eagerly pulling against the carriage brakes. The driver, content they are all equally ready, releases the brake and glides around to the rear of the buildings.

Double doors are both opened to allow her passage and to show respect. They make the customary offer of accommodations; all are declined. The house steward offers Greta his arm for her to hold as they walk across the spacious reception room where another set of double doors is opened to allow entrance into the sitting room where the other guests are gathered.

When the doors swing open, all eyes flicker in her direction. Conversations don’t stop but the tone of the voices goes up a notch momentarily as she enters. Head held high, Geta goes to work.

By the window she sees a group of women being led by tonight’s hostess, Betty Nassar. Betty slowly inches towards the center of the room with her small entourage to conceal that she knowingly was in Greta’s preferred place to receive people.

Greta glides through the room and takes her place before the window. The timing of her arrival could not be more perfect. The sun is just touching the horizon, the light hitting the east facing window backlighting her perfectly, casting her shadow down the room’s center from end to end. The only enhancement she adds is to

suppress the room's soft lighting until the sun completely disappears two minutes later.

Conversations are dying, someone tries to fake a laugh to show they are unaffected by the sudden gloomy atmosphere, it ends as a stifled coughing fit. Around half of all eyes are now on her either directly or indirectly. Greta smiles and allows the lights to return to their previous level. The babble of voices goes back to normal as the three dozen or so people sigh in relief, not even knowing why. Orchestrating such moments keeps her entertained. After 400 years of doing the same job, she needs these moments.

The group of women led by Betty Nassar gracefully drift back towards Greta.

"Lady Mirra, it's so nice that you could attend. My husband is always working, and we get so few occasions to get together with friends."

A servant comes by with a tray laden with glasses of wine. Betty nervously grabs a fresh glass with an empty one still in her other hand, making an obvious breach of etiquette. The servant sees what she's done and with a subtle hand gesture silently offers to take the empty glass.

Greta likes to see powerful people trip over themselves by her presence. But tonight is Betty's lucky night. She isn't here for her.

"Your home is always so beautiful, and your friendship means much to this old lady. In fact, I'd like to return your hospitality by inviting you and your husband over sometime soon. I think a luncheon would be nice. Do you agree?"

With defeated eyes and a perfect smile, Betty responds the only way she can, "That sounds exceptional. I'll let my dear husband know that he's already agreed, and we look forward to your invitation."

Greta meets the eyes of the four other socialites one by one in the group. One looks away and nervously clenches her untouched glass of wine in both hands. She's sure to be speaking with this one later. Greta wonders what vapid favor this one will ask.

"Please excuse us. As hostess I must circulate, and I've not spoken with Franny since she arrived." Betty leads her band of hens away so they can fake greet a woman that was with them by the window when she entered. Greta is constantly amazed at how bad people are at lying.

Greta signals the servant with the wine tray and helps herself to a glass. The next person to approach is the El'Hat chief of police, Mavis Trippler.

"Good evening officer. Have I done something wrong?"

“Hehe, of course you have. You’ve been invited to an exclusive dinner party with the city’s top officials. Not an innocent person in this room. Of course, me being the exception.”

“Is that so? I know for a fact that in the time we spent in the coat room of the El’Hat Bistro we broke several laws of the lewd and lascivious sort.”

“Those laws only count if you get caught.”

“But officer, we did get caught. Remember the coat girl interrupted us?”

“Yes, but she joined in, so it didn’t count.”

“Oh, it certainly counted. Too bad there’s no coat room here. I could use a diversion,” Greta enjoys the verbal foreplay, but now it’s time for the main course.

“How’s your little problem? Are you comfortable sitting in your chair now?”

The captain glances around to make sure nobody is listening. “It’s fine. I’d rather not think about that.”

Greta smugly agrees; she wouldn’t like to think about having hemorrhoids or to experience her cure. When the chief came to her for help, he didn’t imagine she’d use her finger to burn his insides and then use her own spirit to make him whole again. Regrowing that much tissue is equally painful to burning it.

Well, it hurts the way she does it. He cried the whole time. When he finally stopped sobbing, she collected her price. She used her spirit to pick at his, until there was a tear in it, then she gently pulled on it like a hang nail.

When it tore off, she ate it in front of him. She made sure to bend the light around it so he could see the otherwise invisible wisp of spirit and watch it as she slurped up his life’s essence like a noodle. Then she made him gratify her sexually, all the while recounting what she had done to him. That was their first time—the coat room incident was him trying to replace the memory, to forget the pain, the humiliation, and the loss of essence. She will never let him do that.

The chief mumbles an excuse and leaves to find something stronger than wine.

Next up is the woman clenching her wine glass with both hands. She’s holding it casually now, but it remains full. Greta watches as she saunters across the room. Clearly, she has decided something and is ready to act. This should be good, Greta thinks.

The woman is probably in her thirties, right at the beginning of middle age; she’ll look like this for another fifty years, but her behavior suggests inexperience. Her perfect blond hair is in a modern style fitting someone who hasn’t settled on a look they’ll keep for their remaining days. Sharp blue eyes and pale skin, she’s wearing last year’s style of dress; the color matches her eyes.

No introduction, no small talk, she whispers, “Can you really make things happen?”

Greta is old and tired of pointless small talk and takes an instant liking to the brash woman in front of her. She whispers back, “That depends on who is asking, and what they want to happen. I’m Lady Mirra. It’s a pleasure to make your acquaintance.”

No longer whispering, “Oh, I do beg your pardon. I’m not used to this kind of thing and completely forgot my manners. I’m Emma Shalaby, the daughter of Judge Shalaby,” offers the woman while holding out her hand to shake.

Greta ignores the hand. “I know your father well. How is he doing? Is he here tonight?”

“I’m afraid he didn’t make the invite list. How I was invited I don’t understand either.”

“Oh, that’s not hard to figure out. Somebody brought you here so they can influence you into doing something that concerns your father. But you know that; you’re a grown woman with an important father. You’ve been coached to deal with that fact all your life. Now why are you here?” Greta points to the floor to make sure Emma understands where she is standing.

Emma’s resolve starts to soften. Greta doesn’t care one way or another; this woman will be hers eventually.

Emma closes her eyes and takes a deep breath. “I want my father dead.”

Patricide, she’s not heard that in a while. “Don’t say such a thing out loud ever again. Why would you even think such thoughts?” Greta already has an idea of what’s at play. Tonight’s host has four sons, two are near this woman’s age and single. A relationship between her and the son of the deputy governor would be a huge scandal and destroy the appearance of impartiality of the judge in affairs involving the office of the governor. Still no need to rush this, she waits to hear what Emma has to say.

“I met someone, and we want to marry, but it would ruin father’s career, and we’d lose everything. You see, the person is someone who might one day be standing on the wrong side of my father’s court. But if he were to pass away, mother and I would have his pension, and I’d be free to marry whomever I like.”

Greta isn’t surprised at the cold-hearted explanation. The judge is a terrible person himself; he beat his children until they were able to move away. He cheats on his wife with cheap whores, and he has a foot fetish; that’s gross even to Greta. He’s as corrupt as any judge; he’s probably already on the payroll of Emma’s lover. People today have no imagination. There are countless ways to make this happen

that don't involve murder, but this is the world she's been tasked to build. She shouldn't be surprised when her efforts produce such useful results.

"I accept."

"What? You accept? Does that mean?"

"I told you to not say such a terrible thing out loud—you're liable to make it happen, and you are going to owe me a favor of equal weight. Understand?"

"Yes, I expected that." She did not, but there's nothing she can do about it now.

"It's been a pleasure, Emma Shalaby. We'll talk again after I decide the favor, not before."

Emma nods agreement, taking the no talking command literally.

A servant walks through the room with a small metal triangle dangling from a string. She strikes it with a tiny metal rod going ting-ting-ting as she circulates around the room as a signal that it's time to move to the dining room for dinner.

Some start walking right away, others don't seem to hear the annoying little instrument. Greta waits until there's barely anyone left talking before joining the meandering crowd as they walk toward the promise of food.

A figure stands in the doorway. People are walking past him, stepping around him, but nobody sees him. Her heart skips a beat as she's overcome with fear. Silently, she asks herself if she's about to die.

Buy or Read on Amazon Kindle ***Exordium Popule***

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0CKC4PTQ3?ref=dbs_mng_crcw_6&storeType=ebooks&qid=1728099382&sr=8-1

Customer Review

Exordium Popule

[RJ McKay](#)

4.0 out of 5 stars A great introduction to a new series

Reviewed in the United States on May 28, 2024

Exordium Popule introduces the reader to author Michael Nelson's magical world, and his Cataclysm Saga books. Through a series of short stories, the reader learns

the back story of this new world and gets a peek into the characters that will step forward to protect it. Each story introduces a character that will leave you wanting to know more, more about the person and more about the world he comes from. The reader will learn about the first Defender in this new world, and what he faces to protect his own. But along with heroes, there are villains. All have a story to tell.

It's always interesting to discover a new author, or a new-to-me author. Nelson created a world that's fascinating and captivating. I enjoyed his use of short stories to introduce both his world and his characters, and to set the tone for books to come. I can't imagine it's easy to create a whole new world, but Nelson managed just that. I look forward to reading more books in the series.

About the author

Michael L Nelson was born at the end of the 1960's and has been a fan of Dinosaurs, Monkeys, Hard Science Fiction, Heavy Metal, D&D and other RPG, reading Sci-Fi and fantasy novels, playing computer games, messing around with fireworks, and watching professional hockey all or most of his life.

He also has been happily married to his high school sweetheart and managed to survive raising three children.

Professionally, computers have been a passion, driving him to open then close a couple of retail computer stores, do private consulting, and work for a fortune 100 IT company.

All that time, thinking of magical worlds, characters, and stories.
