



## Ghost of the Well of Souls

By Jack L. Chalker

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**Ghost of the Well of Souls** By Jack L. Chalker

Jack Chalker's Well World epic occupies an honored place among the classics of science fiction. Now this boldly imagined, intricately plotted new novel takes us deeper into the Well World than ever before . . .

On the mysterious Well World, the evil tyrant Josich and his dark agents search desperately for the eight scattered pieces of the fabled Straight Gate. Whoever possesses the Gate will wield enormous power, travelling between universes at the speed of light and wreaking havoc across galaxies.

Opposing Josich is a small band of travelers new to the Well World. There is Core, once a machine, now flesh and blood; Ming and Ari, two minds sharing a single body; Jaysu, an angel; and Genghis O'Leary, a lizard being. Unbeknownst to them, they have an unlikely ally: a vengeful entity who is able to clone any person or object with a single touch--and mete out death just as swift . . .

*From the Paperback edition.*

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### Editorial Review

#### From the Inside Flap

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#### About the Author

Jack L. Chalker was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on December 17, 1944. While still in high school, he began writing for the amateur science-fiction press, and in 1960 he launched the Hugo-nominated amateur magazine *Mirage*. A year later he founded *Mirage Press*, which grew into a major specialty publisher of nonfiction and reference books on science fiction and fantasy.

His first novel, *A Jungle of Stars*, was published in 1976, and he became a full-time novelist two years later with the major popular success of *Midnight at the Well of Souls*. Chalker is an active conservationist and enjoys traveling, consumer electronics, and computers. He is also a noted speaker on science fiction and fantasy at numerous colleges and universities. He is a passionate lover of steamboats, in particular ferryboats, and has ridden more than three hundred ferries in the United States and elsewhere.

*From the Paperback edition.*

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AMBASSADOR DUKLA'S ALMOST EQUINE FACE PULSED AS HE breathed the water of his longtime ambassadorial home. Most of those he addressed were no more likely to read his mood or expressions than they could read it on a rock's, but there was no mistaking the tone the telepathic translator module carried through to the allied hexes.

"The Chalidang ambassador has been replaced, as you know," Dukla began, sounding cheerful. "My suspicion is that he either did not go home or he is home for good. The Emperor and Empress there are having quite a purge."

Those watching in both air- and water-breathing ambassadorial chambers gave their own equivalents of nods or knowing chuckles. Not only did the Chalidang rulers have vicious tempers, they were known to go into serious rages and eat the nearest person alive, slowly, limb by limb. It wasn't just personal, it was almost traditional.

"The official protests, of course, have been coming in fast and furious as well--not just from the Chalidang, but also from the Jirminins and the Quacksans. Both lost quite a bit more in the Battle of Ochoa than the

pride their rulers lost--for all that means to the bastards. It centered mostly on my using my authority to allow Ochoan armed troops inside Zone as part of the battle. They are waving the treaty like never before, even though they ignore it whenever it doesn't suit them. They have called for an impeachment of me and my office, and for my immediate recall with censure, and, of course, they want all sorts of reparations. As usual, these things are being negotiated under the table, even as they bluster, but I wanted to let you know ahead of any Council convenings that a deal is already shaping up.

"Technically, the Ochoans were here primarily as a deputized force of the Zone Council--as all of our races who participate do from time to time. They were empowered to prevent hostilities and to prevent Zone's use in influencing the course of a conflict. The complaintants see it differently. The fact that the Kalindans gave over their assignment to the Ochoans is in order, but I'm afraid the Ochoans aren't good for long periods underwater, no matter how well they fish."

The Ochoan ambassador, who knew he owed the continued existence of his nation in part to the courage of this strange creature and its sense of right and wrong, had guessed that this was coming, but he didn't like it anyway. "So they are taking the easy way out, I suppose?" he said. "Much easier than making a moral choice. They justify their action in using Zone as a planned military escape route because of our action, in support of Kalinda's authority, to stop them. The invaders are disarmed and sent home. We are already home, so that is moot, although we did go home fully armed. And you take the political fall."

"That is an accurate summary," Ambassador Dukla acknowledged. "I knew this was probable when I did it. Do not worry. My homeland does not eat its recalcitrants. Fortunately, we are vegetarians. And it shall be nice to be home once more in my native land. I have an estate that is a gorgeous coral reef, nicely designed by me and my kin. I truly have missed it. In a year or two, when things quiet down and memories fade and the rage of nations is elsewhere, I'll quietly be let back into the government, probably as an adviser or deputy minister."

In the Kalindan embassy, the twin-minded Ari and Ming watched while reclining in comfort just beneath the water, along with the very strange one called Core, who appeared to be the self-aware portion of crime lord Jules Wallinchky's computer, designed to run his faraway museum and retreat. For the moment, Core was on their side, but there was no precedent for such a creature, not even in its own memories, and nobody knew just what it might do or become.

"Do you mean that the Ochoans win the war because Dukla had guts and Core had a plan and the guy who made it possible gets kicked in the tail?" This was clearly Ming, outraged.

*I thought at least by now you'd have lost that childlike faith in justice and the rewards of goodness in this life, Ari commented mentally.*

"Only since I got stuck in the same head as you did, dear," she shot back.

"It is likely that most of the nations of and around the Overdark are secretly pleased," Core commented. "It is expedient that someone take the fall, and the ambassador will fall more softly than others. It is a logical result. The important thing is that we have bought some time."

"Huh? Only that?" Ari responded.

"Only that. No war was won here; please put that idea from your minds. A *battle* was won. The defeat is considerable, but it involved a less than thirty percent casualty rate to the main two nations. Bad, but seventy

percent was able to evacuate either via Zone or in ships, so I would expect that Josich now is formulating plans for everyone who caused him this inconvenience and loss of face."

"Inconvenience! He was creamed!" Ming exclaimed.

"Indeed? How many Chalidang troops were lost?"

"Huh? None, I guess, except maybe a few to some sniping around the ships. They're water breathers and this was a land attack."

"Precisely. His surrogates did the fighting and took the losses, and he still has many allies. Take a look at the map."

Core rose, floated over to a wall and checked the labels. She withdrew a large scroll, which she proceeded to lay open on a table and clamp down the edges. A small current was applied, which illuminated the tabletop and therefore the map of the eastern Overdark.

*From the Paperback edition.*

## Users Review

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### **James McDonald:**

This book untitled Ghost of the Well of Souls to be one of several books which best seller in this year, that's because when you read this e-book you can get a lot of benefit in it. You will easily to buy this book in the book store or you can order it through online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more easily to read this book, as you can read this book in your Smart phone. So there is no reason to you to past this book from your list.

### **Christopher Williams:**

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### **Duane Vega:**

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