



Media Kit - *Prelude to a Change of Mind: The First Book in The Lands of Nod*

Sample Review

To create a parallel world that is both fantastic and painfully real is not terribly difficult given today's technology and political and social realities. We are faced with massive species extinctions, horrific sectarian violence, climate change that could create massive social upheaval in our lifetime and technologies that simultaneously offer us cures of crippling diseases and life spans that could match Methuselah.

We are literally on the verge of breakthroughs in knowledge that could allow us to travel through time, to cross parallel worlds, to leave the universe, as we know it. We could also be at a dead end in less than a century.

In *Prelude to a Change of Mind*, a delightfully positive book of fantasy and speculative science, Robert Stikmanz takes us back to the beginnings of the nuclear age and then further to the very beginnings of civilization and posits an imaginative thesis on what went wrong and how we can get back to behaving in ways that enhance our humanity by use of the simplest of emotions: pleasure. Okay, he uses elves and dwarves, but his use of quantum physics not only makes this a plausible scenario, his wry humor and light touch makes it a world we want to believe in because it is a world we have always believed in when we made the best use of our very real imaginations. It is just that kind of magical book.

The story is part fairy tale and part social critique set in an isolated cabin somewhere in the American west during the waning days of World War II. A young woman, Meg Christmas, has fallen ill but a troop of elves has come to her aid. Accompanied by a half-breed dwarf-elf and a full dwarf of the Nondifferential Clan, these creatures communicate through a form of compassionate humming. Meg is restored to health but her healing comes with a price. Surprisingly, it is not her soul. The price is that she has to help save the world. Along the way, she learns about time-travel, consensual realities, and parallel worlds. It is a heady stew of politics, science, and social activism. And the elf-like creatures, the thrm, are destined to take a place beside the classic Hobbits.

Prelude is the rare book that speaks directly to our deepest longings and shows us quite clearly the obstacles that stand in the way of our achieving those not-so-pie-in-the-sky goals of peace, love, and understanding. More rare, it offers us a hopeful future. And, of course, a sequel.

423 Word count