

SEEING REDD

[Frank Beddor](#)

Dial Books for Young Readers

Fantasy/Action & Adventure

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Last year, Frank Beddor appeared on the YA scene with *THE LOOKING GLASS WARS*, an innovative and imaginative redux of Lewis Carroll's *ALICE IN WONDERLAND*. Creating a new mythos for the well-known story, Beddor's version fuses technology and mysticism to lend a modern sensibility that will appeal to readers who love a story that accelerates with the steady beat of a rock song.



The second book in a proposed trilogy, *SEEING REDD* picks up where the first one left off, with young Alyss sitting as queen over Wonderland. But her fairy tale ending is far from sight.

THE LOOKING GLASS WARS ended with Alyss's evil aunt, Redd, imprisoned in the Heart Crystal and Alyss trying her best to restore peace to the troubled land in the wake of Redd's tyranny. But right from the beginning, she is confronted by the arrogant (and, frankly, sexist) King Arch from the neighboring Borderland who warns of dire times ahead. What Alyss doesn't suspect, however, is that Arch conspires to overthrow her and usurp control over Wonderland. When Redd's armies of Glass Eyes begin mounting attacks all over Wonderland, Alyss is put on the offensive and the question becomes *Has Arch found an ally in Redd, and if so, how has the former queen managed to return?*

Although some of the novelty of the original premise has worn off, there is no shortage of imagination in *SEEING REDD*. Beddor's skill is in keeping the story moving and generating this vivid world through well-crafted characters and clever settings. Not for the squeamish, it ups the ante on the violence and brutality, with a full complement of beheadings and maimings that are sure to enthrall the trilogy's most ardent fans.

The darkness that gave the first book such a rich texture is back and coats even the burgeoning love story between Alyss and Dodge. Visit the author's website to find the "soundtrack" that was created especially for the first installment, and you'll get a sense of the raw, driving power the books inspire.

SEEING REDD springboards off the success of the first book and parlays that into another winning addition to the series. But don't enter into *The Looking Glass Wars* lightly. Once you're there, you can't turn back. Frank Beddor makes sure of that.

--- Reviewed by Brian Farrey (emohawk9000@gmail.com)