#### Presentation of the book series

# EIGHT WORLDS / OSM SVĚTŮ

Marcela Remeňová

The youngest published Czech writer



## Family - Part Three of the Eight Worlds tetralogy

2016 / 465pgs / ISBN - 978-80-905865-1-2

After the Eightworlders victory over the Bee People, Lea flees the post-war chaos on Earth and sets out on a long journey to discover the source of her powers and track down the primal creator Potens. But the goal she has set herself proves almost unattainable. Suddenly her own species and even her real family turn against her, including her new-found relative Harry, who is no longer the person he once was. Lea hastens back to Eight Worlds and tries to save her friends form the Potens queen Morgana, who is determined to win back her homeland and dominion over the three races. Yet despite the support of the Bee People and the mysterious James, Lea's mission is all but thwarted by treachery from within her own ranks and by the dark Potens of ancient legend – especially when the fate of Eight Worlds falls into the hands of the shadowy but all-powerful Diego, who is always one step ahead and thanks to whom nothing is ever quite what it seems.



#### First Acquaintance - Part One of the Eight Worlds tetralogy

2013 / 250pgs / ISBN - 978-80-204-3120-2

The first part of the Eight Worlds tetralogy, First Acquaintance (*Seznámení*), tells the story of Lea Layer, an American high school student who lives a perfectly ordinary life disturbed only by strange dark dreams. One night she awakes from one such nightmare to overhear a conversation among her adoptive family and learns that her parents, her brother Fred and her sister Samantha are Eightworlders who come from a completely different galaxy. The gulf that suddenly separates Lea from the life she has always known becomes even wider when her father Thomas, a policeman, unexpectedly brings home a mysterious young man, Harry, who to Fred's disgust moves into the spare room. This in itself wouldn't be such a disaster if the handsome and likeable Harry didn't make a living as a hired killer...In the chain of events that follows, Lea's ordinary life is transformed into an action-packed drama. Most dramatic of all is Harry's sudden disappearance in circumstances even more mysterious than those of his arrival. To track him down, Lea must not only undergo special training for novice agents; she also has to overcome obstacles she couldn't have imagined even in her wildest dreams.

# Bee People - Part Two of the Eight Worlds tetralogy

2014 / 498pgs / ISBN - 978-80-905865-0-5

The second book in the Eight Worlds series takes up exactly where the first left off. Lea Layer, having survived her own death, is teleported to the distant Eight Worlds along with her family and the enigmatic Lara. There they are at once caught up in a war between the Eightworlders and a race of mysterious insectoid creatures. Thanks to her dreams and a surprise encounter with a cruel Beeman, Lea discovers that both the causes of the conflict and the key to its resolution lie with the ancient creators, the Potens. Anxious to find out who she really is, Lea leaves her family and friends and throws in her lot with Enora, Queen of the Bees. But there is no escape from emotional conflict, first with the agent Ben, then with Harry the hit-man who, despite his efforts to steer clear of the Layer family and consolidate his career on Earth as a hired killer, eventually has no choice but to travel to Eight Worlds as well, where he is confronted not only by Lea and the Bee People but also by his long-forgotten past.





#### Marcela Remeňová (b. 1999) - author of the 'Eight Worlds' series

Marcela Remeňová is the youngest published Czech writer. Born in Prague in 1999, she was brought up in a creative environment of theatre and film that inspired her to produce her own imaginative work, her earliest stories being in picture form. At primary school she quickly became an avid reader and began writing her first short stories. Now aged sixteen and a pupil at the prestigious Jan Neruda grammar school in Prague, she wrote her first full-length novel at the age of thirteen – the first part of the fantasy thriller Eight Worlds (Osm světů), entitled First Acquaintance (Seznámení) and published by the well-known Czech publishers Mladá fronta in autumn 2013. A year later this very young and talented writer completed and published a second volume, Bee People (Včelí lid); Family (Rodina) is the third part of the successful action fantasy series EIGHT WORLDS – the thrilling story of Lea, Harry and Ben that gradually unfolds against the intertwined backdrops of modern New York and the distant galaxy of Eight Worlds.

'I don't usually look for inspiration. Ideas come to me of their own accord and I can't influence when that happens. I may be listening to music in the car on a long trip when new scenes occur to me and I think how I can work them into the plot. I store it all away in my head then write it down when I have time, preferably in the evening. I like to write against a suitable musical background, choosing a genre that suits the atmosphere of the scene I'm working on, because music really helps me create the right feeling. I immerse myself totally in my fantasy world and forget about the real world around me. I experience the same feelings as when I read a good book or watch an interesting film, but the story is happening only in my head,' says the young writer about the way she works.

All three of Marcela Remeňová's books are on sale in bookshops throughout the Czech Republic, and the phenomenon of the 13-year-old authoress has become a popular subject in the Czech mainstream media and on national television.

## The 'Eight Worlds' series from the reviews

'Of course everyone was wondering how a thirteen-year-old author would tackle an action thriller. All I can say is that she did, and she came out on top. Despite the multiple narrators I never once lost the thread, and the separate but interlinked stories complemented each other beautifully.

Bee People is a book packed with action that still manages to include plenty of moments of emotion, romantic passages, a love triangle and a bosom friendship, thus providing the reader with a perfectly balanced story. Yes, you can see it is the work of a young mind, but that in no way detracts from its quality. Eight Worlds is a great read – far better, incidentally, than the books of many more experienced authors.

I take my hat off to this young writer.'

Dita Murinová, literary blogger

'As a setting for her story the author has invented an entire new solar system and a race of humanoids called Eightworlders, who with the help of magic are quietly colonizing the universe – including our own planet. Within this space she introduces a whole range of characters who take us through the fast-moving narrative, where every paragraph leads us deeper into their well-plotted psychology and sets up a new twist in the tale. And there are plenty of those! Lea, the heroine, falls into a 'rabbit warren', taking the reader with her, and before she's had time to get over the shock events start crowding in on her thick and fast. Ms Remeňová has obviously done a lot of reading and knows how to construct a story. I can honestly say that for teenage readers the Eight Worlds saga is certainly one of the best choices they can make.'

Přemysl Křejčí, literary critic

'Eight Worlds' is certainly not the rambling of a pubescent thirteen-year-old. Marcela has created an original world that is very precisely defined and elaborated. I found the story utterly gripping – a real page-turner.'

F.A. Brabec, film director

# Falling apart

I woke up feeling as if someone had just yanked me out of freezing water, then pushed me back in. I had no idea where I was, what had happened or what to do. I couldn't breathe and there was a constant roaring in my ears. A searing pain in my left shoulder and the distant sound of clashing blades brought me back to reality. Ben...Benjamin...', I mouthed mechanically, not even noticing the warm blood that was again dripping over my hand and seeping through the sleeve of my coat. 'Ben...Ben...' I moaned, over and over, as I let the tears spurt from my eyes. I no longer cared if other bee people attacked me, or even one of the queens; all I was interested in was Ben and his dirty blond hair, torn clothing and bloody stains on his arms and legs.

'Ben...BEN!' I yelled, and with all my strength managed to roll him onto his back, instantly exposing a huge gash that stretched right across his chest. I had no idea what to do, or where the others were, or why I had fainted and left Ben on his own. I was sure it was all my fault, and slowly I felt a huge rage welling up inside me. I was angry with myself, with Lara, with the other Eightworlders and the bee people, with the new queen, with Enora for getting herself killed, with her predecessor who had started this whole war, and with Harry, who had caused me to lose all my energy. I couldn't take my eyes off Ben's motionless body lying there in the blood; but at the same time I wasn't able to bend down to him and discover if he was still alive.





## My Queen

I placed my palm on the cold metal and pushed. Noiselessly the door swung open, revealing a vast hall with a chequered marble floor and large windows on either side, through which slanted the orange, nearly blood-red rays of the setting sun. In an alcove facing me, surrounded by heavy red drapes that reached to the floor, stood a massive throne on which I could make out the dark silhouette of a slender figure. It turned on me its two fiery eyes, whose incandescence could penetrate the deepest darkness and terrify all but the boldest enemy, and I swallowed hard.

"Mother", I addressed the Queen of all Potens, kneeling and bowing my head.

# Consoling voices in my darkness

Before I could recover and fully regain my senses, the edge of my hand knocked against something hard and an instant later there was a thud as the object crashed to the floor. That quickly got me out of my drowsy, dull-witted state and I leapt out of bed, only to stand for several long seconds, panting and disoriented, before realizing that I was not in a stone hall in the heart of a castle but in my own bedroom. Carefully I examined my hands, which still felt sticky with the fresh blood that had covered them in my dream, then slowly walked towards my reflection in the mirror facing me. No fur, no dagger. Only dishevelled brown hair that fell over my face, a crumpled T-shirt, and staring, dark-ringed eyes.





## A quick decision

I rushed into my room and with a quick movement locked the door. Wildly and distractedly I started pulling clothes out of the wardrobe and sweeping all sorts of stuff off the table and shelves into a large holdall, which already contained Lea's coat with the little key hidden safely in one of its ingenious pockets. Though I would never had admitted it to myself, my eyes were by now quite moist. I had no wish to see anyone in Eight Worlds – I just wanted to get away. At once. But I knew I had to act fast. Lara had succeeded in neutralizing the insect barrier ring so that Lea, whose memory I had hopefully managed to erase, could now be teleported back to Earth, and I planned to use this generously offered opportunity to make good my escape. If I speeded up I might be able to get out before the barrier was completely closed again. Ignoring the terrible headache that had come on some minutes earlier, I slung the holdall over my shoulder and began to make the pale grey Parvamundus in my hand. Once again it was time to leave everything behind.

'Goodbye', I whispered hoarsely into the still of the room, and let the glowing ball in my hand explode into a dazzling burst of light.

#### The Kiss

'Probably...,' Ben nodded, drawing me closer as I rested my head against his shoulder. 'Please... live...,' he whispered, 'Nobody means as much to me as you.' I raised my head and our faces were almost touching. I had no idea how to discover what my true feelings were. Until yesterday I'd felt that Harry would always be the only one for me and I had forgotten all about Ben. But now that Ben was right in front of me everything that had happened between Harry and me seemed extraordinarily distant and faded, like an old photograph. A crazy mixture of emotions whirled inside me. Unable to decide who I was attracted to more, I only knew that I could not hurt either of them.

For several minutes Ben gazed at me in silence. I wondered what was going through his head, but when his lips softly touched mine I forgot everything. I close my eyes and lost myself in his kiss – perhaps our last. I wanted us to stay standing there all night, but knew that Ben had to go and, like all the others, prepare himself for likely death.

Slowly the magic of the moment faded but our faces were still very close and Ben clearly didn't want to let go of me. Pressing me to him one last time, he gently kissed my hair then slowly relaxed his grip and stroked my hands with his. It wasn't easy for either of us but finally we drew apart. 'We'll see each other again, at least once. I feel it,' he said in farewell, and magic little smile flickered on his face.





#### The Bee Man

When I reached the door I stopped and peered cautiously inside. Seeing only a small hallway lined with empty glass-fronted cabinets, I took another careful step. A second later I had drawn my sword, which had been hanging all the while in its scabbard at my belt, and thanked God that I'd brought it with me, because now I saw that one of the cabinets was not entirely empty. There before me was the most bizarre sight I had seen for a long time: a man in a white coat, now covered in blood, with his eyes gouged out. His body had been crammed into one of the cabinets.

With a dry gulp I tightened my grip on the sword and crept noiselessly towards the two shattered doors at the far end of the hall. First I looked in the one on the right. I saw at once it was some kind of laboratory, though I had no time to examine the large room thoroughly. What I did see was a mess: smashed beakers and test tubes all over the floor, overturned tables, and syringes – lots of syringes. The white walls and ceiling were spattered with blood, and lying among the broken glass on the floor, in improbable attitudes, were the mangled bodies of Eightworlders. Above them hovered a giant dragonfly with wings about four metres across, its composite eyes directed straight at me. I knew that even if I had bolted out of the room the very moment I'd come in, I still wouldn't have had a hope of escaping the ghastly monster that took up half the room. I waited for it to lunge at me and rip me to pieces, as it had the Eightworlders now strewn over the floor. But amazingly nothing happened: we just stared at each other. Quivering slightly, the blue-green membranous wings opened to their full, incredible extent with a sound like rustling paper. I was terrified that if I took my eyes off it for a single moment, that moment would be my last. We remained frozen in that position for a full, endless half-minute until I began to have a faint hope that I might get out of there alive.

But suddenly the dragonfly started making strange, multi-layered noises – something like the gasp or wheezing cough of a human being combined with the croak of frogs and even birdsong – all merging into an extraordinary, ear-splitting cacophony. I began to feel increasingly certain that the creature did not want to kill me – at least not yet. I had the feeling the giant bug was trying to communicate with me and, unable to understand what was going on, I blinked several times. But what happened next took me so by surprise that I almost dropped my sword. Before my eyes the dragonfly began to change its form like some liquid, and seconds later there stood in its place a man – barefoot and naked to the waist above a pair of brown trousers. He was of medium height, with long blue-green hair and wide-open coal-black eyes. For a moment he looked at me with seeming interest; then slowly he opened his mouth and said, quite clearly, 'Lea'.

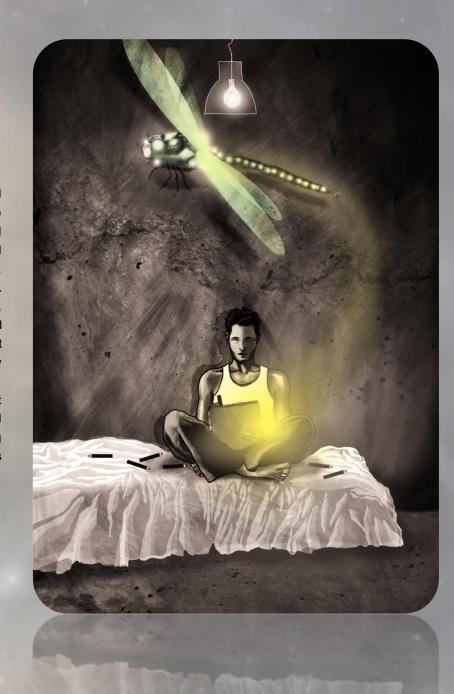
I had no idea where he could know me from, but at that moment the surprising fact that he actually knew my name had not fully sunk in, since I was preoccupied with his numerous needle-sharp teeth and pointed, bright red tongue. His eyes fell on the little key hanging round my neck and for a second rested on it in astonishment. Then he looked me in the face again and in his eyes I saw admiration, respect and humility, although I had no idea why. I was even more taken aback when the insect man bowed his head and laid the index and middle fingers of his left hand on his left collarbone, which I took to be a sign of deference. But before I could recover my wits he stepped up to me and placed his palm on my forehead.

'I'm sorry', he said, just before an icy sensation spread through my whole body and a piercing pain shot through my head as if someone had hammered a nail into it. I collapsed in agony.

#### Stolen talent

Although I hadn't felt like drawing, I eventually opened my eyes, sat down and picked up a sketch pad from the rickety bedside table. Again it wobbled and as usual made me want to kick it as everything on it crashed to the floor. Ignoring the mess for once, I reached into my pocket and, instead of my pencil, took out some coloured crayons and started drawing. I let my hand do whatever it wanted without guiding the crayons at all. What emerged, unsurprisingly, was a dragonfly – slightly larger than normal life-size. Now that I was alone I used the opportunity to try out something I used to be good at, though I had never quite discovered how I did it. I had never come across this new-found ability of mine in anyone else, not even the strongest of the Eightworlders, and didn't want to draw attention to it. I was afraid it might immediately be misused for military ends.

I concentrated as much energy as I could into my index finger until it felt it might burst into flames, then touched the drawing of the dragonfly. The membranous wings, until then perfectly still, began to tremble, and the whole insect took off from the page, leaving nothing behind. With a smile I laid the sketch-pad on the bed beside me and watched as my animated creation fluttered around the room.





#### Someone else

It was several seconds before I saw them. The first few were in their insect form and in that small space they appeared truly terrifying. I felt that luckily none of them was as strong as the wasp or centipede I had already encountered whom, as I knew, it was unwise to antagonise. Nor did the other insectoids who appeared in human form seem particularly powerful.

But the energy field around us, rather than diminishing, continued to expand and increase in intensity. Several Eightworlders had already dropped to their knees and Lara and I struggled to remain on our feet. I couldn't understand what was happening. I thought the queen was the most powerful figure in the entire insect army, but was sure she never emanated anything like this. Did that mean there was someone among them even more powerful than their leader? Even if there was, what would be the point in sending such an important figure to negotiate with a bunch of Eightworlders, thus revealing their secret weapon – the ace up their sleeve? For a while the fear and foreboding I felt at having failed to outwit them, and letting them outwit us instead, were strong enough to counteract the ever-increasing pressure, and I was at least able to stand up straight and get a good look at what we were up against. At the edge of my vision I saw Lea standing rooted to the spot, her eyes fixed on vacancy – at that moment our leader would have been an easy target for the enemy. Uncertainty churned my stomach. My first thought was to call in reinforcements, but I was afraid that even if I succeeded the outcome would be the same: dozens more writhing, incapacitated Eightworlders.

Taking a grip on myself, I tried to see past the huddle of insectoids. It took me a while to focus; then I saw what I wanted – or rather did not want – to see. Marching up and down in the midst of the group was Lea. For several seconds all I could do was stare blankly at her as the mysterious energy was beginning to invade me again. The insectoids were obviously looking after her with great care. But I was surprised to see that despite the freezing weather she was very lightly dressed, and that she was able to move about with astonishing ease and grace, meaning that the all-pervading pressure had no effect on her. Yet what shocked me most was the cold expression on her face, confirming my worst fears and expectations: the insectoids had made her into their puppet – one possibly far more cruel and brutal than Danny.

As Lea approached the table the energy field grew even more intense until I was on the point of collapsing. My knees gave way and I looked at Lea one last time as she pulled back the chair and prepared to sit down. But the instant she came into contact with the wooden surface, just when I thought I could endure no more, the pressure suddenly disappeared as if it had never been. Though the sudden change caused me to stagger a little, I quickly regained my balance and, like Lara, tried to look as if nothing had happened. But our terrified, wide-staring eyes said it all.

## Welcome to the Family

'You live here?' asked Thomas in awe, squinting up at the skyscraper with its penthouse apartment. 'Yes', I replied and couldn't help smiling. 'You obviously earn quite a bit,' he said, impressed. I jumped out of the car and headed for the door, where I was greeted by a sexy blonde with beautiful blue eyes in a tight, low-cut T-shirt – my secretary Angelica. Unfortunately Angelica is a robot – people are terribly unreliable.

'Good evening, Harry,' she said with a smile.

'Look Angel, I probably won't be back for quite a long time — I'll be living somewhere else for a while. I've just dropped by to pick up some stuff. Clean the apartment, will you, and don't let anyone in.' 'Sure, Harry,' she smiled again. That was the best thing about her — she didn't ask questions, and wasn't driven by curiosity like normal people.

# **Epilogue**

I sat in the tree with my loaded gun trying to keep my balance on a shaky branch. It was the best place I could find, and even so I had to use my Eightworldly power of invisibility. I spent hours squatting in that horrible tree, going over in my head my conversation with Thomas.

I had searched the whole area thoroughly but still hadn't found the entrance to the secret underground base. Luckily my informer had told me an hour earlier that Tim Charles had been uncovered and was being transferred to another site.

At last, about two hundred metres away, a hole opened up in the ground and out drove two black Lincolns. Again I had to use my Eightworldly powers: first my vision, so I could locate Tim Charles inside the vehicles; and then I had to increase the velocity and force of the bullet so that it would pierce the ballistic glass. The limos had only gone a few metres before I saw Tim – sitting between two agents I didn't recognize. I took aim and fired. Because of its augmented velocity I didn't see the bullet. But I saw the result – and smiled.













Bibliokvíz











