

Beethoven Beginnings

***Hive – The Overlord Protocol* by Mark Walden**

The shockwave from the explosion threw Otto tumbling out of control through the air. He could hear his own quick panicky breathing, suddenly loud within the confines of the helmet. The stars in the night sky spun past crazily, huge pieces of burning debris whistling past his falling body, close enough to touch.

***Raven's Gate* by Anthony Horowitz**

Matt Freeman knew he was making a mistake.

He was sitting on a low wall outside Ipswich station, wearing a grey hooded sweatshirt, shapeless, faded jeans, and trainers with frayed laces. It was six o'clock in the evening and the London train had just pulled in. Behind him, commuters were fighting their way out of the station. The concourse was a tangle of cars, taxis and pedestrians, all of them trying to find their way home. Someone leant on their horn and the noise blared out, cutting through the damp evening air. Matt heard it and looked up briefly. But the crowd meant nothing to him. He wasn't part of it. He never had been – and he sometimes thought he never would be.

***The Amber Spyglass* by Phillip Pulman**

In a valley shaded with rhododendrons, close to the snow line, where a stream milky with melt-water splashed and where doves and linnets flew among the immense pines, lay a cave, half hidden by the crag above and the stiff heavy leaves that clustered below. The woods were full of sound: the stream between the rocks, the wind among the needles of the pine branches, the chitter of insects and the cries of small arboreal mammals, as well as the bird-song; and from time to time a stronger gust of wind would make one of the branches of cedar or a fir move against another and groan like a cello.

***To Kill a Mocking Bird* by Harper Lee**

When he was nearly thirteen, my brother Jem got his arm badly broken at the elbow. When it healed, and Jem's fears of never being able to play football were assuaged, he was seldom self-conscious about his injury. His left arm was somewhat shorter than his right; when he stood or walked, the back of his hand was at right-angles to his body, his thumb parallel to his thigh. He couldn't have cared less, so long as he could pass and punt.