

One Ascent Time

THE SIGNAL CYCLE — BOOK I OF VI

A novel about resonance, memory, and the hidden architecture beneath ordinary life.



LOGLINE

Los Angeles, Friday, October 5th, 2007. A freelance designer buys an underpriced guitar on Ventura Boulevard, and by nightfall the city — and the ocean sixty miles west — has begun moving around what is trapped inside it.

AT A GLANCE

Literary urban fantasy · 38,305 words

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A.R. Marquez



ONE LINE

A.R. Marquez is a principal software engineer, designer, and music video producer based in New Mexico. *One Ascent Time* is his debut novel.

50 WORDS

A.R. Marquez is a principal fullstack engineer and visual designer based in New Mexico, whose creative practice spans brand identity, AI-assisted development, and cinematic content production. His work lives at the intersection of technology, music, and visual culture. *One Ascent Time* is his debut novel.

100 WORDS

A.R. Marquez is a principal software engineer, visual designer, and music video producer based in New Mexico. He began his career as a freelance designer in Los Angeles in 2007 — the same year *One Ascent Time* is set — and has spent eighteen years since building at the intersection of technology, music, and visual culture. His engineering work spans frontend architecture at Hulu and Disney+, enterprise systems at national laboratories including Los Alamos and Sandia, and AI evaluation engineering for frontier language models. His creative practice runs parallel: brand identity, cinematic content production, and a music and visual identity under the name Rezurrector. *One Ascent Time* is his debut novel.

Full biography

A.R. Marquez is a principal software engineer, visual designer, and music video producer based in New Mexico. He began his career as a freelance designer in Los Angeles in 2007 — the same year *One Ascent Time* is set — and has spent eighteen years since building at the intersection of technology, music, and visual culture. His engineering work has spanned frontend architecture at Hulu and Disney+, enterprise systems at national laboratories including Los Alamos and Sandia, and AI evaluation engineering for frontier language models. His creative practice runs parallel: brand identity, cinematic content production, and a music and visual identity under the name Rezurrector.

One Ascent Time draws on all of it. The eye for shop interiors and the way a city reads from a moving car. The ear for how a room's acoustic changes when amplification enters it. The instinct — built from years of designing systems — that a city is always running two processes at once, and that what looks like signal is sometimes noise, and what looks like noise is sometimes the thing you were waiting to hear.

The novel takes place on a single Friday — October 5th, 2007, the year the world went wireless — and follows twelve characters converging on one instrument. A freelance designer named Nash E. Raya buys a hand-carved, kintsugi-repaired guitar for the wrong price on Ventura Boulevard. Sixty miles west, a collector who commissioned that instrument thirty years earlier watches the Pacific and waits. Below the break, three sisters hear their mother's voice at low volume for the first time in their lives.

It is the first book of *The Signal Cycle*, a planned six-novel sequence pairing six cities with six instruments. The companion audiobook and a vertical video series are in development.

Book description

Los Angeles. October 5, 2007. The year the world went wireless.

On a single Friday, a freelance designer named Nash E. Raya acquires a centuries-old guitar from a Ventura Boulevard shop — underpriced, warm to the touch, carrying something inside it that has no name in the language of the people who have handled it. By the time he understands what he's holding, the city has already started moving around him.

Sixty miles west on a Malibu cliff, a collector watches the Pacific and waits. In a cavern below the break, three sisters surface with a mission and a timer on their wrists. In Tennessee, two cousins follow an app toward a frequency they can't name. In Laurel Canyon, a woman opens a book to a back section that describes a method.

ONE ASCENT TIME is a novel about a city that is also a nervous system, a guitar that is also a prison, and a single day that has been thirty years in the making.

Query letter

Dear [Agent],

I'm querying you because of your work with [Comparable Author] and your stated interest in literary fiction that carries genre inside it — ONE ASCENT TIME lives exactly there.

Los Angeles, October 5, 2007. On a single Friday, a freelance designer named Nash E. Raya acquires a centuries-old guitar from a Ventura Boulevard shop — underpriced by a clerical accident, warm to the touch, and carrying the imprisoned consciousness of a woman named Sera. Thirty years earlier, on a Malibu beach, a man named Rourke commissioned the instrument to hold her: not out of cruelty, but out of love that had curdled into ownership. When Nash plays the guitar through a newly installed pickup, Sera's three daughters hear their mother sixty miles away in a Pacific cavern, and start inland. By nightfall, twelve people converge on a Silver Lake show, and the chord travels through the city's water infrastructure — pipe by pipe, reservoir to tidal exchange to ocean — until it arrives at Rourke's cliff as a shift in the tide.

ONE ASCENT TIME is literary urban fantasy, complete at 38,305 words. It sits alongside UNDER THE SILVER LAKE (the Los Angeles conspiracy as literary object), Michael Chabon's genre-inflected literary fiction, and Emily St. John Mandel's ensemble convergence narratives. Its mythology is rooted in mermaid lore, acoustic physics, and the specific moment in 2007 when analog culture was becoming something else entirely.

It is the first book of The Signal Cycle, a planned six-novel sequence pairing six cities with six instruments. A companion audiobook framework is developed, in which eight characters narrate the same Friday from their own future vantage points, and a vertical video series is in development.

I am a principal software engineer, visual designer, and music video producer based in New Mexico. I began my career as a freelance designer in Los Angeles in 2007 — the year this novel is set. The complete manuscript is available upon request. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angel R. Marquez
(writing as A.R. Marquez)

Sample interview questions

1. One Ascent Time takes place on one Friday in October 2007. Why that week, and why that year?
2. The guitar is a prison before it is an instrument. Where did that idea start?
3. Rourke isn't a villain in the usual sense. How do you write love that has curdled into ownership?
4. The signal travels through the city's water infrastructure. How much of that plumbing is real?
5. Twelve characters converge in a single day. How do you keep a reader oriented?
6. You're a designer and music video producer. What did that bring to the prose?
7. The audiobook framework has eight narrators speaking from their own futures. How does that change the book?
8. The Signal Cycle pairs six cities with six instruments. How did those pairings arrive?

PUBLICATION

Publication information

GENRE

Literary urban fantasy

LENGTH

38,305 words

TRIM

5.5 × 8.5, perfect bound

SERIES

The Signal Cycle — Book I of VI

PUBLISHER

RockYouPie Records

TERRITORIES

World. Format, price, ISBN and on-sale date
TBC.

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For rights and press, please include territory and deadline.