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The Boy Who Fell From The Sky (The House Next Door) (Volume 1)



Synopsis

The Boy Who Fell from the Sky is the first of a mind-twisting new YA dystopian series. The world is falling apart in 2055. Another flood has devastated London and it's the eve of the First Space War. With the city locked down, sixteen-year-old Mathew Erlang is confined to his house with only his cat, his robot and his holographic dragons for company. Desperate for a distraction from the chaos around him, Mathew becomes fascinated by his peculiar and reclusive neighbour, August Lestrangle. Mathew begins to investigate Mr. Lestrangle, turning to the virtual world of the Nexus and Blackweb for answers. But as he digs deeper, Mathew realises that Mr. Lestrangle doesn't seem quite human. When Mathew accidentally finds himself trapped in Lestrangle's house, he opens a door and falls four hundred years into the future. Unwittingly, he starts to destabilise the course of human history. A 1984 for a new generation, The Boy Who Fell from the Sky delves into a future where climate change and technology have transformed the world. It is the first book in The House Next Door trilogy, a young adult dystopian science fiction action adventure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jule Owen was born in the North of England, somewhere between Snowdonia, the Irish Sea and the Pennines, and now lives in London, UK. She spent many years working in online technology, latterly in the video games industry and is fascinated by science, technology and futurology. Her books are her creative response to the exponential growth of technological innovation in the era of climate change.

Some books transport the reader into a new reality – this is one of those stories. From the opening chapters on, it was clear the author had done her research. All of the technology, the political environment and the state of global climate were a realistic portrayal of the future that's already unfolding. Overall, it was an easy read with an interesting cast of characters. I think there's appeal for both teens and adults. The book takes a critical look at some weighty subjects, like technology's impact on privacy, government control, and the devastating impacts of climate change, but it's packaged in a way that makes it engaging and accessible. The present tense narration lent to the sense of immersion in the story, and I found it to be a fitting choice for a novel that takes place in the future. Mathew was the classic "unlikely hero" sort, with a good balance of creativity and adventurousness to make him endearing. His weaknesses and flaws make him believable, but he's also driven. Because this book presents a fully realized future vision, there is a fair amount of exposition at points in the novel. I found some of this exposition to be a bit heavy-handed, breaking away from the scene to explain functionality or design specifics. Though I would have liked some of that information to be more smoothly integrated into the narrative and action, I was fascinated enough by the content that those cutaways weren't overly distracting. The story is not complete with this one volume, with the end begging for an immediate read of the next volume. But, I am greatly looking forward to going along for the ride with this trilogy!

This was a beautifully written story. Also the editing and proofreading appeared flawless. I appreciate that. This story is outside of my normal genres. But I totally enjoyed it nonetheless. The future worlds created were amazing. By the details given, one could visualize where the author took us. I enjoyed the characters, the mystery and the thought provoking problems of the future. Jule has a sequel to this and I anticipate it to be just as good, and probably better!

The young Asian-English main character was well developed. We got to feel what his life was in a non-post-apocalyptic Great Britain. Now we assume that technology has taken major leaps and bounds and not all for the good. The time when he fell from the sky was a bit rough to adapt to. The author could have better described the incident leading up to his falling through the Darkroom door. And I was a bit disappointed that we had to go half way through the book before he fell from the sky. Not sure if it was meant as a prologue or not. But all in all I was happy with the book and went out

and purchased the second in the series. I am looking forward to seeing what the Dragons end up doing to him.... :-p

I loved this story. It was thought-provoking and very insightful. It not only predicts potentiality in the tech-wave, but of course, political and environmental outcomes if trends are not shifted radically. It is a very human story, as the main character really tries to hold onto his humanity in the midst of a very dark time, where people are being reduced to bar codes, where relevancy as a single man or woman has been nullified, and where any kind of freedom is being shut down in the name of "security". It's quite a terrifying picture, but in all honesty, one that we must face if we don't wake up and smell the coffee so to speak - simply because there is a faction of people in our world who make their living by empowering fear and terror - an industry that is growing exponentially through war, weaponry and surveillance - and if we don't do something to check it, it will simply become so dominant that it will be a self-empowering machine. And of course, as history has shown us, humanity eventually will rise up and destroy the oppressor. Technologically speaking, I loved the perspectives with nanotechnology and VR (Virtual Reality). All in all, a very good read. I recommend it.

A boy falls into a forest. This reminds me of the opening to Predators. Then we follow the goings on (not really exploits) of Matthew Erling Erlang in the not too far future. London has been flooded in parts, and this has caused day curfews to be put in place except for a select few people. Matthew's mom is one of those people that has to leave for work every day (in a hired car), but Matthew has to stay home and do his school work and attend class and lectures virtually. And then things get bizarre. There were many cool technological advances that appear to be where we are headed. How cool would it be to program a couple of dragons that are pretty much autonomous, at least in the VR world in which they are created? 3D printing is ubiquitous and capable of more than just the plastic-type material available now. This is exciting to read and imagine! Less exciting is the governmental parties making plays for things and using tragedy and disaster to their own ends. That could never happen in our world, right? I was about to hand out 5 stars for this book until the end of the book. Then I discover this is the first in a trilogy, and the book just stops. There is one statement that's supposed to just wash away all the questions raised along the way, or so it appears. I'm not satisfied at this ending at all. At least the second book can be obtained for free. Definitely want to read on. [first posted on Goodreads, same day]

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