



The Forbidden Voyage

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What would you do if everything you were taught about your home planet was a lie?

What would you do if you were Left Behind?

ENDIRION is a thirteen year old boy like any other. Except his skin is green and it glows. And he doesn't have any hair on his head or anywhere else on his body. Oh and he lives in a cave underground. But so does everyone on the poisoned Mother Planet. There is little to eat and what they do have is as mutated as the people themselves. Fuel is scarce and technology exists only in history books.

Or so they are told.

When Endirion and his classmate Harlo are sentenced to hard labor at the Dump they see things that go against everything they have ever known about their planet. Determined to find out the truth the boys set off on a dangerous journey that pits them against angry marshals, mysterious animals, mutant humanoids, and lands them in the belly of a Monstruwhale. It is a harrowing quest that takes them down remote tunnels, across the Lake of Fire, into the Madlands and a whole new world.

The Forbidden Voyage Details

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From Reader Review The Forbidden Voyage for online ebook

Leslie OBrien says

“Left Behind” is book one of “The Forbidden Voyage” in the Left Behind Trilogy by R. Anne Polcastro. While it is categorized as a Children’s Science Fiction story, I found it quite enjoyable. Actually, I enjoy most young adult science fiction stories. I find the overall stories, worlds, characters, and quests to be far more demonstrative in terms of good storytelling as compared to the often boring/tedium of adult stories of this nature.

Endiron is a 13-year-old boy and one of the survivors of an environmental disaster that has forced them to live underground. Together with Harlo (his frenemy), they are assigned to the dump as punishment for fighting. There, they discover that things aren’t exactly what they’ve been told and the boys set out on a quest to find answers.

Story Likes: I do enjoy a good dystopian wasteland story with subterfuge, backstabbing and politics. The boys, while originally enemies, eventually become allies and then friends as they set off on their quest.

Dislikes: I suppose there were some aspects that could have been fleshed out better, and while the story did pattern other similar stories, Polcastro managed to put her own unique spin on it, which took the story to a new and enjoyable level.

Age range, 10-adult. Great choice for summer reading.

*I received a review copy with the request for a review.

Rebecca Gransden says

Left Behind Book One: The Forbidden Voyage is a massively engaging sc-fi adventure novel. Set in a future where the world has been ravaged by ecological meltdown, the land poisoned and made toxic, the seas boiling with heat and chemical pollutants, a young boy named Endirion is thrust into an uncertain time. With the assistance of his forceful ally, Harlo, he faces a hostile environment and perilous circumstances where his well-being is put under real threat.

Full of fantastical mutated creatures, wonderfully described environments and delightfully retro futurist sci-fi elements, Left Behind is pure enjoyment. I loved following the characters and felt a real sense of jeopardy as they faced increasing dangers. The plot is exciting and creates an atmosphere of mystery with the revelation that there could be a grand conspiracy behind the existence Endirion knows.

Timely themes such as global environmental catastrophe, the monopolization of access to power sources, technological obsolescence and control, and the poisoning of natural resources are weaved into an interesting backdrop as the main characters grapple with initial teenage concerns which evolve into a high stakes journey across an unwelcoming land.

Expertly crafted, I was kept gripped by this right up to the end and look forward to following the story. Great book for those coming up to young adulthood who want some relatable characters, a plot full of risk and thrilling drama, and a world filled with surprising creations.

P.S. Winn says

Good story that takes readers on a journey into a wasted world after an environmental accident has devastated the place, leaving nothing the same. Endirion and Harlo are going to find out that even in this futuristic wasted land conspiracies exist and lies were told. The author did a good job creating a world none of us wants to see but are always afraid is coming our way. I think if I wouldn't have read another fantastic series about a wasteland before reading this one the author would have gotten five stars out of her work. The series I read had a little better character development and as it got 5 stars I couldn't help but make the comparison. This is a great book to pick up and I hope readers will give it a try.

Jason Crawford says

Today, I am reviewing the Dystopian/SciFi Left Behind by R. Anne Polcastro. This is a story in which Those Who Have Come Before have destroyed the planet through their own willful negligence and abuse of natural resources, leading to a terrible disaster that sent huge amounts of radiation into the environment, decimating civilization and sending many people underground while the more fortunate ones escaped to another world.

I give this book a 3.75/5. Here is my breakdown.

Characters: 4/5. The characters in this book were solid and believable. I particularly enjoyed watching Endirion's development as he went from timid, indoctrinated youth to utilizing his unique talents in helping the "mission" progress. The main two characters were especially interesting, but even the supporting cast was well put-together. I look forward to finding out some of the deeper motivations behind the actions some of the characters take.

Plot/Storyline: 3.5/5. The plotline here is a tad derivative, by which I mean that I can think of similar storylines off the top of my head. Still, Polcastro's take on the story is fairly unique, and brought forward by the strength of the characters. The book reads like a combination of The Island and Stephen King's Gunslinger novels...which is not a bad thing.

Flow: 4/5. Well written. I enjoyed the language and the pace of the story. As a MG/YA novel, it isn't as action-packed or as compelling as some of the more adult stories I've read recently, but that is no fault of the work. I can imagine middle-school children both enjoying the book and being at least as interested in it as I was. The crises which befall our two heroes do a good job of maintaining reader interest as well.

Spelling/Grammar: 4/5. There were a few typographical errors, mostly limited to ending quotation marks that were missing. These in no way distracted or detracted from the work.

Overall: 3.75/5. An enjoyable, solid read on all levels. I wasn't ever bored or distracted from my read. Polcastro did an excellent job of maintaining my interest. Thank you for the read, and I wish you the best of luck as you move forward!

Casey Dorman says

Left Behind Book One: The Forbidden Voyage is a rollicking science-fiction story whose heroes are two boys, living in an underground community of victims of an environmental disaster, which left them with green skin, large heads, and in some cases, advanced thinking skills. So far as they know, they and some other underground communities are the only survivors of the ecological disaster that laid waste to their planet after the explosions involving the nuclear/solar energy plants that had powered their civilization. Some escaped by leaving the planet. Most of those left behind went underground, venturing out only occasionally to forage for food, always contaminated by the above-ground radiation, or dispose of waste. On the surface, even more mutated species existed in the “Madlands” where survival was hard and rarely for long.

Endiron, one of the younger boys who lives in the underground community and Harlo, an older, “jock,” with whom he fights for a scrap of food, are sentenced to three months working in the “Dump” where they will dispose of garbage on the surface. However, as they begin their dangerous punishment, they notice that, contrary to what they have been told all of their lives, there are machines still working nearer the planet’s surface, machines such as trains that take waste to the surface. And there is energy, piped in to the machines through mysterious conduits that the two of the, at first enemies and gradually becoming friends and allies vow to follow until they find the source of the energy.

Their quest is dangerous and always entertaining. A highlight is their journey across an underground lake filled with mutated sea monsters, one of whom, a “monstruwhale,” is intelligent and helps them to cross their lake in their ferry. Finally, as they near the surface, they find that there are unmutated humans, still living on the planet. Those humans, who keep the rest of the planet’s population suppressed, including the most suppressed races, those of Endiron and Harlo, who live underground, while they, the unmutated humans travel to the planet to which they have migrated. Harlo and Endiron are determined to find out the truth about their world and its history. The ending of the story is the beginning of the next book and I won’t spoil things for readers by giving it away.

This story is never-ending suspense and action. The evolving relationship between the weaker, sensitive and more intelligent Endiron and the stronger and more adventurous Harlo is enjoyable to watch as it grows. Their gradual realization that everything they thought they knew about their home planet is false turns the story into a science fiction mystery. And of course there is a strong ecological message that echoes clearly throughout the book.

The author is a wonderful storyteller. The writing is a pleasure to read. The author knows very well how to keep the reader on the edge of his or her seat and to entertain with novel, creative ideas and characters. This is a great book for young adults, but even someone such as me, who is an older adult and seasoned science fiction reader, found myself captivated by its pace and ideas. A real pleasure to read.

Ana says

What to say about this book?

"There are so many lies out there; the question is, where do they begin and where do they end?" The book describes itself with this sentence. I have no words to what I just read. As I said in the previous updates: when you think you know what's going to happen next R. Anne Polcastro makes a plot twist. The descriptions of the places, creatures, the whole WORLD where the story takes action are so well built, you can actually see everything inside your mind as you read the book.

As I finish the book, I find myself empty; I want to keep on reading. I want to know what happens to Harlo and Endirion. I created a strong reader-character(s) bond.

I can't wait to read the second volume!

R. Anne Polcastro is a writer you should keep your eyes on. She has "something" special.

Juliet Wilson says

Endirion is a thirteen year old boy. His hairless skin is green and it glows. Like everyone else on the poisoned Mother Planet, he lives in a cave underground, only venturing to the surface to forage for herbs or hunt animals. Both herbs and animals are badly damaged by suradiation (a form of irradiation from a mysterious form of energy that wiped out human civilisation as we know it).

After an incident during a meal he is banished to the Dump where he must work together with his enemy Harlo, another banished boy, sorting recyclables from rubbish.

One night they are forced to camp overnight on the Dump and then discover a mysterious settlement which according to their world view shouldn't exist. As they work to find out about the settlement and its strange technologies from a bygone age, the two enemies learn to work together and even become friends. As they investigate the settlement's mysterious power source, they find themselves travelling to the Madlands, the area closest to the site of the Disaster that ended civilisation.

Set in a convincingly unpleasant future world, this is an intriguing story of friendship and adventure, with plenty to say about environmental destruction and social inequalities.

Left Behind (Book One) The Forbidden Voyage, a middle grade novel by Anne Polcastro. Thanks to the author for sending me a review copy of this book
