



## More Than This

*Patrick Ness*

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A boy named Seth drowns, desperate and alone in his final moments, losing his life as the pounding sea claims him. But then he wakes. He is naked, thirsty, starving. But alive. How is that possible? He *remembers* dying, his bones breaking, his skull dashed upon the rocks. So how is he here? And where is this place? The street seems familiar, but everything is abandoned, overgrown, covered in dust.

What's going on? Is it real? Or has he woken up in his own personal hell? Seth begins to search for answers, hoping desperately that there must be more to this life, or perhaps this afterlife...

## More Than This Details

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Author : Patrick Ness

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## From Reader Review More Than This for online ebook

### Elena says

WHAT. THE. ACTUAL. F\*\*\*.

Patrick Ness just outdid himself.

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### Regan says

I like how I still don't know what happened. And I like how that was the point.

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### Lara says

Um...er...huh.

Well.

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Okay, so, I totally don't know what to make of Patrick Ness at this point. I hated *The Knife of Never Letting Go* (couldn't even finish it), and absolutely loved *A Monster Calls*. This? Like I said.

I think the concept is pretty interesting up to a point. And I liked the characters up to a point. And the various mysteries kept me interested up to a point. And, okay, the very very end is really good. I get what Ness is saying here (I think?), but I wish this book were only about half as long as it actually is. And I wish that the action were less over-the-top-sci-fi-action-movie ridiculous and that the creepy parts were...creepier. And I wish I had been more convinced by Thomasz's speech patterns.

The thing is, I really enjoyed the beginning. And then I found myself like 150 pages in and still nothing much had happened. And by the time stuff finally did start happening and new characters got introduced and things started to be explained a little (or at least postulated about), I just didn't really care all that much anymore. I never did manage to connect again (ha!).

I think that for whatever reason the real life and sci-fi aspects just didn't mesh well for me, maybe because I had a hard time taking either world seriously--neither ended up feeling entirely believable to me. I don't know, maybe that's the point.

Anyway, in the end this one is more like a 2.5 for me. Definitely more than just okay, but I really can't quite say that I *liked* it.

Does that make me a horrible person? :(

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## Kai says

*"A book... it's a world all on its own too. A world made of words, where you live for a while."*

You should read this.  
Because it is beautiful.  
Because it is scary.  
Because it is mind-blowing.  
Because it is nothing like you expect it to be.  
Because it is hard not to love Tommy.  
Because it is a book like no other.

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## Wendy Darling says

**4.5 stars** Terrific blend of *IAm Legend* + *Twilight Zone* + *The Matrix*. I don't love the implied cautionary tale re: technology, but I do love the story structure, characters, and writing. Thomasz has particularly great speech patterns and dialogue, and the story never feels cliche or boring--no small feat when the first 30% consists almost entirely of Seth on his own.

Best read knowing as little about it as possible.

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## Trudi says

Patrick Ness is a magnificent storyteller and master wordsmith in possession of a vibrant imagination. His Chaos Walking trilogy is tremendously unique and exciting, and his A Monster Calls brought me to my knees with its merciless emotional elegance and purity of Truth.

*More Than This* shows glimpses of greatness, but never quite reaches that level of soul-satisfying, heart-stopping, mind-melting resolution for me. It's an existential tale of *seeking* -- the search for meaning, for Truth, for understanding and forgiveness and discovery of self -- where redemption and final destination are displaced for the all important *journey*. This is a story without a climax, a story which poses many questions and offers no definitive answers.

Is it a metaphor? An allegory? A sci-fi adventure? (view spoiler)

The characters are great. I loved them. Especially Tomasz. I want an entire book just of that kid. Seth's back story and his relationship with Gudmund (while taking up very few pages of the novel) burns bright, so vivid, so emotional. I quickly became astonishingly *invested* in their story after only a few scenes, in what they meant to each other and how they expressed their thoughts and feelings. So tenderly realized. There were times I did not want to return to the "other story" going on, I so wanted to stay with these two and find out everything about them -- everything that came before and everything to come after.

Patrick Ness, you need to write a love story. I believe you have it in you to break all of our hearts.

But this is not that book. This is something else. It defies categorization, and sometimes that's a wonderful, brilliant thing. Here, I'm left feeling a little let down and yearning for *more*.

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### **jessica says**

huh. what an interestingly bizarre story.

ness' '*chaos walking*' trilogy is one of my favourite series ever, so i was very eager to finally read some of his other works - but this was not what i was expecting. it was a little strange, a little confusing, but somewhat intriguing.

this rating probably deserves to be higher, but i just dont think i was in the right mindset for something that was so... out there. and i think i need to learn how to set a book aside when that happens and pick it up when im ready, rather than just pushing through it, because its not really fair to the book. and theres honestly nothing wrong with this story - the ending was actually quite moving - it just caught me at a bad time and didnt really hold my interest as much as i wanted it to.

however, i will say this is the perfect book for someone looking for a well-written but quirky sci-fi/dystopian novel that develops nicely into a lovely message!

### **? 3 stars**

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### **Matthew says**

While I try to avoid spoilers in my reviews, my overall impression of this book may this time be a spoiler in itself, so proceed with caution!

This is a fairly mind warping dystopian mystery left open to so much interpretation after 470 pages, it's kind of amazing. I mean, after that many pages you would think you have some pretty good idea about what is going on. But, instead, each page adds more to the mystery.

This book was very easy to be intrigued by. The writing is very good and the troubled characters fascinating. Sometimes dystopias can be cheesy and/or way too unbelievable to be taken seriously. But, in this one it was so well presented I just wanted to find out more. Also, I give this book a big thumbs up for keeping me interested and not wanting to put it down.

If asked to come up with a complaint, the only thing might be a little repetition here and there, but not enough to ruin it. Also, some of the ideas are not completely original in sci-fi, but not so much to feel like any of it was taken word for word or idea for idea - just shades of other sci-fi tropes.

Dystopian/speculative fiction fans, if you haven't read this, you should. It may become one of your new

favorites!

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### **Alienor ✕ French Frowner ✕ says**

Either ① Jean-Paul Sartre gave me my quota of existentialism for a lifetime (I really do love him, though)  
Or ② My reading slump is worst than I thought.

(unfortunately, I'd say ②)

I shall come back to More Than This someday.

~~Everyone has been telling me to read a favorite author's novel when nothing\* works. Hey, now, that's not as if I didn't think about it. But, well... Too bad I'm an obsessive reader who needs to read EVERYTHING all at once, let's say. If only I had any Melina Marchetta left. Sigh. I kept looking at my fave authors' pages in case I forgot one, but no such luck.~~

Until Patrick Ness.

~~Surprise, surprise, he is the only one who escaped my rush. He will do he *must* do.~~

#### **\*Books I started today, FYI :**

~~The Last Wish~~ : attention span < 0

~~All the Light We Cannot See~~ : words words words

~~The Way of Shadows~~ : ugh—what's this writing

~~Under the Never Sky~~ : I don't caaaaaaaaaaaaaare

~~The Reapers are the Angels~~ : maybe later

~~Malice~~ : been there done that

~~The Serpent King~~ : not in the mood

~~Origin~~ : how about no

~~I kid you NOT. Honestly, I spend more time choosing my book than reading it lately. Ugh.~~

#Slump

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### **Elise (TheBookishActress) says**

*"People see stories everywhere," Regine says. "That's what my father used to say. We take random events and we put them together in a pattern so we can comfort ourselves with a story, no matter how much it obviously isn't true. We have to lie to ourselves to live. Otherwise, we'd go crazy."*

**This is a book about hope.** *More Than This* is about existentialism and is stuffed with insane plot twists. Yes, true. But more importantly, this book tells us **there's always hope, as long as we hold on, as long as we don't let go.** It's such an important message and it's so well *executed* and I just love terrible books with hopeful endings?? So much??

*More Than This* follows a boy who dies and wakes up in his childhood home in England, thinking he's in hell. From there, things get weirder... and more intriguing. All you really need to know is that I picked this up at 9 pm, thinking I would just read a bit before bed. I somehow finished at 1 am - yes, I did read this 500+ page book in four hours flat - and I don't even regret it.

? The plot is **mind-blowing**. Every twist is built up so well and makes so much sense, but there's no way to guess any of these twists. Nothing's out of left field, but you don't see any of them coming either. It's the perfect balance. Ness makes the book so suspenseful and intriguing it's impossible to put down. This is a 480-page book, and I did not put it down once.

? While parts are open to interpretation, and the ending is a bit open, this book **doesn't completely leave you hanging**. There *are* answers to the big questions in the actual plot. But given that this book is about mortality, don't expect to get through this without analyzing it and asking yourself "What does this even mean??"

? I know a few reviewers hate the ending, but I somewhat... adore the ending. Okay, it's a little confusing, but it doesn't feel like copy-out. I think the somewhat open ending was fitting for this story - it's hopeful, but not unconditionally happy than anything we could've gotten otherwise, let's face it.

? Despite being written in third person, it's easy to feel empathy for the main character, Seth. Seth feels like a real, fully formed person; he is just that well-written. His relationship made me cry actual tears. There are so many multifaceted, developed side characters here as well - no one is one-off.

VERDICT: A powerful, well-written, and mindblowing story. I honestly cannot recommend this enough—it's just too good.

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## Lola says

What a strange story.

I'd even go as far as to say that it's weird... and very much of the unbelievable sort. Patrick Ness doesn't care, though. He likes to confuse the reader. At least twenty times throughout the novel, Seth says he "remembers" and "understands," when in fact it's a lie.

Well it is original, that's indubitable. Seth wakes up in an empty world after drowning. Later on, he finds two other... survivors? Apparently, he woke up from the virtual world he was living in. That's all I can say. It's not enough, and yet, it's dangerously too much.

I liked the alternation between past and present. The memories were interesting and helped me care about Seth. We do not know about the people he meets as we do about him however. This reinforces the idea that it's all in Seth's head. But it's not... really. Or is it? Who knows? Not even the author does.

The message is great. This might not exactly be my type of novel. After all, I rarely read science fiction and prefer clarity to confusion, but I do admire important themes well explored. Everyone who chose to be part of the virtual reality did so to escape, but Seth makes us realize that even when things get rough, ugly and post-apocalyptic, we should still hope for a better future and find beauty in the darkness... companionship especially.

This is a long book. Too long in my opinion. Could have been edited, condensed better. Interesting story (what I understood of it) and great pacing. Relatable hero and entertaining, if somewhat melodramatic sidekicks.

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### **Grace (BURTSBOOKS) says**

um, hi, no one talks about this and it pisses me off.

Want a book that tackles topics such as suicide, mental illness, sexuality and homophobia in respectful and realistic ways???

Do you also want entertainment, to die for characters, political intrigue and all that sci-fi goodness??

Read this book. Stop what you're doing and read this book. It might have been lost in the surplus of new releases over the past few years but it still rings so true, and I will never not recommend this book to everyone. It is absolutely chilling and in the best way possible.

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### **Noelle says**

Oh, it's Ness review-writing time?

Here's the thing with reviewing Patrick Ness books: I don't *want* you to read reviews of Patrick Ness books. I want to Panda slap your laptop out of your hand before allowing you to read any details about Patrick Ness books. I want you to skip GO, do not collect \$200 dollars and JUST FREAKING READ THEM ALREADY. Save the review browsing for after.

Which might be a bit scandalous to say as a book blogger (goodbye page views!) but: 1) I don't want you to get spoiled because part of the fun of reading Ness is feeling like you are a reaction GIF brought to life, and 2) Preconceptions and Ness books just don't mix.

Your brain will try to fill in the blanks and make assumptions--specifically that you can try and guess where the story is going in Part One. Patrick Ness will smile to himself, suddenly amused on the other side of the planet, not quite knowing why. Part Two comes around and you'll chuckle ruefully. That Ness, he gets you every time! But you've read a book before, you know where Part Three is going, right? RIGHT? Part Four comes along and there you are lying in the fetal position in your driveway as Ness lays down rubber doing donuts around you while screaming "MWAHAHAHAHA!" out the window.

We've all been there.

I always thought one of the best things about Patrick Ness was the beauty of not being sure where he was leading you but being willing to open up and experience the journey. Ness has made that thought into a book.

*"I'll just see", he says. "That's all I'll do. I'll just see what's next."*

What's next takes the universal feeling of being sure there must be **More Than This**, focuses it into a tight close up shot of a teenage boy's dying face and then pulls it back all the way to the atmosphere. Detailed personal agonies let go to boundless breadths of emotion.

I somehow didn't cry until page 381.

**More Than This** is unconventional. It might test your patience and expectations as a reader. But, as a reader, haven't you ever read a book and wondered, isn't there more than this? Well, my dears. This is it.

#### **4.5 stars**

*This review originally appeared at Young Adult Anonymous  
YAA received an ARC of this book from the publishers.*

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#### **Aj the Ravenous Reader says**

I honestly have no idea what to say about the book. To be honest, it was a bit slow and up to more than 250 pages, I was still debating with myself on whether to finish it or not but there is just something about the book which I could not explain that manages to pull me back into it. It's probably the author's ability to make the reader ponder on life's meaning and ambiguities. I guess it's called *"More Than This"* for a reason. True to its title, it is going to be more than what you think it is. In the end, some might get pissed while some might be surprised. I was both. To others, that's the strongest recommendation there is. ;)

For an actual, more helpful review, do check out one of my buddies' review. . Belated happy birthday, Will! I hope you had a special and memorable day. ;)

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#### **Maureen says**

I'm not sure what I was expecting that to be, but it was not that....in the best way possible.

I loved the characters and the plot and the world.....but I don't really want to say much about them.

I'm of the opinion of most everyone else that you should go in knowing as little as possible about this book!

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## Emily May says

Look. Here's the thing. I am not generous with my five star ratings. Five star readings must have shocked me or blown my mind or done something really original or otherwise awesome to get me to throw that final star in their direction. So a four star rating is, for me, really really good. I want you to remember that and realise how good this book is when I say I just expected something more from Ness. Let's make a joke about it: I just expected **more than this**. Ha. And maybe it's because I'm too hard on Ness. Maybe it's because I expect him to continue churning out five star books as if it's as easy as breathing. But this book made me feel like something was missing.

More Than This is a compelling read with a wonderful and diverse set of characters. It's creative and different. It has you on the edge of your seat, turning pages as fast as possible and making a nearly 500-page book fly by at an almost impossible speed. It's philosophical and clever. It's sad and creepy. It throws in some funny dialogue to lighten the incredibly dark mood. It's a great book. Really. And yet it felt like 480 pages of build-up that never actually reached a climax. But, honestly, I was never bored for a single second. I was mesmerized, horrified, confused, excited. So much so that I think the lack of a climax bothered me even more.

This book is about existentialism. It's about those old questions: what is the meaning of life, the universe and everything? What is "reality"? Is there a pattern amid this chaos or can it all really be random? And, of course, is there something **more than this**? Ness is a genius and I love what he does here. I love the message. I love that every answer opens up five more questions. I love that every time you and the characters think you know what's going on, he throws another surprise into the philosophical pot and stirs up this crazy story a bit more. And what it all comes down to, what this whole book is really doing, is answering that question above all questions: do any of the answers really matter anyway?

Ness also finds himself back in familiar territory when telling the story of unlikely friendships blooming in the most unexpected places. He isn't the kind of author who wastes secondary characters and he delivers small pieces of heart-breaking humanity to even the most fleeting glimpses of those we never see again. I love authors that can do this. It lends an extra layer of believability to the story when it feels like that person who only appeared for a couple of pages went on living past what we saw of them. I was also delighted to see a gay protagonist; there is still nowhere near enough of them in YA books, but then I suppose Ness has never shied away from breaking the mold.

I do love me some existentialist philosophy and More Than This is full of quotes that could give me goosebumps if I spent too long thinking about them. I guess there's always something a bit scary about it, isn't there? When some book (or whatever) lays out a haunting piece of truth that you didn't even realise you knew was true until you read or heard it. Then you're like: *Oh shit, yeah. That's true. That's life. That's me.* Ness just writes about things we all feel or worry about or obsess over. And he writes about it beautifully. Here's a couple of quotes I liked but there were so many more:

**"Haven't you ever felt like there has to be *more*? Like there's *more* out there somewhere, just beyond your grasp, if you could only get to it..."**

**"People see stories everywhere," Regine says. "That's what my father used to say. We take random events and we put them together in a pattern so we can comfort ourselves with a story, no matter how much it obviously isn't true. We have to lie to ourselves to live. Otherwise, we'd go crazy."**

So, believe me, I liked this. If you're excited about More Than This, you can stay excited. If you're thinking about maybe reading this, I say YES! If you didn't really like his other books but think this sounds pretty interesting, I again say YES because this isn't anything like his other books. It's just me, I guess, always expecting too much from Ness. Just being stupid. Just being human and always expecting **more than this**. Ha.

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### **karen says**

this book treated me like a dog treats a ragdoll.  
and i have no idea where to begin.

patrick ness has written a game-changer that i'm not even really sure how to approach.

this is a YA novel. i've lost half of you book snobs right there. but i think that is my point. YA has been breaking free of its presumed confines for years. when i was a teen, YA novels were largely disposable, empty-calorie entertainment trifles meant to keep us off the streets, off drugs, and not full of babies. they were either morally-didactic or cheesy horror-mysteries with very little intellectual fiber. and when i finally came around on the contemporary YA fiction bandwagon, i was impressed with both the variety of topics and treatment of those topics and most importantly, the range of sophistication of the writing itself. sure, loads of them are still silly and forgettable, but there are also complete gems of books out there for stronger, smarter teen readers looking to be exposed to something new, something challenging.

and this book delivers that with a brainpunch i'm still feeling.

this is how i felt after i read *beauty queens*, after i read *piper's son*, which while they are COMPLETELY different kinds of books, did things to me that i didn't think could still be done to me, not in YA anyway. which sounds like i am undermining what i just said about YA-sophistication, but my reaction to these titles is more about my being completely knocked off-balance as a *reader*, and at having my expectations about the book completely rocked, but also my expectations about what books *could be*.

does that make sense? because it's not that i am impressed that there are well written YA books out there - i'm beyond that realization. this is something more fundamentally mind-blowing.

i promise there is a review coming, but i really gotta work through this here. i'm all gobsmacked.

*beauty queens* stunned me by not being, as i had expected, about a bunch of lovely and spoiled girls going all *lord of the flies* and killing each other on a deserted island after a plane crash. in fact, it was the complete *opposite* of that storyline, which forced me to question what that said about me that i wanted that story in the first place, and brought a little tear to my soul and stirred up all the sisterhood feelings all bottled up in me. *piper's son* redefined the boundaries of YA commercially by having one of the two main characters be a fifty-something woman experiencing her first pregnancy. and it redefined the boundaries for me personally because it made me cry. and that doesn't happen.

and this one. this one just takes genre and convention and coyly toys with it. when you think you know what is going on, when the characters think they know what is going on, that's when things start to go all slipstream on you.

*more than this* is like a giant book-jenga, with different *kinds* of books making up its tower, and just when you think you know what you are reading, that darn patrick ness will change the game slightly, yanking out a piece of the puzzle, slyly addressing what he is doing and what he is not doing and what he *could* be doing and letting the reader know that he knows what they are thinking, but think again, please! it is an aftermath novel. it is an *afterlife* novel. it is an afterlove novel. it is an afterloss novel.

he pulls and teases and backtracks and sidetracks in this elegant dance of misdirection and metafiction.

and then he does the unthinkable! and it's hard to even tiptoe around, and it may not count as spoiler but basically - (view spoiler)AND THAT IS ULTIMATE MINDFUNKERY!! and it becomes this crazytime philosophical and humanist exercise, but like if *solipsistic* humanism was a thing, you know? it blows my freaking mind with all my brainparts that still cannot comprehend that this is a freaking YA book.

also - tomasz is the new manchee. and i love him.

i can't do anything for this book. it's too much in my heart right now.

come to my blog!

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## **Spencer says**

***“Real life is only ever just real life. Messy. What it means depends on how you look at it. The only thing you’ve got to do is find a way to live there.”***

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### **Actual rating: 4.5 Stars**

Patrick Ness has sold me on all of his other books by reading this one. I've read A Monster Calls and immediately after finishing More Than This, I decided to order the Chaos Walking Trilogy. I will buy anything this man writes.

#### **1) The Plot**

This book starts off with our main character's, Seth, death. He remembers dying but when he wakes up, he isn't dead. He wakes up by himself in an abandoned place that he thinks is his own personal hell. He starts wondering if there is (*wait for it*) more than this. (*Get it?*) I know it's cheesy, but I had to.

This book will make you question everything you know. This book is so thought-provoking, and a book that will take your brain on a roller coaster. This would make one hell of a movie.

Upon finishing...

## **2) The Characters**

This book mostly revolves around Seth and I really love Seth. I can relate to some of Seth's experiences, and I found him to be very relatable. I liked all of the other side characters, too!

There isn't that much to say about the characters, so on to the next category.

## **3) The Writing**

I could read Patrick Ness's writing until the day I die. His writing makes you feel like you are there in the story. His writing is so descriptive and immersive. I love his writing, and I must read more!

## **4) Conclusion**

This book was wonderful, SO close to being five full stars. If you want a book that will mess your mind up, then this is the book for you. Really enjoyed it, would highly recommend.

★★★★.5/5 stars

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**Brigid ☆ Cool Ninja Sharpshooter ☆ says**

**After reading:**

GOD DAMN IT PATRICK NESS. GOD. DAMN. ITTTTTTTT.

Well. I guess it's no secret that I'm obsessed with Patrick Ness's work and I worship the ground he walks on and yada yada. I anticipated this book for a long time and then put off reading it forever because ... I don't know, I guess I was nervous that it wouldn't live up to my expectations.

But I shouldn't have doubted, because this book was fantastic. Very emotional, intense, vivid, and engaging, and with a great cast of characters. There are still some things about it that confused me, and I have to digest it for a while ... but over all I still loved it. Not as much as the Chaos Walking series (although I kind of doubt I'll ever love anything that much) but it was still amazing.

**Full review:**

Coming eventually!

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**Before reading:**

UPDATE: AAHHH NOW THERE'S AN EXCERPT. OMGGGG. Ugh it was too short. But it was beautifully written and so mysterious and intriguing and I NEED THIS BOOK NOW.

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WHAT? WHAT IS THIS?

WHAT IS THIS MYSTERIOUS NEW PATRICK NESS BOOK? WHERE IS IT? WHAT IS IT ABOUT? I AM FREAKING OUT HERE.

Well, whatever it is, I'm sure it'll be amazing as balls because everything Patrick Ness touches turns to gold.

WORSHIP WORSHIP.

UPDATE: OH MY GOD THERE'S A COVER AND THERE'S A DESCRIPTION, OH MY GOD.

THE COVER. IT'S SO COOL. VERY SIMPLE BUT VERY COOL.

AND THE DESCRIPTION. IT SOUNDS SO MYSTERIOUS AND CREEPY AND BADASS AND I CAN'T FREAKING WAIT.

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**Whitney Atkinson says**

This is a genius idea for a book. It's hard to talk about because it's great going into without knowing much, but I will say I really enjoyed this. From the gay main character to the addicting premise, it was fabulous. I just found myself not really able to connect to the characters, and the ending was a bit too ambiguous for me. But I highly recommend this!

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