



Spear of Light

Brenda Cooper

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When the post-human Next suddenly re-appear in a solar system that banished them, humans are threatened. Their reactions vary from disgust and anger to yearning to live forever like the powerful Next, who are casually building a new city out of starships in the heart of the re-wilded planet Lym. The first families of Lym must deal with being invaded while they grapple with their own inner fears. Ranger Charlie Windar is desperate to save his beloved planet. The Next are building strange cities he never imagined, and other humans who want to destroy the Next are his worst enemies.

Ambassador Nona Hall strives to forge links between the powerful station she's from, The Diamond Deep, and the people of Lym. The formidable merchant Gunnar Ellensson appears to be up to no good, and as usual his motivations are suspect. Why is he sending ships to Lym, and what does he intend to do with them when he arrives?

The Shining Revolution threatens to undo everything by attacking the Next on Lym, and their desire to eradicate the post-humans is greater than their desire to save humanity's home. It is entirely possible that they will draw the wrath of the Next onto all of humanity.

In the meantime, the Next's motives remain inscrutable. Why are they here at all? What do they want? Why are they interested in the ancient past of a planet that has been ravaged and rebuilt at least once?

Spear of Light Details

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From Reader Review Spear of Light for online ebook

Viva says

I give this book 2 stars, which by Good Read's rating means it was ok. This is a neutral rating.

This is book 2 in the series and it's pretty much impossible to read without reading book 1. I'm of the school that feels each book should be complete in itself, even serials. Each book should have at least some sort of explanation; this one doesn't.

I can even live with a book that doesn't but this book wasn't well written enough that I could overlook it. I thought the writing was awkward to read and it was a struggle to get through. What I read wasn't entertaining enough for me to like it or even want to try book 1. In the end, I decided to give it an "it was ok" rating.

I got this book free as a review copy.

Mark Baller says

Good series loved it hoping for more

Clay Kallam says

Brenda Cooper has had her ups and downs in her eight-novel career, and sadly “Spear of Light” (Pyr, 400 pages, \$18) falls short of her best. “Spear of Light” is set in the same time and universe as her three previous novels, which concern humans and transhumans (advanced artificial intelligences (robots) that began as human beings) in a galactic setting.

The Next, as the transhumans are known, are seen as a threat to human beings by many, while at the same time, many humans volunteer for the painful and sometimes fatal process of becoming Next. There’s political intrigue, violence, romance and after four novels, a carefully developed society, but “Spear of Light” (which may be the end of The Glittering Edge series, but may not) just doesn’t click. There’s a major reveal at the end which comes pretty much out of nowhere, solving a puzzle that seemed secondary to the main themes, but otherwise the book simply ends rather than concludes.

All in all, the four novels based in this society are all over the map. For example, one is a thinly disguised version of Eva Peron’s life which has little to do with the themes explored in “The Edge of Dark” and “Spear of Light,” which are a long way from “Diamond Deep,” the first book. My advice: Check “Diamond Deep” out of the library and see how much you like it – and then go from there.

Cheryl says

I was attracted to the cool book cover of this book. It was not until I received it and really looked at it that I realized that this is book two. Not to worry as I am not one of those types that has to read books in order. It just depends on the type of series the book is in as to whether it can be read by jumping right in or not. Luckily for me I was able to jump right into this book. Although it did take me a few chapters to warm up to every one and fully understand all of their roles in the story. For me however it was not really the characters that made the story for me but the actual world that the story took place in. It felt very futuristic and what I actually could envision the world looking like in the future. In addition, I liked how the name of each character was at the beginning of each chapter so that it helped lead the way as to who's main voice was taking the lead at that moment. There was so many characters and so this helped to keep everything clear and concise. The ending for each character was good. I do look forward to checking out more books by this author.

Riley says

First, some background. Many humans refer to the Next as soul bots. What they are is a highly evolved community of complex intelligent beings. I actually grew to admire the Next when I read **Edge of Dark**. They evolved from robots created by humans but were eventually forced out into space because they were feared by their creators. Well, they are back and now have a distinct tactical advantage over humans. But there is a deal, worked out between the Next and representatives of both the planet Lym and the Diamond Deep space station/community. Those representatives, Charlie, the planet saver, and Nona the diplomat will have important roles in **Spear of Light**.

In **Spear of Light**, the focus is on the human reaction to the Next's occupation of the planet Lym. They don't occupy all of the planet, just carefully chosen territories. Why are they even on Lym? Can they be trusted? Why should the people of Lym just give in to them? What happens to human communities outside of Lym? And what, if anything, can the highly advanced Next do for humans? Questions lead to speculation which leads to opinions and taking sides. Sides that disagree as to how to handle the Next.

Despite having not the faintest clue about what the Next want on Lym, the some residents are determined to fight them. And to fight anyone that does not want to fight the Next. Other residents want to honor the agreement with the Next, just as the Next have also honored the agreement. There is a third, space-based contingent, that just wants to wipe out all soul bots. These human reactions are what makes the story 'real' to this human. Ignorance and fear are as motivating as reason and respect.

Putting the broader picture aside, a couple of characters stand out. Yi is one of the four humans-turned-Next that played a role in the current state of affairs between humans and Next. Yi and his family were Next representatives because they were closer to human. In **Spear of Light**, Yi embraces becoming Next and yearns to evolve further and know more. Yi seems to be an outlier in typical scifi where being forced to become a robot should be terrifying and abhorrent to humans. Yet, here is Yi, eager stretch into his new existence. He does this without forgetting what it means to be human. This depiction of Yi's transformation is refreshing and hopeful.

Charlie Windar, the ranger has, perhaps, the most substantial human role in **Spear of Light**. He has always worked to restore the natural world of Lym, keeping the wilds safe from humans. He loves Lym and fears

what the Next will do to his planet. Yet, as a broker to the current arrangement, Charlie has done everything he can imagine to save Lym from being completely taken over by the Next. Now he faces his friends and neighbors on Lym who believe Charlie is a betrayer because he gave in to the Next. Charlie's struggle is the most poignant in **Spear of Light** and absolutely pulled at my heart. And because I am a romantic at heart, Charlie's and Nona's continuing romance, what they do for each other and how they even manage to stay together is an inspiring counterpoint to the struggles around them.

Without spoiling anything, I have to say that I did not see the ending coming at all. While I thought the Next's motives were suspect, due to the fact that they were not at all willing to talk about them, when I found what they were up to I was surprised. And I do like surprises.

Spear of Light is the awesome conclusion to **The Glittering Edge** duology. Book 1, **Edge of Dark**, was such an amazing story that I had a hard time believing it could be matched. Maybe that is why I let 7 months elapse between books, even though I had book two in hand. **Spear of Light** proved that, as a whole, **The Glittering Edge** duology is an insightful observation of humankind, filled with hope, hard hitting reality and a sense of humanity's place in the future universe.

Originally posted at Whiskey With My Book.

connie says

this would have been like 2/5 if it wasn't for the ending which just threw me into another existential crisis i hated reading from the 2 main char's povs they were so boring??? if you have to state in so many words that they're in love maybe they aren't truly

Lisa says

Still decent, but still never quite connected with the characters. Satisfying ending even though Cooper took it in a different direction than I would have. Well, I'm not a published author, so...

Lata says

The second and last Glittering Edge story, this finds Charlie, Nona, and Crystal and her family on Lym, while Satyana continues to bring people together on the Diamond Deep. Everyone is still wrestling with what does it mean for everyone that the Next are on Lym, what are their intentions, what does it mean to be human?

The Spear of Light doesn't provide any easy answers to the question of what makes someone human, but shows each character's struggles to understand their place and their feelings in this situation. I really appreciated how Brenda Cooper respects her readers and doesn't take the easy route in this story; i.e., the Next being simply evil and bent on the destruction of their forebears.

In fact, by showing a number of different reactions to the situation through her different characters, the author presents fascinating questions and choices to the reader. In this story, there are more PoVs, with us getting a chance to hear Satyana's and Yee's thoughts, in addition to most of the original PoVs in book one. It was fascinating to see the humans from first Crystal's and now Yee's perspectives, and how they perceive

other, much older Next.

I also loved how much most of the characters behaved like adults, preferring not to automatically descend to violence in the face of their fear at the Next's presence. I really appreciated how often characters chose to talk and negotiate their way to solutions.

I now want to read the earlier stories by this author about Ruby and the Diamond Deep.

Lindsay says

An excellent conclusion to this far-future transhumanist duology.

The Next are on Lym and the humans who live there and whose lives are devoted to restoring the planet don't want them to be. The original devastation of the planet came as part of the last conflict between the Next and humans, and everyone is worried that it's all going to happen again. And it might. Extremist forces in the Glittering that oppose the Next would sooner destroy Lym than share it with the uploaded intelligences.

Charlie and Nona continue as POV characters here, and we also pick up Yi, one of Chrystal's husbands from the first book, and Satyana and Nayli from the Glittering give additional POVs of the conflict. Charlie faces a backlash from the more hysterical parts of the Lym society because of his negotiations with the Next in this book and his plot feels very real although it feels like the Lym humans have just gone collectively mad. Nona is caught in the middle as always. Yi, like Chrystal in the first book, is an absolutely fascinating character. Of the family from the High Sweet Home, he's the one that has adapted to their new situation the most completely and his hopeful, but sad, perspective adds even more to that of Chrystal's from the first.

While I loved both these books, I find myself a little frustrated by the way secrets are used by both sides. As it turns out, there's absolutely no good reason for the Next to keep why they're on Lym secret from anyone in my opinion. Similarly the secret actions of Satyana's lover also bear no reasons for secrecy either, particularly not to his allies. It all feels a bit too much like mystery and drama for the sake of mystery and drama.

I also found myself hungry for any contact with the Next in this book or story from Yi's perspective. That's great, and it kept me moving through a reasonably long book, but it does say something about the relative level of interest in the rest of the story. I also think the new Katharine character was absolutely fascinating and I would have loved to see much more of her in this.

Jvilches says

Spear of Light is a story based on conflict between humans who downloaded themselves into robots, humans trying to bring a planet back to a state of pristine wilderness, and humans living in space.

It's a sequel to Edge of Dark which I haven't read. I think I may have felt more connected to the characters if I had read the first book, but the backstory was conveyed nicely, without feeling too much like an info-dump. As long as you're willing to flow with it, you can pick up what's missing pretty well. But I do recommend reading the books in order.

I didn't love Spear of Light, but I did like it. The plot moved along at a good pace. The chapters make it clear who's point of view was being followed. And the conflict itself was an interesting take on how these different factions of humanity would interact. People fear what is different - how that fear turns into different actions plays out on a large stage here.

However, the characters didn't feel quite real to me. Maybe this was partly because I wasn't introduced to them through the first book. But to me, they felt a little flat and slightly one-dimensional. Aside from that, the ending also was a little rushed. I had to read the last bit a couple of times to figure out exactly what was going on.

I think Cooper has a lot of promise as a writer, and has some good ideas to play with. I'd like to read the first book now, to see how it colors my view of the second.

I received an ARC of this book in exchange for my honest opinion and review.

Valerie says

Spear of Light was an okay story. I love the topic - who doesn't love space robots? - but for some reason, the characters really failed to grab me. I didn't truly feel invested in them much after book 1, and the plot twist, while surprising, was done a bit confusingly, so it took me a little too long to really understand what happened.

Justine says

An excellent conclusion to an exciting and thought-provoking duology. Spear of Light continues the story from Edge of Dark, and does a good job of maintaining the momentum of action and enquiry of the first book.

Some new and interesting points of view are introduced, giving a different insight into events, but even so, I was left wanting more as the story is just so rich and interesting. The book ties up the story as well as it can, but I think it is a credit to Cooper's worldbuilding that I was left feeling like there was still so much more to explore.

I've been lucky to read some excellent SF books by women that don't seem to be all that widely read on Goodreads. The (R)Evolution trilogy by Stephanie Saulter (Gemsigns, Binary, Regeneration); Skinner Luce by Patricia Ward; Dissension by Stacey Berg; and The Towers Trilogy by Karina Sumner-Smith (Radiant, Defiant, Towers Fall) to name just a few. All of these books are very different, but what they share is a certain element of creativity, original worldbuilding, and wonderfully explored characters. The Glittering Edge Duology is another of these, and one I'm happy to have discovered.

DJ says

4/5 Rating Review first posted at MyLifeMyBooksMyEscape and The Speculative Herald

*Disclaimer: I received an ARC of this book from the publisher in exchange for my honest opinion and review.

**The GIVEAWAY is located at the bottom of this review.

Edge of Dark was one of the best books I read in 2015 (my review), and one of the novels I included in my 2016 Hugo nomination's ballot. The reason I loved that story so much and kept thinking about and recommending it to other readers a full year after I finished it, was because of Cooper's futurist ideas about transhumanism that brought the question "what does it mean to be a *human*?" to the focus. I was deeply hoping that *Spear of Light* would be a continuation of that and other futurist ideas, and it was, but this time, it took a back seat to the plot.

A few weeks have passed since events at the end of *Edge of Dark*. Charlie has negotiated the treaty with Next, and while the Next are keeping to themselves, the people of Lym are none too happy that the Next are there at all, regardless if they are keeping to their promise. And with this giant wall the Next are building around all of their territory, the people are close to revolting.

The people of Lym aren't the only ones upset with the Next. While they are angry because they are on *their* planet, the people of the Shinning Revolution *hate* that Next even *exist* at all. After the actions of the *Few Free Men* ship, the Shinning Revolutions has an even greater following – in the millions – and they will stop at nothing to end the Next.

At this same time, Nona is coming to Lym as the official ambassador of Diamond Deep to see how the Next and Lym are doing – and how Charlie is. This will be the first time she has seen him since the system-wide vote, and the one night they made love.

Of the Next, Yi, Jason, Chrystal, and Katherine, are still considered the first of the new-generation of Next, and meant to be a type of ambassador and public-face of the Next to the humans. Even though Yi and them are higher in the chain of command than the newer converts and soulbots, they do not even know what the meaning of this new wall they are building is, nor why the Colorimas or Jhailings are on Lym, or what the Next's ultimate goal is.

As you can tell from my brief plot set-up, the *Spear of Light*'s plot heavily centers around the Next's purpose on Lym, and has multiple threads in order to tell this story – more thread and POVs than last time.

We still have Charlie's and Nona's perspective as last time. Charlie working to keep peace on Lym between the normal people, gleamers, and Next; and Nona working as the ambassador, a sort of relay point for information between Lym and Satyana on the Diamond Deep. Then there is Satyana as well. Her chapters serve to let us know of the happening in space with their war with Shinning Revolution, and allowed us to keep an eye on Gunnar and his money schemes.

The two new perspectives this time are Yi and Nayli. Nayli is a co-leader of the Shinning Revolution, and the person who "murdered" Chrystal at the end of *Edge of Dark*. With her, we finally get to see the inner working and motivations behind the Shinning Revolution. Yi is one of the members of Chrystal's family. Yi gives us a better glimpse into how the humans turned soulbots turning into Next are handling the change, and gives a closer look (compared to Charles and the rest of the human) at what the Colorimas or Jhailings are up to.

You should have noticed two major things: one, there is no Chrystal POV; two, I am using the word

“human” freely in this review. These changes are at the root of where I wish Cooper decided to take the story in a different direction.

Chrystal was central to the plot of *Edge of Dark* with her becoming of a Next, and the question of “what defines a human”, and after the ending of last book, I figured the consequences of that and the reactions it would cause would be central to *Spear of Light* as well. But it was not.

We do not get any new Chrystal chapters; we do not see how other characters react to the “new” Chrystal; her family members don’t seem bothered by it, and we don’t get much of an explication why; even Nona’s meeting her is anti-climatic :/ The only place we see an effect of this “new” Chrystal is with Nayli. Nayli has a little moment with it in her first chapter, but by the end, she has decided that the Next truly aren’t human. And that is also the end of any of that “what defines a human” talk that was so central last time!

What Cooper does this time, is instead of focusing on one topic in depth, she focus on several issues with slight analysis. We have Yi and Jason, both of whom are becoming Next, but Yi has always been excited to become a Next and see what he can be capable of, while Jason still wants and misses being human. There is also now a Yi one and Yi two; and Jason one and Jason two. There is a love connection between a Next and a gleamer. The gap in communion/understanding between Yi and the Colorimas /Jhailings mirrors the difficulty he is having talking with Charlie – even though it has only been a few months since his change. EVERYTHING with the Shinning Revolution, and their belief that people should NOT become a Next (The Shinning Revolution is a perfect example of how close-minded, ignorant, inconsiderate, and childish some people can be because someone or something is “not like them” or because they believe that something else is wrong or not what their opinion is).

Every time one of these topics (these highly controversial topics) come into focus in the story, just as my appetite is wetted, and I think we are about to dive into it, exploring all the reasons and beliefs and opinions for each side(!), we simply keep on going, and move on with the plot :/

One thing this story is not is slow. ***Spear of Light* is an excellent example of how to keep a story moving and the reader glued to the pages by constantly advancing the plot and always moving forward.** But what I LOVED about *Edge of Dark* was how Cooper was able to move the plot, while *also* exploring the moral and ethical dilemmas of becoming a Next. Personally, and this may sound strange, but I felt *Spear of Light* was too focused on the plot and telling the story of why the Next are on Lym.

It would have been great to explore more of what happens if a gleamer and Next fell in love with each other! To see more in detail the difference between Yi and Jason with the changes they are undergoing, or use Yi’s gap with Colorimas/Jhailings to show how great a gap between him and Charlie! And I was waiting for someone to call the Shinning Revolution out for what they did and were doing, and why they were doing what they did (their close-mindedness)!

There are more topics this story touches than I just mention there and a few paragraphs earlier, and if Cooper had picked only one of these to be the focus and dig into...

As you can see from my rating, I really liked the book! No, it’s not as good as *Edge of Dark*, but it is still a very good book, and the ending – why the Next came to Lym – was excellent and a twist that I did not see.

It would be extremely remiss of me to not recommend and say that *The Glittering Edge* duology is a must read sci-fi series.

4/5 Rating

The Glittering Edge duology - 4/5 Rating

◇ ◇ ◇

GIVEAWAY!

Open to **US residents only** (sorry!) and runs through **June 15, 2016** (06/14/16). Please click on the Rafflecopter link below to enter to win a paperback copy of *Spear of Light* by Brenda Cooper! Good luck! :)

RAFFLECOPTER GIVEAWAY!!! ***

◇ ◇ ◇

-DJ

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <https://bibliosanctum.com/2016/06/07/...>

Spear of Light continues the story from *Edge of Dark*—which was a novel I consider to be one of the best sci-fi surprises for me last year—and it certainly does not disappoint. Brenda Cooper continues to handle the subject of transhumanism with a keen sense of thoughtfulness, tackling all the important questions in this exciting conclusion of The Glittering Edge duology.

The first book saw the rise of the Next, a post-human society that has returned from deep space after many centuries of living in exile. And for some unknown reason, they want a claim on the planet Lym. Unable to stop the stronger and more technologically advanced Next, our characters from *Edge of Dark* were left with no choice but to cede parts of the land to them.

Now the residents of Lym are angry. Humanity is angry. Many have joined the Shining Revolution, a rebel group that vows to fight the Next, even if it ultimately means taking out Lym with them. This puts those like Charlie between a rock and a hard place. As a ranger whose family has devoted generations to protecting and re-wilding the planet, it chafes him to see these more-machine-than-human invaders his home, but neither is the idea of Lym's destruction acceptable to him. The Next may be building cities on his beloved world, but at least they have vowed not to harm anyone—unless they are attacked first.

Ambassador Nona Hall has also fought hard to maintain this peace, but it's difficult when every day more and more are actually seeking to join the robots. With their methods of downloading a person's consciousness into a carbon fiber body and incorporating them into a greater network, the Next are essentially offering a form of immortality, an idea which some cannot resist. To the Shining Revolution though, it is an abomination. But as the rebels go on the offense, they are also endangering the fragile peace, each attack pushing the Next to make good on their threat. Sooner or later, something's going to break.

Unsurprisingly, both Charlie and Nona are back to reprise their roles as point-of-view characters in this

sequel, but this time they are also joined by three others: Satyana, Nona's aunt from the Diamond Deep space station; Yi, a character from the first book who was forcibly turned into one of the Next; and Nayli, one of the top leaders of the Shining Revolution. Together, these five characters provide a well-rounded picture of the conflict from all perspectives, showing the far-reaching consequences of everything that happens in this story.

But perhaps the greatest drama occurs on Lym. *Spear of Light* addresses a lot of questions about this world, like why the Next are interested in it, and also why its history is so important for humanity. But before we get to those answers, we have the battle for the planet. What would you do if your home was invaded by an unbeatable enemy? Would you still fight, even if it meant certain death? Would victory be worth it, even if it meant completely destroying the thing you sought to protect in the first place? The tensions are high as the people of Lym make their choice, and Cooper does an incredible job presenting the dilemma from every side possible.

Dealing with the Next is also no simple matter, as I realized very quickly that there are no clear villains in this story. While I found it hard to sympathize with the brutal and violent tactics of the Shining Revolution, neither could I make myself fully embrace the Next because some of their members were so thoroughly machine-like, especially those who have lost much of their humanity after being around for such a long time. This is why I thought Nayli and Yi's chapters were so important; their perspectives succeeded in balancing each other out, raising this story to another level by making it a much deeper and more engaging one.

The final parts of this book were just phenomenal, bringing this duology to an end with thrilling climax and conclusion. There were also some shocking revelations to boot. All told, I still think I liked *Edge of Dark* a little bit more, but I have say it was really close. *Spear of Light* lacked some of the emotional impact I experienced in the first book, but it made up for that with its high suspense and tight pacing. This novel merely confirmed to me that *The Glittering Edge* is one of the most solid, well written sci-fi series out there, and it deserves a hell of a lot more attention. If you have an interest in transhumanism or stories about what it means to be human, you really need to read these books.

James says

It's due at the library and I'm not inclined to renew it.
