



Overpowered

Mark H. Kruger

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The world's safest town might actually be a deadly kind of dangerous. And Nica Ashley is about to learn the hard way.

Nica Ashley is accustomed to traveling the globe with her journalist mother, so when she gets sent to live in a small town with the father she barely knows, she's in for a bit of a culture shock. Barrington prides itself on being a sleepy, family community with the lowest crime rates in the state of Colorado. There's even a private security force run by Barrington Technology (BarTech) and a nightly curfew for all residents.

On Nica's first day at school, she meets Jackson Winters and finds out he went from school superstar to living ghost after his girlfriend disappeared a few months ago. When Nica follows him out after curfew one night, they both witness a mysterious green flash-and the next morning the power has gone out and all the birds are dead.

But secrets are well and alive, and as Nica and some of her friends discover they now have abilities best described as "super," they also realize that Barrington might not be so safe. And that BarTech is looking for them.

Overpowered Details

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Author : Mark H. Kruger

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From Reader Review Overpowered for online ebook

Sue Jackson says

A fast-paced & suspenseful sci fi thriller about a small town in Colorado hiding secrets. Read my full review at:

<http://bookbybook.blogspot.com/2017/0...>

Courtney says

things happened really fast in this book; I get that a lot happens & 1,000 page books are too much for the average reader, but I really don't like when that happens. who's that? a strange boy? BAM. best friends. no thank you. the story is pretty good - I didn't love it, but it was enough to keep my attention throughout the entire book. but the ending was really great; had a good cliffhanger - I almost wish I had the second book.

Stephanie (Reading is Better With Cupcakes) says

I really enjoyed this story. There was something about it that just made me want to keep going.

That said, this is not a book without its faults.

First, I do not feel that the author really portrayed a girl character very well. There were quite a few moments where Nica didn't quite act or respond how one would think she would.

Also, there were story flaws. For example, at night the town loses its internet and phone. However, about half way through the book, the trio are always texting each other late at night.

There were also a few other things that irked me. The author seemed to poke a lot of fun at antidepressants. He also pointed out way too many times that Nica was a world traveler. I understand shes been every where, stop pointing it out over and over. Also, I don't really think that he knows what picking out an outfit really is for a girl

I was really torn between giving this book 3 or 4 stars, I went with 4 because I really enjoyed the story despite all of its flaws.

This review is based on an ARC provided by the publisher.

You can find more of my reviews at:

<http://readingwithcupcakes.blogspot.com/>

Chapter by Chapter says

Overpowered by author Mark. H. Kruger was a novel that sounded like it would be exciting and keep up a fast pace. The cover looked cool, the premise interesting and promising—in short I was very happy to get reading. What I will say by the end of the novel is that Overpowered is unlike anything I expected it to be.

In Overpowered main character Nica Ashely has grown up travelling from country to country with her journalist mother, the last thing she expects is for her mother to get a job in the coldest place on Earth and to be sent straight to her father's small town of Barrington. Barrington is unlike anything Nica has expected—it has a curfew for one thing—and is a small, quiet community where everybody knows everybody. The pride of the town is the company that practically owns it; BarTech.

When Nica is enrolled at the high school she ends up meeting Jackson Winters, an attractive, strange boy whose life has spiralled out of control after his girlfriend went missing. Immediately Nica finds herself drawn to him, but she doesn't expect anything out of the rebellious boy. However when both of them are out after curfew together by sheer luck they both witness something strange and out of place in Barrington, a strange flash of light.

Suddenly Nica discovers that the strange flash has given her and a few of her peers strange superhero-like powers. Wanting to uncover the answers to why they can suddenly achieve unbelievable feats, Nica and her friends begin to bring buried secrets to life and learn that Barrington and BarTech are not what they seem.

For the most part Overpowered was a good read. The plot was interesting and kept me wanting to carry on and find out what secrets this small town was keeping. I do think that there are a lot of things that happen in the story that readers will not expect to go down. There were a few issues that I had with this read, one of them being that in the plot I really just wished that there was more time to go in depth about certain things/more explanations for certain occurrences. I think a lot of people who have read the novel will agree with me about a few plot holes, though if you ignore them the plot is pretty solid and mysterious.

Another problem I had with Overpowered was the writing, I had a love/hate relationship with it. There were times where it was descriptive and exciting but for the most part it felt very awkward. The novel is written in the first person point of view but there were countless times where Nica would be written thinking something that just did not sound like her character at all, one thing that comes to mind would be the fact that Nica uses the word 'lad'. It felt very out of character. There were also unnecessarily long descriptions on clothing, setting, etcetra that made it very hard to get into the novel as I wanted to.

I did like the romance that took place in the novel between Nica and Jackson, I can proudly say that the plot did drive the romance and made it very real. Everything between Nica and Jackson just made me all smiley and happy to see them together. Still, there were times when they would have their romantic scenes and they wouldn't even feel all that long and I just wished that those scenes could have been extended to make their romance more realistic.

Ben Alderson says

been trying to read this for almost a year.... no just no

Hunter Richards-Berry says

Every time I go to the library there is always something that catches my eyes. I walk through the front door and into the teen section, usually only staying a few minutes. But my last experience took a little more time, simply because I was so interested in this book. I read the blurb and just kept going. It was interesting at the start but the plot kept escalating. You would see glimpses of a strange messed up world and would want to indulge in it. It was a fantastic book with a fantastic plot. You could often see the main character in turmoil which was extremely captivating and motivating. ""I'm fine." I lied". I thought that was classic female, in fact classic human. Pretending everything was alright but really it wasn't. She cared so much about what Jackson (the love interest) that she would lie and pretend she was something that she wasn't. Happy. She had so many worries about him that she was caught up in his own world. She was a little salty about Dana, Jacksons previous "interest" and was always worried about her. She was kidnapped and in need of saving but truly Nica (the main character) had thoughts about not saving her. Just for her own personal gain. This was possibly referring to how messed up us humans are. The category on the bingo board that this completes is 1b. I feel that this relates to survival as everyone is against the main character and that makes it difficult to progress but they still get things done. "It's hard to take a step when the whole worlds pushing against you". I'm not sure if I learnt anything from this book but I certainly enjoyed it. The whole setting was interesting to me as there was a curfew to keep people in check and it was a seemingly perfect town. Everyone was happy (most of the time) and everyone got along. So it was a sick realization to them when they found out what was happening. Overall good book and a good plot.

Amy Atkins says

Spoiler!

My biggest questions are around the details and timing - things like why was Dr. Ashley in Barrington before the first pulse if he is working for the government to stop Bar Tech industries. He would have arrived after the pulse as a response to what had happened.

Georgina Martin (Bookz and Bitz) says

Awesome cover. I'm thinking 28 days later....zombies, mutants the lot.....

Overpowered isn't that. Well sort of, but no.

Overpowered introduces us the Nica, a 16 year old girl who's spent the last 14 years traveling around the world (19 countries, 19 schools - remember that, its important!) only for her mum to turn around and say she can't come to the latest destination, Antarctica. No, Nica has to go to live with her dad in Barrington, Colorado - home to the safest town in the country. Suburbia. So why if its so safe does the town have a curfew of 9pm for all, why does her dad have extra secure locks on the windows and why do the local tech company BarTech supply their own security forces to the town (and pay for the school....). Nica starts to realize the town is a little strange, and more that slightly stepford. The adults don't really talk about anything,

her dad shuts her down when she asks why the internet is shut off at night, or why she can't go out after 9. But she does and she's caught in a green 'pulse' -as are her friends and they develop strange powers.....what exactly is happening in Barrington?

I hate trashing books, I mean really trashing. There is nothing wrong with an opinion, but as I'm not a writer I hate to criticizing something I couldn't do better. In this case dyslexic me could do better. Much better.

I loved the idea, and the story itself had promise but was severely let down by the writing. Firstly the horrendous product placement - every single page mentioned some sort of product, 'drinking a dragon fruit vitamin water' 'she reached for a vitamin water' 'her dad has stocked up on vitamin water' and so on. (this is where I need a head bang smiley) then there was the 'Jason's mac pro was bigger and faster than anything either of them had owned' (I'm not quoting here, but writing it from memory - you get the gist). Add to the annoying sponsor messages the writers completely inappropriate attitude towards depression, anti-depressants and mental health in general, there are endless comments about people needing to take a prozac or other antidepressant to calm down, then others about how they must of taken to much of xyz as they were chilled, in a world where we are trying to bring mental health issues into the mainstream, to make them understood and not kept quiet attitudes like the ones portrayed in the book are completely unacceptable.

Then there's Nica and her traveling (19 countries and 19 schools, remember) and his constant need to remind you every two seconds (just in case you forgot its 19 schools in 19 countries), there was one time when I was in thailand and I read a book, which reminds me of this book. (I've never been to Thailand but that's the sort of crap that was spouted by Nica every twenty words). I get that she's travelled, but in all honesty it does nothing for the story, her travels do not affect the outcome, she could of lived in a town up the road and moved back with her dad, the story would remain unaffected.

The writing was truly the thing that let the story down, it was quite entertaining once you filtered out all the crap, but sadly when sifting everything you didn't care about out, your left with a good short story, not a book. I wish I could recommend it, but I can't - I was going for 2 stars but writing this review made me mad (particularly the negative attitude towards mental health issues) and I realized there is nothing I can recommend about it, whilst the plot is fun, teenage mutants isn't original, but it could of been saved by good writing, which is not going to be provided by Kruger I'm afraid.

Egalley kindly provided by Edelweiss and the publisher in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Karl says

Decent story premise that moved along well enough. However, nothing really special either. The book reads more like a TV Pilot than a book. Given that premise, it's a show I would probably watch, but not a show I would HAVE to watch.

Jessie says

Having just finished this book and the short blurb at the back that says this is Mr. Kruger's first novel, I can

honestly say I hope it's also his last. Don't get me wrong; the writing itself was just fine and the story was amazing. But the problem is there wasn't enough going on in the story as it went from one event to the next. It was dull. There was so much here that screamed, "FILLER!" It was like he was trying to reach a certain word count and painstakingly progressing the story at the pace of a snail.

The break-in at Bar Tech Security was ridiculous. There was hardly any action or drama there. I'd expect the main characters to meet SOME kind of resistance, but there was next to none. I could overlook the way Jackson turned off an electric fence by using his ability, but not the way they opened a high-tech lock that changes its password multiple times in a day. C'mon! A high school nerd just happens to bring up a hacking website on his phone that gives a universal passcode to a high-tech lock that lets them reprogram it? As if high-tech locks even work that way! It would've been a lot more believable if they'd somehow broken the lock and the door opened. And they just happened to evade ALL the security guards AND find Maya within moments of entering the facility? Not only that, during their escape, security guards just stand there and watch them as they run right by, all without ever seeing who they were? Even if they were hoping the kids would run into their trap, they'd still make it believable that they were being pursued. It's like a herding dog guiding sheep into the position they want them in. The dog doesn't just stand there and watch the sheep move around. When the teenagers reached the final wave of guards, I thought that was done alright, but it was over way too quickly.

But my BIGGEST beef about this book is the final two pages. How the hell does Dana Fox just show up out of the blue without any rhyme or reason (and yes, that was literally only two pages)!? There's no information at all about her, where she was, what happened to her, or if she has abilities, too. She just walks up Jackson's driveway and gives him a hug. It was a big cliffhanger that didn't make ANY sense whatsoever. It didn't even set up the next book. It was literally, "Hey, Dana's back. Find out what happens in the next book! Cut, that's a wrap, folks!" Are you serious? That is NOT how you end a book! I felt like the author met his word count, ended the story in two pages, and sent it off to his publisher while leaving a crap ton of loose ends.

It annoyed me to no end that the author was building the groundwork for a serious relationship between Nica and Jackson, and then dropped the ball by bringing Dana back into the picture. That was a major faux pas in the world of writing. You don't start a romance between two people and get the reader involved in that and then suddenly change course by introducing a third person we don't know. It makes us hate that character immensely for existing.

I won't even mention Nica's father. We find out he's a government spy, and... that's it. Nothing more is said about it.

I could go on and on about how much the ending sucked, but I won't. If I had known it was going to be like that, I would never have bought this book. I already struggled on multiple occasions to keep reading the darn thing as I was swimming through filler. Mr. Kruger worked as a screenwriter and TV writer according to the blurb on the inside back cover, but news flash! The ending of a book is not like the ending of a TV show! You need to wrap up all the loose ends, then skillfully introduce something new that will make the reader want to pick up the next book. Having Dana appear out of thin air is nowhere near "skillfully introducing something new."

Oh, and on the writing itself? The author has the annoying habit of italicizing words where it doesn't make any sense. It's even worse when he italicizes an *entire* sentence... of dialogue! See that? I used italics properly. *I didn't italicize an entire sentence where it doesn't make any sense to do so.* Except now I did. This is annoying enough to take you right out of the story (if you managed to even be involved in it).

Mr. Kruger should stick with screenwriting and leave novel writing to authors who are actually good at it.

Aelvana says

Nica has grown up with her journalist mother, moving from country to country as her mother's job moves them. But when her mom lands a spot in Antarctica, Nica is sent to Barrington, Colorado---the "safest" town in the country. The most boring, old-town-America kind of place that even has a curfew. But something is going on in this town. Pulses of weird energy light up the night. And Nica and others find themselves reacting in strange ways . . .

I liked the idea, but the execution of this is terrible on multiple levels.

First, the science. The pulses are explained as EMPs which causes genetic mutations which gave some people powers (and a lot of people bad moods). Except aliens would have made a lot more sense, because the EMP is not behaving like an actual EMP. Electromagnetic pulses of the power level described would not only have knocked out the cell system in Barrington, they would have killed everything electronic. Computers. Cars. Televisions. Microwaves. Nothing would have worked at ALL. And it wouldn't have come back after the pulse stopped because the nature of an EMP totally fries the circuitry. It should be the equivalent of an attack that throws everyone back into a pre-technological society (see books like Rick Yancy's *The Fifth Wave* to get some idea how this would actually play out as an actual EMP is one of the waves). Mystical green alien energy rays could have neatly avoided this. It also would have avoided the frankly painful explanation of how electromagnetic light-bending can make someone invisible (because genetic powers apparently also work on the clothes you're wearing).

Second, Nica might as well have come from Pennsylvania or Wyoming for all the difference her world-hopping makes to her character. She thinks, talks, and acts like an American. There's one nice moment when she reflects on the oddity of throwing a birthday party, because everyone else in the world tends to be a lot poorer, but who she says she is doesn't match who she actually is. She doesn't have any weird habits picked up from other cultures (no, the kickboxing breathing-exercise doesn't count.... she could've learned kickboxing in America and gotten the same result). She doesn't have an accent or any odd turns of phrase. She doesn't even appear to be multilingual to the slightest degree. She isn't comparing her new school to the other schools she's been in except for a few slight nods to Thailand. I could go on, but Nica comes across as someone who tells you one thing but behaves totally differently.

Third, the relationships (most especially the romance) is pretty painful to watch. I'm already not a fan of the instant attraction Nica has to Jackson, the resident bad boy. Or the way Nica tends to describe every character by how physically attractive they are. I liked her friendship with Oliver best because it was simply a friendship and not her constantly rating him on his boyfriend potential. Although this also goes back to the whole not-matching-her-history problem, as Nica has supposedly jumped around to 19 different schools, yet has no problems forming friendships. Even losing her old friend in Thailand minimally affects her because they can text a bit. Frankly, I would expect Nica to be at least a little emotionally scarred by those kinds of experiences and either reluctant to try to make new friends or reluctant to throw herself wholeheartedly into relationships, because she ought to think given her life that nothing is stable. (And I'd prefer to forget about the spying-on-you-naked-in-the-shower scene. Peeping is peeping no matter who's doing it; not to mention the scene only appears to exist to further allow Nica to expand on Jackson's physical attractiveness).

The mystery plays out okay, although to anyone who's half-awake it should be obvious who's driving the

conspiracy within the first few chapters. I still wish it had been aliens. Aliens could've given this a much-needed boost, although it still wouldn't have saved Nica's character. This is clearly setting up to be a series but I have no interest in any further books. I rate this book Not Recommended.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

Kate Bailey says

So good.

Campbell says

this book was amazing! definitely great for those who like action, mystery, and romance! the book has some parts that make this book ages 12 and up.

Julia A says

Alternative title recommendations at end of review

This book had so much promise, but about a quarter of the way in everything plummeted downhill like a cartoon snowball, picking up more and more clichés as it went until it was a giant pack of nonsense. At least in my opinion.

When I picked up the book I was interested mainly because 1) The narrator, a world-traveling teenaged girl, sounded fresh and interesting. Yeah, some of the plot devices were a little easy to see coming (what?? she has to move back to a small town where she'll feel stifled and cramped and generally be searching for any adventure she can get??), but I didn't mind as long as the way it was presented was fun to read. And, 2) I like a little predictability now and then. When you pick up a book about a small town with a dark secret, hinting that some teens get superpowers and that maybe The Looming Corporation is more than just scenery, you can pretty much guess what the rest of the book is going to focus on. And I love me some butt-kicking super-powered teens--that can be a fun book to read.

This was not a fun book to read.

First of all, the narrative voice stopped being so fresh and interesting as soon as the first day of school hit. The clichés piled on and my interest dropped off with alarming frequency. First our main character Nica whipped out the Not Like Other Girls card, which is ridiculously annoying and overused. (rant ensues; not actually a spoiler, just very long: (view spoiler)

The plot wore thin preeeeeetty darn quickly. Or maybe it was just how often things were reduced to bland

summary that left a lot to be desired in terms of feeling like you were really in the story, or even up on the details that the characters were throwing out in the badly written dialogue. (How many times can three people "quip" things "glibly" and "dryly"????)

Also, *there was so much italicizing*. Like, *all over the place*. It felt like reading really badly written movie dialogue. Just in case you didn't realize one of the characters in this small town melodrama was saying something ominous in this conversation full of double entendre in this *entire book of secrets and mystery and intrigue and lies*, the author went ahead and *italicized it for you just in case. Just to be sure you'd notice. JUST TO BE SURE.*

Frankly, it was a condescending and overused device that got really annoying really fast. It threw me out of the story while I was reading, because I kept stopping to stare at entire sentences of italic text and wonder why no one put a stop to the wanton abuse of emphasis. *Where were your editors, sir?*

Then again, maybe the plot just felt thin because of the way the once-interesting narrator became some dopey lovesick but-trying-so-hard-to-still-be-better-than-other-girls twit. Seriously, it was maddening. As soon as the Mysterious Rebel Hunk came on scene, all signs of the savvy world traveler flew out the window, and the main character became totally obsessed. Weird electromagnetic pulse no one wants to talk about? OK. But have you seen his *electromagnetic eyes*?? Because they totally had Meaningful Eye Contact for a few seconds there. Even the "intensely romantic" scenes (i.e., when the protag finally -- spoiler alert? -- kissed the Mysterious Rebel Hunk of her dreams) were stilted and poorly described. That's right: even the smoochy parts were basically just bad summary. Considering how much time the narrator spent talking about how much she was thinking about these things, and how much she said she cared about them, the actual language was completely out of place; it made me think the author read a few romance novels in the name of research, and then did his level best to imitate the more PG passages without having to think too much about it. Seriously. It was bad.

AND THE ENDING. DON'T GET ME STARTED. I know this is supposed to be setting up a sequel, but it kind of flops over the finish line with one of the most pathetic "cliff hangers" I've ever read. (view spoiler) It was NOT worth dragging myself through the second half of the book to read that lackluster ending, let me tell you. I should've just given up a hundred or so pages earlier and saved myself the time and mental anguish.

SO:

Even though the "teens get superpowers/teens vs. evil corporation" thing isn't exactly new, I thought this book would at least give it a fresh voice. Unfortunately, what I got was a book that made the plot feel tired, condescended to its audience, and dragged its way to a conclusion that was completely unsatisfying and in no way encourages me to read any forthcoming sequels. I'd definitely recommend skipping this one, which looks like it's aiming to be a series. (Either that, or the ending is even worse than I thought.)

WHAT TO READ INSTEAD:

If you're looking for something with a little romance, a lot of semi-apocalyptic butt-kicking, and a good dose of teens-vs-the-Evil-Corporation, I highly recommend *Undead* by Kirsty McKay. Set in modern-day England, the main character wasn't expecting to have to deal with this kind of mindless horde when she got stuck on an excursion with the rest of her class. In the end, she has to rely on her wits and a ragtag band of survivors with a hotwired schoolbus to save the day. Not too much gore, and a self-respecting summary-to-description ratio, this is a leap and a bound ahead of Kruger's clumsy *Overpowered*. Bonus: *Undead* is also

the first in a series; unlike *Overpowered*, I've actually read the second book in this series (Unfed), and it lives up to its predecessor.

Katie_la_geek says

For this review and more visit my blog

Overpowered had a great premise and it could have been awesome but somewhere in the execution this went wrong for me. Like I said I really liked the idea. It had a great plot and there were some really interesting parts. Unfortunately there was just a bucket load of things I had issues with which took away from the awesomeness of the actual plot.

Firstly the writing seemed really cold to me. There were loads of descriptions of physical things like clothes and food but there was no real description of the more emotional things. I didn't need to know exactly what brand of water or computer Nica was drinking or using. I wanted to know more of her inner workings, how she was feeling and what she was going through but felt that aspect was completely overlooked.

Then there were a few inconsistencies. Every night wi-fi, mobile phones and home phones go offline yet somehow Nica still manages to text her friends. Also after the pulses everyone gets angry, starts fight and generally loses the plot apart from Nica, Oliver and Jackson. I thought it was because they were 'different' but Maya is different to and she also loses the plot. I also struggled at times to know what time of day it was. There were moments where I was sure the action was taking place at night but a few pages later it was daytime which really confused me.

The characters were bland and didn't really have any personality. Nica was ok but personality wise she was all over the place. On her first day at school she throws a boy to the ground after he bumps into her, she also goes on about how she studies martial arts but apart from that one time she does nothing else to backup that side of her. She has no 'normal' girl interests and instead goes on about her martial arts, living in Thailand and has an obsession with sushi. Jackson is no better, as the love interest I expect him to have some personality so we can understand why Nica is so taken with him but there was nothing. No time was spent getting to know him and he spent most of the book not answering his phone and disappearing for long periods of.

The romance really annoyed me as well. Nica really fancies Jackson and has not really dated before. He kisses her and she starts pulling her and his clothes off in the middle of the woods where some crazy people were after them. I got the impression that she was a virgin and she just came across as well to eager and unconcerned. Sex in YA is fine and I fully support it as it is something that teens do and think about but it has to mean something, the implied (almost) sexual content in this meant nothing.

What I hated most about the romance was the way Nica reacted to Jackson. She went from being a girl who

could and would throw a boy over her shoulder to saying stuff like:
“Was he upset with me for being so hopelessly lame.”

And

“I was so stupid no wonder he had no interest in me.”

And

“As if it were even possible that a hunk like Jackson would ever want an insecure mess like me.”

It drove me mad, I just hated that she put herself down all the time. It was even worse because the reason Jackson was so unsure about getting romantic was because his girlfriend who he was really in love (but couldn't be that much in love with as he nearly had sex in the woods with another girl) with was missing. I cannot understand how Nica never really thought of that.

Overpowered was a great idea on paper but at the end of the day it wasn't for me.

The publisher provided me with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review