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The desert planet of Arrakis has begun to grow green and lush. The life-giving spice is abundant. The nine-year-old royal twins, possessing their father's supernatural powers, are being groomed as Messiahs. But there are those who think the Imperium does not need messiahs...

Children of Dune Details

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From Reader Review Children of Dune for online ebook

Josh Cutting says

This is when I officially gave up on the Herbertverse. This was awful!!! I really do not care for the children of Mu A'dib, they're both creepy and way too articulate (kind of like Dakota Fanning) I was actually rooting for the assassins the entire book. And when the kid smears worm larvae on himself and becomes a god!?!?!?!? Sorry folks, I checked out. I don't even care how the rest of the saga works out. No God Emperor of Dune for me, no Heretics, stop this universe, I want to get off!

Evgeny says

One of Paul's twins is supposed to become an Emperor of the mighty interplanetary Empire created by great Muad'dib. The only slight problem is that nobody at all – and I do mean absolutely nobody – wants this to happen. This includes the twins themselves. Plots within plot within plots are brewing and in the game with such high stakes all means of winning are fine, including slaughtering innocent bystanders wholesale. Another interesting problem is that it is not exactly clear whether the abovementioned twins are completely human, and if so whether they will remain such. Enter Lady Jessica who finally after almost 20 years of absence decided to visit Dune to check on her grandkids.

Here is a very good place for my rant about Lady Jessica. She went to Caladan shortly after the events in the end of the first book. She left her kid daughter behind, but took Gurney Halleck

with her to keep her company. She never showed up even to take a look at how her daughter is doing. Please do not get me wrong; I fully understand that it was much easier (and fun) for her to spend her time with a lover as opposed to bringing up her very unusual daughter. Still in my personal opinion if you do it you gave up all of the rights to complain about the way your daughter developed. Upon the arrival Lady Jessica is shocked about how her daughter turned out: disappointments within disappointments within disappointments. I am very glad that even in the distant future the hypocrisy is alive and kicking.

So from the paragraph above you can figure out I was not a big fan of Lady Jessica in this book. Add to this her holier-than-thou attitude typical for any Bene Gesserit and you will understand why I wanted Lady Jessica to die. This was also why I pitied Alia: she grew up from being a lonely (abandoned) scared young teen into her present – and not very nice – self. Abandonment within abandonment within abandonment.

So how were the other characters? Except for the two above I could not care less about any of them one way or the other. None were particularly nice. Absolutely no one at all cared about little people that were used as 100% disposables by all major players. This brings up an interesting question related to the whole series: is absolute monarchy the best form of government humanity could come up with after countless centuries of development? Currently democracy with all its faults (and it does have countless number of them) really looks much better than what our future descendants would have according to the series. Despotism within despotism within despotism.

While I am still in the rant mode let me talk about Muad'dib Jihad. Sometime during the reading of this book I finally realized why it was so successful (yes, I can be slow at times). Remember that the Fremen did not have any access to open water? They had to wear special suits to catch their own moisture and recycle it.

Do you know what it means? It means that then it comes to body odor the worst-smelling modern bum has nothing on an average Son of the Desert.

In fact they would be qualified as biological weapons and as such banned in modern times. The usual conquest would look like this: arrive on a planet, face its defenders, remove stillsuit, and finish off the survivors to end their agony. This is why I found notions from “progressive” people of Dune about going back to traditional Fremen ways ridiculous, no matter how romantic it sounds. People finally gained access to water, decent food, medicine, and countless other “spoils” of civilization. Try telling me further progress means giving these up while keeping a straight face? You cannot? I thought so. Then again continuing this way would severely cut down the production of spice and who cares about lives of simple humans measured against this? Nobody that is who. Profits within profits within profits.

Let me get this straight until it is too late: I like this book more than the previous one. At least things happened in here unlike the previous installment where Paul’s angst was the only happening. There were some action and some fairly intense moments... with the people I do not care about. Anyhow, I gave the second book 3 stars and I like this one much more. I gave the first book 4 stars and it is an undisputed classic of science fiction. What would be the final rating? 3.5 very solid stars? Would Goodreads allow me to give half-star ratings for my special case? Not likely. Finally the reasoning for the rating was the following: for me 4 stars mean I will reread the book once; 3 stars – no reread. I will not reread this one. I am still looking forward to reading the next installment. I will be perfectly satisfied if it is at least as good as this one. Hopes within hopes within hopes.

P.S. Have you noticed I overused the expression *something* within *something* within *something*? Frank Herbert did it in all three books I read so far. What is good for a classic of science fiction should be good for me.

Markus says

Buddy read with Athena!

”This rocky shrine to the skull of a ruler grants no prayers. It has become the grave of lamentations. Only the wind hears the voice of this place. The cries of night creatures and the passing wonder of two moons, all say his day has ended. No more supplicants come. The visitors have gone from the feast. How bare the pathway down this mountain.

Paul Muad’dib, god and emperor of a universe divided, is gone. The religiously pantocratic Imperium has been left with his two nine-year old children, Leto and Ghanima. But despite being born with the knowledge and memories of a thousand generations, the two Children of Dune will not be allowed to take their father’s throne at such a young age. Instead the Atreides empire is ruled by a council of advisors, among them Stilgar and Irulan. But true power rests in the hands of Muad’dib’s sister, Alia Atreides, who clings to control of the regency.

But in Alia’s mind there are voices whispering. The voices of evils long gone, who intend to forge the woman worshipped as the Womb of Heaven into a dangerous weapon to be unleashed. And while Alia descends into madness, House Corrino sees its chance to take back all that the Atreides have stolen from it. And a mysterious old Preacher walks out of the sands to publicly denounce the religion of Muad’dib. Meanwhile, Leto and Ghanima journey together into the desert, chasing old myths and desperately trying to

understand why the legendary sandworms are slowly disappearing from the surface of Dune...

"This is the fallacy of power: ultimately it is effective only in an absolute, a limited universe. But the basic lesson of our relativistic universe is that things change. Any power must always meet a greater power. Paul Muad'Dib taught this lesson to the Sardaukar on the Plains of Arrakeen. His descendants have yet to learn the lesson for themselves."

One very interesting aspect about the book, is the fact that it's filled to the brim with quotes about politics, religion and power. Just as it is a science fiction classic and an epic adventure, *Children of Dune* is something of a guidebook to the very meaning of power. Of how one struggles for it, how one gains it, and what absolute power can do to the person wielding it. And some of these lines would be worth quoting over and over.

"There were in olden times certain tribes which were known to be water hunters. They were called Iduali, which meant 'water insects,' because those people wouldn't hesitate to steal the water of another Fremen. If they caught you alone in the desert they would not even leave you the water of your flesh. There was this place where they lived: Sietch Jacurutu. That's where the other tribes banded and wiped out the Iduali. That was a long time ago, before Kynes even - in my great-great-grandfather's days. And from that day to this, no Fremen has gone to Jacurutu. It is tabu."

While not as outright astonishing as the first two books in the series, this is definitely a great addition to the wonderful universe of Dune. Frank Herbert's writing is better than ever, which is the reason for all the quotes in this review. And while certain characters are absent from this book, other characters who were absent in *Dune Messiah* are brought back onto the scene.

The part of the book that fascinated me the most was definitely the character development of Alia Atreides. When reading Dune, it's quite easy to notice that elements of it have directly inspired a lot of later fantasy authors, including Robert Jordan and George R.R. Martin. And there are many things of Alia, her rule as regent and her descent into madness that are particularly reminiscent of a certain queen named Cersei. But in my eyes, Alia is a more fascinating character still.

Thus ends the final book of the Great Dune Trilogy, one of the absolute greatest series ever written within the genres of speculative fiction. But the tale goes on; a tale of spice and sandworms, of assassins and great houses, of the calculating Mentats and the devious plans of the Bene Gesserit; a tale of the planet Dune.

"The desert is my home."

Aziz Varl?k says

"?yi bak, kuzenim Hâriku'l-Âde. Biz hep böyle olaca??z. Evliyen de böyle duraca??z. Her zamanki gibi s?rt s?rta duracak ve z?t yönlerine bakarak varl???m?z? koruyaca??z."

Drew Athans says

The conventional wisdom seems to be that only the first Dune book is good and that the rest of them are awful, but I've found this to definitely not be the case. This 3rd book in the series was gripping and exciting...I literally couldn't put it down! Don't listen to what everyone else says, read these books for yourself and make your own decision...you won't be disappointed! This one focuses on the children of Muad'Dib, as well as his sister Alia, wife-in-name-only Irulan, and the return of his mother Jessica to the political goings-on of Arrakis and the struggles with the almost cult-like religion that has sprung up around his supposed death and his sister as its new figurehead. Behind the scenes there is all sorts of plotting and double-dealing between a whole host of characters and factions, and the shocking revelations from the middle of the book on make this book one of the best in the series, and it wraps-up the first trilogy of books and this time period with a bang!

Eric Allen says

Children of Dune
Book 3 of the Dune Chronicles
By Frank Herbert

A Dune Retrospective by Eric Allen.

This book is a bit of a hard one for me to rate, because parts of it are so good, while others are so not. Everyone likes to say that Dune Messiah is a bridge between the events of Dune and Children of Dune. However, most people do not realize two things about this series. First was that Herbert meant to stop after Dune Messiah. And Second, when he finally decided he had more story to tell, seven years had passed. Looking at the series as a whole, now, it seems that way to some people, but at the time that these books were published, it was not the case. Dune Messiah was meant to be the end, not a bridge of any sort between better books in the series.

Children of Dune follows many swirling plots throughout the empire to remove the titular Children from their places as heirs to Paul "Muad'dib" Atreides. His sister Alia has become possessed by the old Baron Harkonnen, and is actively trying to bring the monarchy down and take power for herself. The heir to house Corino is plotting to take the throne in other ways. The Bene Gesserit have their own plots, as do the Spacing Guild, and a hundred other people or groups.

In the midst of all of the chaos and plotting, a blind preacher appears out of the desert, calling down the religion that worships Paul as a god, and preaching defiance of Alia, and a return to Fremen tradition. Many think that he is Muad'dib returned to them from the desert where he wandered off to die, but many question why he would return only to tear down the religion and empire that he, himself, built.

The twin Atreides heirs plan... something, and in carrying out their plans accomplish... something, but the book never really bothers to tell us what, so it's probably not all that important.

Everything comes together when all plots fail, and young Leto assumes the throne after doing... something, which allows him to do so... for some reason... I guess, bringing about changes that will change the face of Arrakis for a time, bringing a storm through the known universe, but which will result in peaceful calm once

it is through.

The Good? There is a lot to like in this book. The political intrigues, all the back dealing, and plotting, and maneuvering are really well done and play out to a wonderful conclusion. There's a lot of real tension through many scenes as various factions play off each other for control of Arrakis, the spice, and the empire. Alia's fall into insanity is really well played out, and she makes a very good villain. The story is epic in scope, much like the first book, encompassing huge changes in the empire, and there are a lot of great character interactions throughout the novel.

The Bad? The twins are, frankly, not characters. Hell, they're barely even plot devices. They're not even that, they're more like stage props. They have absolutely no personality of their own. Their motivations are, for the most part, a complete mystery to the reader. They just... do things, without explanation of why, or how, or why it's important to the plot. They don't act like real people. They merely exist within the plot to facilitate the needs of the story and for no other reason. **AND HALF OF THE ENTIRE BOOK IS FROM THEIR POINTS OF VIEW!!!**

The twins are creepy, and weird, and say and do things that just make no sense, because they have no context, because the author couldn't bother himself to give us one. For example, there's one part where the twins, who have access to the memories of all their ancestors, "play the mother father game" wherein they take on the persona, from those memories, of their parents... for some reason. And this serves some purpose... I guess. Now, I could see if they were curious about the parents that they never met, and wanted to know more about them. But that would require them to show something resembling human emotion, or motivation, two things that they do not appear to have. They constantly complain about being treated as children, and constantly show themselves by their behavior to BE children. And that is the extent of their personalities, and the vast majority of their dialog in the book.

When the main protagonists of the story are so lifeless and devoid of personality that they are basically only props wheeled out when the plot needs something to happen involving them, it's very hard to care. Any tension and drama revolving around the twins is completely meaningless, because they're not characters. They don't act like real people. They have no personality or motivation. So why should I care when they are in danger, or when a big choice is placed before them that could impact the entire empire... for some reason? I don't, because Herbert failed to realize that just because these are Paul's children, does not automatically mean that I care about them. They are not developed as characters at all, and because of that, each and every scene that they appear in is awkward and creepy, and all tension revolving around them is non-existent. If you want me to care about your characters, you need to treat them with a little more care than you do the scenery, and expounding upon their motivations and plans even just to the point of showing that they even HAVE motivations and plans would go a long way toward making them sympathetic. I mean, all I'm asking for is a paragraph here and there that makes these children feel like real people, with real emotions and motivations, and plans that aren't completely left to my imagination. Is that so much to ask? I mean, I'm the reader here, not the writer. I'm not supposed to be filling these things in myself. That's the writer's job, and he failed spectacularly to do it.

All the epic events in the universe, frankly, become boring and a chore to read through when the people at the center of everything have to take twelve steps up just to be considered wooden. When you have no connection to the characters, the story itself becomes meaningless and dull.

In conclusion, while this book does have some MASSIVE flaws in the characters and their motivations, it is still an exciting book full of some very excellent political plotting and intrigues, as well as inner turmoil within the empire. Alia slowly going insane and power hungry is really well done, and the Preacher

wandering out of the desert to try and right the wrongs that were done in the name of Muad'Dib gives a really interesting view on the way mob mentality and religion sometimes go hand in hand for the worst possible outcome. There's a lot to enjoy in this book, but on the other hand, there's a lot that's hard to get through, and so I can only give this book three stars. It was far from a horrible book, but at the same time, the main protagonists don't even qualify as plot devices most of the time, so it's also far from a great book. It was merely ok. I just felt that, being the followup to two such well crafted stories with a strong central protagonist, this book was a little weak with the lack of one.

P.S. Thank you to all my faithful readers out there for putting up with this review not quite making it out before my end of the month deadline. The ice on the stairs up to my front door proved to be rather treacherous, and I slipped and broke four bones in my right hand, making typing up my column for you all this month a very painful and frustrating experience. I ended up having to dictate it to my brother who is now typing it up for me, so if you see any typos, blame him or my editor. Haha. Thank you all for reading, and I will try to have a few more reviews written up for you this month than I was able to get up last month.

Check out my other reviews.

Richard Houchin says

The Dune series is remarkable in that each sequel gets progressively worse until it's unreadable.

The first book is truly excellent. It's mantra on fear alone makes it great.

The second book a very good sci-fi novel.

The third book is merely okay.

The fourth book is sub-par, but still interesting.

The fifth book is a pain in the ass to read.

The sixth book will leave you concerned about the author's health, so terribad is the writing.

But hey, the first book kicks ass!

Andrew Georgiadis says

The anti-George Lucas.

Frank Herbert, that is. His science fiction universe has come to embody everything that another seminal epic of our time, "Star Wars," cannot: subtlety and mystery. "Children of Dune" is the third installment in the series and centers on the vicissitudes of a power struggle involving Paul Atreides' sister and his children. This in a vacuum created by Muad'Dib since his disappearance into the desert at the end of the second novel, "Dune Messiah."

Arrakis will ever be the story's home, but the increasing excursions made to other worlds like Salusa Secundus and Tleilax whet our appetite for myriad unexplored corners of this galaxy. That is to say: Herbert's universe is even larger than ever. He is the anti-Lucas because to experience the world of Dune is to live in the thought-bubbles of its characters, constantly reading one another's expressions, trying desperately to interpret nonverbal cues of zen-like figures like mentats and Bene Gesserit "witches," wherein plots and schemes and indignation (the silent kind) abound. Noticeably absent are staccato, declarative descriptions of landscape, weaponry, technology, conflict, combat, or physical features and their like. Conversation and thought are the rivulets that feed every facet of the "Dune" universe, and that universe seems even larger because of the vast expanses unmentioned.

Take, for example, the Lady Jessica's travels to Salusa Secundus, a rare deviation from the political plotting and religious fervor of Arrakis. We are treated to none of the tired and typical expositions expected. We are not told how Salusa looks from space; what the travel involved to reach it; how many people live there; what differentiates its character from other worlds; its climate; its people; its proximity to Arrakis; its size; what city Jessica is in; we are not privy to innumerable things, rather getting to unpack it all under the auspices of our own imaginings. As a result, "Children of Dune" expands the Dune universe by an order of magnitude. I cannot help contradistinguishing this incredible style to the mundane plodding to which it might have easily fallen prey in more ordinary hands.

To say much of the plot of "Children of Dune" is to drain it of a beauty and mystery exclusive to your own mind's eye. Its protagonists (admittedly not wholly protagonistic) are nine year-olds. They function with physical and mental prowess that could never be translated to the silver or small screens, and thus they belong entirely to you, to be made your own, as much as Arrakis and Salusa and Tleilax are yours. Herbert's trust in Dune readers allows for something of the numinous.

Manny says

Might work better as a version of Monopoly. Here are some suggestions for the Chance and Community Chest cards:

SOMEONE YOU THOUGHT WAS DEAD IS ACTUALLY ALIVE. ADVANCE 5 SPACES.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IS SOMEONE YOU KNEW IN THE FIRST VOLUME. GO BACK 10 SPACES.

EVERYONE ELSE IS INVOLVED IN A CONSPIRACY AGAINST YOU. MISS A THROW.

PAY A ONE TRILLION CREDIT FINE OR HAVE A MYSTICAL INSIGHT.

TURN INTO A GIANT SANDWORM AND EAT ALL THE OTHER PLAYERS.

etc etc...

Michael Finocchiaro says

In Children of Dune, we learn of the destinies of Paul Atreides-Muad'dib's two children, the two pre-born Ghanima and Leto and the tyranny of their Aunt Alia. I found the story to be beautifully written and the action kept the pace throughout. The appearance of the Preacher was interesting (if the identity was somewhat predictable) and I liked all the intrigue with the would-be usurper and his particularly out of control mother and their plots against the Atreides twins. The Golden Path which will drive the last three official Dune books is introduced here but only explained in God Emperor as we see the bizarre fate to which Leto II voluntarily succumbs.

There is quite a bit of philosophy here (and even more in the next books it seems) and lots of reflections about religious fanaticism as most everybody detests Alia and she loses this reader's sympathies when the extent of her Abomination is revealed. Against this backdrop is the loss of tradition for the Fremen as Dune is terraformed and the old ways of life pass away. This is even more intense in God Emperor, but it is touching here as well.

The thing that many take exception to is the gholas of Duncan Idaho. I think he is a fun character and obviously Frank Herbert, having killed off his Ned Stark early in Dune as well as his Robb Stark in Dune Messiah, wanted to keep his Jorah Mormont alive throughout the series if you allow me to abuse the Game of Thrones analogies. Actually, there are more similarities than that: the span of time that Dune's alternative history covers is as long and complex as that of RR Martin. The male-centric point of view, disdain for homosexual relationships, and fascination with incest is also a commonality. Lastly, although Frank had the excuse of dying before writing #7, Martin apparently may never get around to writing #6 Winds of War or #7 A Dream of Spring leaving us (and the Targaryans, Lannisters and remaining Starks eternally hanging!)

The ending was spectacular - perhaps the best ending in a Dune book as far as I have read them (reading Heretics of Dune now) with the palace scene and the Leto II cliffhanger. I am definitely glad that I persevered this far in the Dune series and found this was a particularly strong entry.

David says

The classic biblical conundrum - are the sins of the father really inherited by the son?

Yes, CoD went a lot further in analyzing religion and society than the previous book which I found interesting, but more interesting was the current day metaphor with society's "progress" without regard to the costs involved. Who is going to pay for our excesses today, and how will they go about fixing them?

The Preacher seemed a powerful figure at the beginning of the story, but by the end I almost felt sorry for the old guy. Leto striking out to redress the mistakes of both his father's and aunt's reigns looks to be an interesting story I'll enjoy following. I can't say I agree with his views that he will bring an era of thousands of years of peace, but it will be interesting to watch him try. CoD is not something to be read lightly as you can get through several pages and realize you are completely lost. I've found myself rereading sections quite a bit. On that thought, I'm going to take a break for a little bit before continuing the series as I find it to be somewhat exhausting.

Megan Baxter says

This may be heresy, but I think this is my favourite of the Dune books so far. I found *Dune* interesting, but oddly opaque. The second book was more accessible, but didn't really grab me.

Note: The rest of this review has been withdrawn due to the changes in Goodreads policy and enforcement. You can read why I came to this decision [here](#).

In the meantime, you can read the entire review at Smorgasbook

Apatt says

"I must not fear.

Fear is the mind-killer.

Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration.

I will face my fear.

I will permit it to pass over me and through me.

And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path.

Where the fear has gone there will be nothing.....Only I will remain."

If you have read at least *Dune* you must be familiar with the above "Litany Against Fear". I don't know about you but it gets old very fast for me. When it shows up in *Children of Dune* I read it like "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer." – SHUT UP! Fortunately it only appears once but Mr. Herbert still sneaks in the odd snippet here and there whenever I am feeling too complacent.

To my mind the *Dune* series really finishes with this third volume. It ties up all the loose ends nicely and ends on an optimistic and suitably poignant note. Come to think of it the very first *Dune* novel feels very complete within itself, and you could read it as one of the greatest standalone sci-fi novels of all time (or one of the most overrated if it doesn't do it for you).

So the Atrides are at it again with their mystical shenanigan. These Atrides are so damn verbose 24/7, I swear none of them is capable of speaking like a normal person. I can not imagine how they say "pass the salt" at dinner without mentioning the cosmic ramifications should the salt passing project not be successfully concluded. That said *Children of Dune* is actually quite an entertaining read, much more so than *Dune Messiah* which often had a soporific effect on me when I was reading it. *Children of Dune* focuses on the two Atrides kids, Leto and Ghanima (or non-kids because their heads are stuffed full of their ancestors' memories and it makes them super weird). Their father, the legendary Paul Atrides A.K.A. Muad'Dib walked off into the sunset of the Arrakis desert nine years ago, very pissed off about what the world has come to thanks to his leadership. He is now presumed dead as the *Dune* desert is deadly and not conducive to a pleasant stroll after dinner.

The planet Arrakis has come a long way since we first encountered it in *Dune* the terraforming project is going well and water is more abundant with plants appearing in some areas, other areas of the global desert is becoming moist. Rains and clouds are often seen and early in the novel eight Fremen drown in a flashflood. When you have a culture based on the scarcity of water this development really turns the world upside down. The cultural and social ramifications of Arrakis becoming more watery are the most

fascinating aspect of the book for me.

The book starts off slowly (as most books do) with the introduction of the Atreides twins and ambles along pleasantly enough. At almost exactly the half way point Mr. Herbert suddenly shifts gears and the novel becomes much more plot intensive and relatively fast paced. Exciting things are certainly afoot in the second half the the novel; featuring a murder plot involving tigers, a possession that makes you fat, the birth of a sort of Duneman superhero and many spoilerish things that I won't mention (probably said too much already – sorry!).

All in all a fun read, there is plenty of subtexts and philosophy to think about if you want to (I had my brain switched off, it's my standard mode). The theme of religion and fanaticism is ever present. I don't know if I will go on to read God Emperor of Dune and the subsequent volumes. I am afraid of coming across the Litany Against Fear again.

Lyn says

The third of the Dune and the slide away from the quality of the original masterpiece has begun in earnest.

Better than Dune Messiah, but only in that it is more ambitious and with a more cohesive plot. Herbert takes a more introspective narrative to prepare the way for Leto II. The concepts of shared DNA, collective memories and possession run astride a vehicle of rapid autocratic decline.

Some cool scenes, a few interesting new concepts, but ultimately Herbert's vision is starting to fray and the great bulk of his masterwork is becoming as cumbersome as the Baron's ghost.

A cautionary tale for creators of series - go back to the well too often and the water gets stale.

Timothy Urges says

And I stood upon the sand, and I saw a beast rise up out of that sand, and upon the head of that beast was the name of God!

Children of Dune follows the aftermath of Paul's decision at the end of *Dune Messiah*. The planet is flourishing but this weakens Dune's greatest resource. Chaos begins to breed in the Empire and a savior is needed.

The narrative moves between several characters and their motivations, choices, and conspiracies. The pacing of this novel is much slower than the previous two books. I think this is mostly due to a large portion of the focus being placed on the internal metaphysical mechanics of the characters. But what I did enjoy about that aspect of the novel is that none of the characters are who they appear to be at first glance. Their depths are endless.

This is a worthy continuation of the *Dune Chronicles* and I am an invested fan.

