



# See Eads City

*Amberle L. Husbands*

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There's a Monster, living in Eads City. It lives in the water, in the gutters, even in the orphanage. Both beast and pet, both freak and God, it controls the lives of every single person within the city limits. People like Jane, a religious prostitute, struggling to build a life away from the streets for herself and her husband, a phobia-plagued genius drug-salesman. Or like Sufjan, an ill-fated pyromaniac just trying to survive the city streets. And caught between them all is Alaska Darling, a morally torn hit man, trying to destroy the mob at its roots. A childhood drifter and drinker, Alaska has found his calling in Eads City, trying to save innocence one individual at a time. But he finds out quickly that killing the beast may mean playing its game, as well. In a gangland setting of the distant future, human beings must live in an inhuman age. It's the year 2171, and for these pilgrims on Mankind's newest frontier, the woods are still full of Evil. As Alaska is swallowed alive by the thing he set out to destroy, Sufjan and Jane fight to outlive their own vices and to rise out of the city shadows. They fight to stay alive in a world bathed by blood and fire; one where, sooner or later, they must all face the Monster.

## See Eads City Details

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## From Reader Review See Eads City for online ebook

### Natalia Woodley says

I picked up a copy of this along with a poetry collection by the same author at a signing event (after having a wonderful conversation with her about black hole physics, the X-Files, banjos, and the nature of Hell). That is, coincidentally, how this novel reads, too -- in the most splendid way possible. I really love the noir elements in this, considering how rarely I see them applied to subjects and settings this unique. There are moments where this book wants to go full-on magical realism, but is tethered to gritty reality by the characters' own slow exsanguination, both literal and figurative. Really, I think the ability of the author to trap you within said characters page after page is what completely hooked me with this one. This is definitely the jewel I took home from the bookstore that day.

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### J.G. Gatewood says

I really enjoyed this book, and for a debut novel, I say well done! I found the characters to be very relatable, and the story telling was superb. I found myself relating with Alaska on several different occasions, which is always a good thing that helps to draw me in. I have a friend who I think is the twin brother of Sufjan, and Jane intrigued me throughout. The demons they are all personally fighting within themselves kept me captivated, and turning the page (I typically read at night before I go to bed, and I constantly found I was telling myself, 1 more page, just 1 more page, lol).

I know others have said it, but what I found truly interesting was that even though this book takes place on another planet, we are all still human beings. And unfortunately, the very ideals that make us human means that whatever problems we created on Earth, will likely follow us wherever we may go. I loved the parallels and even more, the personal battles each of the main character faced. Amberle has a gift for writing concise characters that are easy to identify with. I could clearly picture them in my mind, and could understand why they were making the decisions they made.

I truly enjoyed this book and give it 4 out of 5 stars. I look forward to reading other books by Amberle.

I was provided a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### Tony Burkin says

For a debut novel, *See Eads City* is beautifully crafted, and the message behind the book is captivating. *Husbands* takes us into the future in good science fiction style, but then makes us ask the question: What if nothing has changed? Even more chillingly, what if the world and all that's in it go on changing, and only we stay the same?

Alaska Darling is one of the inhabitants of this dystopian future; a hit-man living in Eads City who's all ready to leave the bloody, criminal life behind him. But one after another, the people around him make it clear that a clean get-away will be impossible. The novel is hectic with scene-changes and points of view, but the setting and characters of the city remain fully-fleshed out, never flagging. In fact, I found that the

novel's fast pace and shifting perspective kept me intrigued and going from one page to the next like an addict.

The author tells a desperate and heart-felt story, and surrounds it in dark sci-fi and pulp-genre fashion. The compelling cast of characters and effortless flow of narration had me wishing for another chapter (and another, and another) long after I'd read the last page.

I give *See Eads City* a well-deserved four stars. Highly recommended reading.

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## **Tamara says**

Okay, I admit it – I picked this novel up off the shelf because the author's first name is the name of a character in Terry Brooks's Shannara series... Yes, I'm that kind of nerd.

I read a lot of sci-fi, though – to balance out my fantasy addiction—and I was surprised to find this novel classified as such. Yes, it is set in the future. Yes, there are some technological changes involved in said future. But really, this was more a look at the human condition of that future than a scientific review of its gadgets, and that's something I rarely expect to find in contemporary 'sci-fi'. In fact, I almost put this one away. I'm a little bit predisposed to want gadgetry and laser beams in my sci-fi.

That said – I'm so very glad my gut won out and I read this novel. What really sold me on it was the characterization. The author deals with it subtly – very, very subtly – so that these men and women grow to be human beings in your mind almost without you realizing it. The different POVs really get you into the head of the characters and let you see the world through their eyes, no matter how dark and messed-up the minds behind those eyes happen to be.

Also, on a completely personal note, I really enjoyed how each character handles language differently. It really added to the complexity of each one; for instance, Sufjan's propensity to make up words and then freely incorporate them in conversation, causing all kinds of confusion for other characters in his path, and all kinds of humor for the reader.

Once this book had sucked me in, I found myself wanting more and more of it. I think I have to dock it a star for the lack of laser beams, but if a gentle, more sublime style of sci-fi is your thing, *See Eads City* really is a novel you should put on your to-read list.

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## **The Shayne-Train says**

i'll warn you, this review may seem rambling. that's just the mood this book put me in. deal with it, mother fucker.

i had gone camping when i started this book. as there was, i knew, to be numerous drunken attempts to stay upright in canoes, i decided to leave my trusty and beloved e-reader at home. so whilst packing, i scoured the homestead for one of those old-fashioned paper-type books. i found the signed copy of this, so kindly sent to me from the author, under a pile of Secret Avenger comics and a pair of rusty practice sais. "cowabunga," i murmured to myself, slipped it into a plastic freezer bag, and added it to the bottles of whiskey and packets of meat i was bringing. it proved to be the best part of the trip.

there is a part, in this book, where a main character brings up her guilty love of examining others' bookshelves. she specifically comments that, with the heavy onset of e-readers, the opportunity to do this is

fading. it is impersonal, she says, to just open a window on someone's tablet and look through a list of files. i felt the author was speaking to me, here. a little printed high-five for getting pulp in my hands again. it was appreciated.

this book surprised me with its beautiful, surrealistic eloquence. this is a neo-noir sci-fi crime novel in the same way that sex is a fun activity, or childbirth a discomfort, or eating jellybeans a taste of sweetness: describing the experience with a label does it no justice. this story transported me, the characters and their dialog carried me to someplace foreign and familiar at the same time.

i WAS Alaska when i was reading his bits. i WAS Sufjan and Karl. i wasn't Jane, but that's because i'm not good enough to be Jane. her bits were the best. (take that as you will.)

go spend some money on this book. go. now. for real.

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## **Kshitij says**

*\*provided in exchange of an honest review\**

See Eads City twirls into the lives of four different people trying to fight their demons in the grey city of Eads in somewhere future. And that's that in the name of plot. There are conflicts but they mostly stays inside the head of characters as time and often, we see them trying to accept 'the point is there is no point'.

To start with I feel the scenes were over described at few places. Not that it hampers the flow of the book, but makes me think why the readers are required to know that much. The book goes nowhere, when it comes to plot and there are few instances to get jumpy. The focus mainly stays on the city, which isn't a bad thing but I'm not sure how easily readers can get connected with it. Having said all that, this book works and it is almost perfect, the reason being it's written with full vigour. It has a brilliant setting and I can see myself living in the city with other characters. There are some enlightening theories about mathematics and coffee, which I liked. The characters are pretty engaging and come to life with author's flamboyant writing style. Characterization is good to an extent that readers would feel totally engrossed and can easily portray what the so and so character would do given a situation. This unflawed description makes SEC, a very reflective novel. Alaska's life was beautifully sketched. I fell in love with Jane right away. Other characters were equally good.

Final Words: The city settings are pretty apt and engrossing. I love the books in which there are life theories. I like the way this book attempt to focus on life miseries and questions the doomed civilisation strewn under the greyness of machine era. The book is bleak and bold but most of all its honest enough in saying what it wants to. I hope it reaches to right audience who are mature enough to disentangle the message author wants to impart.

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## **Rosalee Palmer says**

Wow, what a roller coaster of a book! I immediately fell in love with the characters -- especially Jane -- and found myself really rooting for them.

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## **Peter says**

I liked it, it is a bit of a challenge though to keep on track, but was never tempted to put it aside, keeps the interest to continue on to the next chapter.

To clarify a little, it is a bit like riding a roller coaster, you think you are on one track, next your hurtling 90 degrees off, then maybe heading back 180 degree, you don't get bored with it, well put together.

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## **Andrea says**

I won this book in a Goodreads First-Reads giveaway.

2.5 stars. There was some good writing here but there was also a bunch of stuff that did not make sense.

Looking back I realize that this is a book where very little happens and there is no concrete storyline. Mostly there is just character description and details about what the characters are doing, but I can't detect much of a plot.

The whole other planet/in the future thing did not work for me in this context. It just seems completely unnecessary and does nothing but make things more convoluted.

I feel like this book could be developed into something much better than its current form. I really liked the characters, and the content about the work that Sufjan and Alaska do is compelling. Jane and her oeuvre are fascinating--she was probably my favorite character in the book.

SEE EADS CITY has serious potential but there is both too much and not enough going on.

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## **Matt Abraham says**

If the mathmagicians are right, and we all live to 160, the only thing I'm sure of is I'll never read another book quite like this. Set in the mythic Eads City we follow a handful of odd characters (Alaska, Jane, Karl, and Sufjan) as they navigate the streets between junkies, mobsters, and general crime while they're not busy waxing poetic about their life, and life, in general.

See Eads City is a very different book with numerous aspects that I found interesting. The first is the milieu the author's created. We're deep in the future with all sorts of massive changes (new planets, interstellar travel) but at heart humanity is still the same. Lust, anger, avarice all still exist in a large enough quantity to force Gene Roddenberry to kill himself. I also enjoyed the writing style. The multiple first person perspectives allowed the reader to follow multiple story lines from different points of view, without losing any personal ties to the plot and more importantly, the characters.

Granted I found the three act classic structure not as prevalent (despite the fact the story was broken into a trio of sections) and a little undisciplined, but I thought the meandering plot still did an excellent job to

enhance tone of the work. My suggestions is if you're looking for something different then visit Eads City, you won't be disappointed.

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### **Sarahkmartinuk says**

Having read the blurb and pestering the author for my copy I finally received my copy of Eads City which I recieved free as part of a good reads giveaway. I have to confess that I think I may have misunderstood what the book was about. From the blurb, I thought the book was going to be literally about a monster living beneath the city however, it soon became evident that this was not the case. Subsequently, I have really struggled to finish this book as it seemed to lack direction. I truely believe that the book is well written about a dysfunction society and characters who are living out lives they wish they were not in. Unfortunately, it just does not appeal to me on a personal level. Sorry!

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### **Jill says**

I was not what I expected it to be. I was waiting for something to happen to would make everything come together. It was a good book.

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### **M.B. Munroe says**

There's a passage in Siri Hustvedt's new book, 'The Blazing World' -

I once had a conversation with a man who had excoriated her first one-woman show. When I brought up his review and offered a defense of her work, he was hostile. He was not a stupid man and had written well on some artists I admired. He had attacked Burden's work as confused and naïve, the very opposite, in fact, of what it was. I realized that he had been incapable of a fair-minded appraisal because, although he prided himself on his sophistication, the multiple meanings of her carefully orchestrated texts had eluded him, and he had projected his own disorientation onto the work. His last words to me were "I hated it, okay? I just hated it. I don't give a damn about what she was referring to."

EADS CITY, I fear will have the same effect on many who read it. It is not an easy read, it is not the novel for the lazy or for the un-inquisitive and face value, sterile minded reader.

Upon the first few pages of EADS, we convince ourselves this is hardboiled, cyberpunk, and we feel this is familiar ground. But the reader ventures further into the novel, something altogether is revealed. A literary novel? Yes. Hardboiled, Sci-Fi noir, yes. A crime novel? yes. A poetic meditation on disenfranchisement of the human spirit in the face of technological advances, yes.

Some readers want the writer to take their hand and take them on a journey. EADS gives you a dismissive look and grunts for you to join them at the bar, but you're buying.

Will Self recently wrote in the Guardian on the 'Death of the Novel', stating - 'the hallmark of our contemporary culture is an active resistance to difficulty in all its aesthetic manifestations,'

As I read this novel, his article came to mind. Husbands is a great writer who challenges the reader in thick layers of poetic prose, her novel can a straight plot, but the book can be read as standalone personal postcards from the edge of humanity as each chapter switches narrative mode. We are used to the Sallis-esque criminal with a heart, or the prostitute who doesn't see herself as a victim, but there are no stereotypes here; each character is full of contradictions and depth, so much so, the plot for me was secondary, like all good 'meaty' fiction should be.

I do hope Husbands continues to produce more work, she has a future as bright as the lights of the big bad city of Eads. For it is Eads city that is the main protagonist in this novel, just as New York for Baldwin's Another Country, LA for Bukowski

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### **Amy says**

Really kept my interest; the characters were fascinating. This book kept me coming back to read another chapter and another and another... while I should have been elsewhere... like in class.

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