



In Blackness (Book 1)

U.L. Harper

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The truth of our bloody future will reveal itself...in blackness.

Lenny and Saline are merely kids when their parents move them in with, Busek, an old family friend they've never met. A few months later their parents are dead and they're left alone to cope in the small town of San Pedro. It doesn't help that Busek beats his son, Dustin, and doesn't seem to care for them.

Flash forward almost a decade. Although the three kids are now young adults and good enough friends, they've each found their own way to deal with their situation.

Saline has hidden the fact for years that she's Born Again Christian. Ironically, a group of Christians offers her a chance to visit her old hometown for a supposed religious gathering. But it's not who is gathering there that sends her running for her life but rather what is gathering.

Suddenly feeling the same pull towards their old town as his sister, Lenny follows Saline. On his travels he discovers the truth about his urge to be there and why that might mean the end of him.

Back home, Dustin immerses himself in the intricacies of San Pedro. He and local anarchists are on the frontlines of an odd discovery, which on the outset seems like simple yet awkward workings of the city council. Instead they've stumbled upon an event that will change the world as we know it.

In Blackness is the predecessor to In Blackness: The Reinvention of Man, the second installment of three books chronicling the alien apocalypse.

In Blackness (Book 1) Details

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Author : U.L. Harper

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From Reader Review In Blackness (Book 1) for online ebook

Shannon says

"In Blackness" is one of those books whose flaws are far outweighed by its positives.

The flaws are few and far between, but they are there: the first hundred and fifty pages that just drag on and on (and on, and on); the characters that could use some fleshing out in personality (and which I found a bit hard to root for); the dialogue that can on occasion seem a bit forced. The build-up takes a while and lasts too long, but when it does come, it's worth it. Without giving away any plot points, or the ending, suffice to say that "In Blackness" is the one of the few books to truly creep me (a lifelong horror fan) out in the past few years. The ending is a bit unsatisfying -- but, then, as the first in a three-part series, that's to be expected and hardly something Harper can be faulted for.

It took me over a month to force myself through those first 150 pages, but I'm glad I did: the pay-off was worth it, and I'll definitely be buying the next two books when available.

Ivana says

I absolutely loved The Flesh Statue so I set out with high hopes for In Blackness. I wasn't disappointed--on the contrary, I'd rather say I was...shocked. That's the word.

What I love most about Harper's novels is his writing. It has a sharp edge to it, a bitter aftertaste and a dark foreboding in every word. I loved the almost claustrophobic atmosphere; something dark and dangerous is in the air, literally for years. For 70 or so pages, that is, and that is one thing I didn't really like. There's not much going on in the first half of the book. While it did do a lot for the character build-up and projected the author's ability to write great literary fiction, many times I put it down wondering what this is really all about. There is a lot of reminiscing about what happened that prompted them to move away from Lowery, but for deep into the novel, I didn't find out much, and it was slightly frustrating. I felt that some things were a bit overstretched and too long, not adding much to the main plotline.

But once the action kicked in...holy shit (pardon my French). It was intense, scary, it was mortifying. I caught myself skipping sentences to find out what happens next. A book hasn't scared me like that in ages. There's slaughtering and palpable terror and helplessness. It gave me nightmares for several nights in a row. I kept turning around, half-expecting to see one of those creatures coming to get me.

There seem to be certain recurring motifs in both The Flesh Statue and in Blackness. The social issue, the frustration towards the authorities, the rebellion and resistance after tearing down an old library and building a jail/slaughterhouse instead, and also the doubtful fatherly figure, Busek.

Without giving away too much, the main question is how many human lives are you willing to sacrifice to save your own life. Apparently, the majority of the society and those in charge don't really care. Saline, who is searching for God, gets the answer to the question she asks--there is a God--but it's a God of sold souls, a God that works through bloodthirsty mind-controlling monsters. Apparently, the only God a society like this is able to be subjected to.

In Blackness is a very intelligent book aimed to show the downfall of the human society not just because of

extraterrestrial extermination. It already reflects Harper's talent, but I believe that a little editorial work would bring forward the huge potential of this great story.

Ella says

I recieved this book through winning it on goodreads so first of all, I would like to thank U.L. Harper for his kindness.

I thought this novel had a bit of a slow start and I didn't enjoy it as much as I thought I would as it was different to what I expected it to be. I think the book really picked up in the middle and the descriptions of the place at the end were brilliant! You could really visualise it, which is what I love about books. I liked how real and normal the characters seemed, as this novel is written in third person, so you didn't get into the protagonists mind as I am used to. I think the cover is simple and it didn't really need a fancy one, although it could be a bit more adventurous. Overall, an okay book!

Brenda says

This story starts out innocently enough about what seems to be a normal family who are living in Washington State and decide they need to move for a fresh start. Ten year old Saline and nine year old Lenny along with their mother Sally and father Charles leave Washington and move to San Pedro California. The plan is to stay with family friend Busek and his son Dustin until they can save enough money to get on their feet. As the story unfolds we realize that the children had been having strange nightmares which was what prompted the family move. After living with Busek for a short while a car accident leaves them orphans but Busek allows them to become a part of his dysfunctional family. Fast forward Saline is seventeen and in pursuit of things more spiritual and becomes involved in a church down the street from where she lives. She has had the feeling she needs to go back home to Washington and ironically the preacher decides to take a pilgrimage there inviting her along. In the meantime the nightmares have started plaguing Lenny again. Once Saline leaves for Washington Lenny feels compelled, as if it's his destiny to make the trek as well. What they find when they return to their old home, is worse than any nightmare could ever be. Is it possible that those nightmares actually took place? What about Dustin, just what does he find himself involved in back in San Pedro?

U.L. Harper really knows how to tell a story in such a way that he hints at what might be happening but once it was finally revealed what was going on I was totally shocked as well as surprised. He pulled me in with the characters and their tragedies of not only moving to a different area, but then being left orphans in the care of Busek. The only word I can think to describe Busek is weird. The relationship he had with the children was odd, he abused Dusty and seemed just to leave Saline and Lenny alone. I loved the writing style, the author would get you comfortable with a direction that the story was going, making me think I might know what would happen next and then Bang he takes you another direction! My only complaint about this story is that we have to wait on the next book in the trilogy.

If your a fan of dark stories that easily get in your head and creep you out, then this book is right up your alley I think fans of horror/Sci-fi will certainly enjoy it. Definitely a different kind of plot filled with relate able characters that hooked me in and left me wanting more! Recommended!

glenda says

I really liked this book.

I opened it up the afternoon I received it from the author, U.L. Harper, fully intending just to have a quick glance, to get the idea of it. Well..... I didn't put it down again until I'd read the last page.

Now, it's not a rock-em-sock-em kind of story with lots of fireworks, and obvious in-your-face action. Oh, no, it's more insidious than that. :O)

The tone for most of the book is really quite level, but the author still keeps you turning pages, needing to know what will happen next.

The tone of this book is also the reason you reach the last page realizing that... hey, this could really happen, and with the world as self absorbed as it is, it could really happen this way...

Definitely looking forward to the next installment!

Christina says

Remarkable book! In his exciting book, In Blackness, U.L. Harper weaves a dark science fiction mystery tale that will have you second guessing every tree you walk by as well as keeping you out of the woods~ forever.

Siblings, Lenny and Saline, learn that something evil and ancient has been concealed in the shadows of their nightmares for years. This something is real, it's returning and it throws them into an unpredictable alien hell.

Dustin, their stepbrother, realizes things are changing when the hospital is mysteriously cleared of ALL patients leaving the hospital staff building the hospital into something new. A new jail is built... one with no windows. Why? As he presses for more information he soon discovers just how dangerous this new foe is and how determined they are to maintain control over mankind. Gruesome and eerie leap from the pages as the main characters trifle through body parts to discover the truth and find out who has known this was coming all along.

This is one book I really hope becomes a series. Move over Twilight and Hunger Games, In Blackness, has bigger monsters, serious government issues and better suspense! The main characters Lenny, Saline and Dustin speak to you from the pages as they deal with their issues and you see pieces of your self, insecurities and strengths in each of them. I had so many questions I wanted them to answer as the book unfolded that I could not put it down. U.L. Harper did a fantastic job! Quick, go to amazon and buy the e-book!

Lyndz says

In the first book in this three part series, teenagers Lenny and Saline travel independently to their old home in Washington - Saline, with a mysterious Christian group, and, Lenny, desperately in the footsteps of his older sister. What they find on their individual journeys will change not just their lives forever, but the world as they know it. Meanwhile, their stepbrother, Dustin, is about to discover a secret that society can no longer hide, a secret that might cost everyone around him their lives.

Wow! What an intense novel. I have been digesting it for the last couple days and I think I am about ready to write a review.

I was really excited when I found out I won this one. If you are looking for that perfect Steven King-esque novel to get you into the mood for Halloween or if you just like a good old fashioned scare, you should definitely look into In Blackness. This is definitely a nail biter. And I have the nubby nails to prove it. The characters were well portrayed, they were, while not always likable, *believable* as real people.

The Nephilim in this book are to the Nephilim in Cassandra Clare's novels as the Vampires in 30 days of Night are to the Vampires in Twilight. Hopefully someone will understand what I mean by that.

My only complaint is that it ends without tying everything up with a nice pretty bow, but it is going to be part of a series so that was to be expected.

Thank you U.L. Harper and goodreads for the free copy and the opportunity to read this book. I received the book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Ellie says

In brief, In Blackness by U.L. Harper is freaky, fun, and frightening. It begins with a solid, traditional portrayal of a family, somewhat dysfunctional, mom, dad, big sister Saline, little brother Lenny, moving away from their home down in the northwest to sunny southern California.

Pretty classic except there are nightmares that remain back home even as the family takes off. Pretty soon, the children are orphaned by a horrific accident and go to live with their friend Dustin and his abusive father.

Years pass, and amidst some religious fervor, Saline makes a pilgrimage home. Lenny follows his sister-right back into his childhood nightmares. The question is, were those nightmares just dreams?

Dustin is soon swept up into this horror/sci fi/fantasy that grabs hold and keeps you reading late into the night. When I began the book, I was worried about it being part 1 of a projected trilogy. By the time I finished, I was happy to know I had more to look forward to, in a dreading kind of way!

Not my usual kind of reading, I loved the style, the writing, the people and their relationships in this book and completely enjoyed the whole experience.

I won this book as a first-read. I was happy to try this book, since it was free. My only complaint is, now I'm hooked and I'll just have to go out and buy the rest of the series. As soon as they appear!

David says

In Blackness was truly disappointing for so many reasons. Up to page 200 this book presents a decent if not somewhat average novel about two siblings struggling to live under the house of an old family friend who is often abusive to his son. Due to the fact that the main characters' parents had died but oddly enough was you pass about two hundred pages into the book it goes from a well-written book with a somewhat interesting cast, to an absurd Sci-Fi action/thriller which hits the plot and you like a shovel across the face. I had to place the book down and spend a night feeling I had wasted too much time on the damn thing. The only redeeming quality is the cover art which inspired several dreams and nightmares which inspired me in several of my own art works.

Zara Garcia-Alvarez of The Bibliotaphe Closet Blog says

I was happy to win a free giveaway copy of U.L. Harper's book, In Blackness through Goodreads and I thank U.L. Harper for his warm and thoughtful inscription.

I came to the novel completely blind to what it was about, which allowed me to fully enjoy the build-up towards its climax. Though the writing style is not as full-bodied as literary works, the absence of detailed descriptions of setting added to the book's eerie surrealism. What U.L. Harper lacks in descriptive writing, he makes up in his ability to compel you to turn the page in anticipation of discovering upcoming events.

Though the characters' flaws could not fully articulate the potential richness of their relationships to one another, which is what I believe U.L. Harper attempted to do in his story, the characters themselves became representations of larger societal values: Lenny, the religious skeptic with survival instincts; Saline, the spiritual seeker and peacemaker; Busak, the "entrepreneur;" and Dustin, the rebellious advocate. Together they form the microcosm of survival.

What was inevitably interesting in this piece was the creative science fiction of what and who these characters needed to face. Its details were reflections of known stereotypes, yet descriptions of horrific and graphic images of potentially our communal fear: extermination. This novel could very easily be adapted into a screenplay for a sci-fi movie, which with the right budget, special effects, and producer could help propel it to its fullest potential.

This novel is a simple, yet good start to a science fiction series that can entertain the youthful sci-fi audience in which it is intended.

Christy says

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway. After reading the back cover of In Blackness, I thought that this was a book that I would be interested in. I was not wrong, however, the ending was a little unbelievable. It

will lead the reader to question everything around them. At least this was the experience that I had. I am interested to see where the other parts of this series lead me.

Holly Abbie says

Harper's style is solid and the read is great. I want to say the first 2-3 pages do not do the story justice, it takes off from there and we go off on a well told adventure. Centered around San Pedro, Ca. you can tell and feel the author's connection to the place.

Found myself reading on to find out what happens next.

You will too.

A great read. Well defined characters.

I'll add more, just wanted to get the word out.

BUY this book.

Shari says

The description of this book is so amazing, it gives you just enough information to make you interested in reading it without giving anything away, and I mean ANYTHING! I was totally shocked, I'm still shocked. No wait, make that freaked out, disturbed, and very possibly traumatized. I know that I will be having nightmares for at least a week.

Now, I'm not going to give anything away because I want you to be as shocked as I was when you realize what's going on. Instead I'll tell you why I really enjoyed *In Blackness*. The first thing that drew me in was U.L. Harper's writing, it wasn't overly descriptive and I was able to learn about the story's surroundings by the characters dialog. I've always found that style of writing really easy and enjoyable to read. Usually when I read a book written in that style the story is a light, fun read. *In Blackness* is definitely NOT a light, fun read. Instead it is a very thought provoking and disturbing read. It was great!

I'm so glad that I finished *In Blackness* during the day because if I had read this book before bed I would never have been able to sleep. I've been talking about this book to everyone I've seen since I finished it. It was just that kind of book. I can't imagine what is store for Lenny, Saline and Dustin in the next two books, but I can't wait to find out.

David Ross says

I bought this book because it was recommended by good reads. i read the review about it, and it sounded like there was some promise. it was hard to get into because it was so SLOW, and hard to follow. later in the book, it started to pick up but i still couldnt get past the poor grammar or under imaginative use of words. i felt like i was reading a story written by a small child. i found myself reading MANY sentences multiple times to simply understand what was being said, and i felt the authors attempt to be discriptive fell short, adding too many details that had absolutely NOTHING to do with the story line. for example, in Busek's journal how he was talking about "shititing his brains out"...is that necessary?! and if so how did that play into the story??

Pg. 279- paragraph 4- "They decided you're going to do for them what you're going to do and I'm going to do what they want me to do"

Pg. 280 - paragraph 2/3 - Dustin magically turns into Lenny and paragraph 3 he turns back into Dustin..

simple mistakes and lack of creativity really killed this book, i think if the author put more time in simply using more descriptive and imaginative words it would have been 100 times better!
