

SPECULATIVE FICTION REVIEW by Stephanie Young

TITLE *Little Brother*
AUTHOR Cory Doctorow
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PRINTING Ebook

First off, I want to point out that this ebook was a free download from the author. In the introduction, which you should NOT skip, Doctorow lays out his views on copyright, DRM and all things related to this subject. It is well thought out and credible since he is a well-known authority on the subject and co-editor of the Boing Boing blog, one of the most read on the web.

The reason I point this out is because I may not have read this book otherwise, as I have no books by him. However, after reading this, I will not only pick up a copy of *Little Brother* but some other books by him as well. Another reason the intro is important is that it plays into the book so well.

The story is told in first person by Marcus Yarrow, a seventeen year old who is an adept hacker, geeky in the way many teens his age are, and he is not happy about the way our country is being stripped of freedom and privacy. The majority of his hacking is to personally defeat all this monitoring, not to steal or cause disruptions to society. Even so, my initial reaction to Marcus was he was sort of a punk.

That changes quickly however, when he is rounded up by Homeland Security after a terrorist bomb (or was it terrorists - that is never totally revealed in the book) blows up the Bay Bridge between San Francisco and Oakland. The brutality of his captivity is powerfully written and by the end of it, you hate DHS as much as Marcus does.

The rest of the book tracks Marcus's attempt to take revenge on DHS for what they did and because his one friend is still a captive or dead as far as he knows. IN the end he learns that you have to fight but in a way that shines the light on what our government is doing to us in the name of "Security".

The novel is well written with excellent pacing, well-developed characters, and a plot that is complex without being confusing. There are plenty of references to pop culture and tech stuff that will appeal to all levels of geekdom. The ending was very satisfying without being predictable.

I highly recommend this book both for its quality and for the message. While fiction, everything in this story is either already happening or could happen if we let things continue without raising the flag and not letting our government walk over us like so many bugs.

Rating 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌