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Jurassic Park: A Novel



Synopsis

Audie Award, Science Fiction, 2016 An astonishing technique for recovering and cloning dinosaur DNA has been discovered. Now humankind's most thrilling fantasies have come true. Creatures extinct for eons roam Jurassic Park with their awesome presence and profound mystery, and all the world can visit them - for a price. Until something goes wrong.... In Jurassic Park, Michael Crichton taps all his mesmerizing talent and scientific brilliance to create his most electrifying technothriller.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 15 hours and 9 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Brilliance Audio

Audible.com Release Date: May 12, 2015

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00U7TZZRM

Best Sellers Rank: #45 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science Fiction > Adventure #55 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Action & Adventure #69 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > TV, Movie, Video Game Adaptations

Customer Reviews

I read this years ago and loved it. Helluva page turner. So when my boss/client told me to pick a popular writer of thriller-type novels, and study one of them to get the tone he wants for his novel, I chose JP because I was familiar with it, not just from having read it but from multiple viewings of the film which I love. A familiar work would allow me to study the structure without losing myself in the story. I thought. Turns out I was dead wrong about that. I got caught up immediately. Because I was interested in how it worked as narrated as well as how it read, I purchased the Audible version of it at a discount, and moved back and forth between it and the ebook. (By the way, it's nice that at least some Kindles will play the audio right along with the ebook. Audio broadens my understanding of a work, and listening while reading, though it slows down the latter dramatically, even though I normally listen at 1.5x the normal speed, is a highly immersive way of approaching the text. But what about the book??? Yes, okay I'm getting to that. The book. Well... It still counts as a page-turner, no question. I got caught up in the narrative so often that I found I had to consciously slow down and

look for the things I wanted to study. Crichton could tell a story! And in that respect, he's like Tolkien, a damn fine storyteller, but kind of a crap writer. Yeah, I'm sorry if there are Crichton fans out there foaming at the mouth, but the drawbacks of his writing are so clear, and in some cases so dire, that I couldn't overlook them. The most egregious problems are his characters. None of them have real internal lives. Crichton gives lip service to family, exes, jobs and the like, but they're not terribly developed. But this is a thriller, you say, they don't have to be. And I would agree up to a point. But consider: John Hammond is a joke. He's an uber rich guy who exists for two reasons: First to pay for and supervise the development of the park, and second, to be annoyed when people tell him the park isn't going to work. He's so obtuse that when Ian Malcolm explains things to him, his consistent response is to ask the rest of the people in the room what Malcolm is talking about. There's nothing about him that isn't cardboard, and even the cardboard doesn't ring true. Ian Malcolm, or as I like to call him Information Dump Malcolm, exists to explain things. From the get go, all he ever does is lecture. He doesn't have conversations, he doesn't connect with anyone. He's like an AI. Say: "Chaos Theory," and off he goes, explaining it. Say: "Look, real dinosaurs," and you get pages of explanation about what's wrong with science today. After a while I just skimmed over his dialogue. The kids: Two of the most utterly pointless, useless characters ever penned. Lex is so annoying that I kept hoping the T-Rex would gobble her up like an hors d'oeuvre. She never shuts up, never does what she's told, screams, whines, and makes endless noise when everyone is telling her to be quiet or the dinosaurs will eat them. She's an insufferable know-it-all, who knows virtually nothing about anything, and doesn't really want to know anything. All she wants to do is play "pickle" and whine about how none of this is fun and she's hungry. The only time she's bearable is when she's unconscious. Tim is a virtual non-entity, but at least he's an improvement over his sister. Everybody else: Almost totally interchangeable except for their area of expertise. I don't really feel like I'm being harsh here either. I'm willing to give props for a compelling story told in such a break-neck fashion that had I not been paying close attention to the text, I might never have caught these problems. Or at least they might not have gotten up my nose so completely. What you have is a decent thriller with a great plot and a damn good hook: cloning dinosaurs. It was timely then and it still is, it plays to our fears and our desires, and Crichton knows how to manipulate both. I think I'm pretty much finished with this book now, I doubt I'll ever need to read it again unless I want to remind myself of the spare, efficient style of it. Crichton proved to me that the advice about dialogue -- use "said;" the eye skips right over it -- is completely true. His work is an education for any writer, but particularly those who are going to write fast-paced stories. He tells a great story, and that's really the bottom line.

Jurassic Park is a lot more than just a thrill a minute read. Crichton tackles very important ideas through his character Ian Malcolm, a student of fractal science, who has this to say: "But now science is the belief system that is hundreds of years old. And, like the medieval system before it, science is starting not to fit the world any more. Science has attained so much power that its practical limits begin to be apparent. Largely through science, billions of us live in one small world, densely packed and intercommunicating. But science cannot help us decide what to do with that world, or how to live. Science can make a nuclear reactor, but it cannot tell us not to build it. Science can make pesticide, but cannot tell us not to use it. And our world starts to seem polluted in fundamental ways---air, and water, and land---because of ungovernable science." Science as Crichton describes is a consensual delusion of the experts, involving the idea that we can control what we do or that it actually serves our interests. Hammond is the money bags here who decides that cloning dinosaurs and putting them in a theme park will make him a lot of money and the scientists he hires back him up. I love the way Crichton cuts down this ignorant man's misplaced overweening confidence at every turn. I got more out of this book the second time I read it than the first. It's class AAA fiction, entertaining and provocative to the nth degree.

This is a very good book, way better than the movie could ever hope to be, but the mass market paperback version is complete garbage. The spelling and grammar mistakes in the book are unimaginable - periods in the middle of sentences, all kinds of extra commas that didn't appear in the original version, dozens of instances of "th" being replaced by "m" (for instance, "mat" instead of "that" and "mere" instead of "there"). The book is incredibly well written but the printer royally f***ed up their job. Buy it at Barnes & Noble and get a copy where you don't constantly have to stop and figure out WTF is supposed to be written there.

Great read. I read it because my daughter wanted to read it after seeing the movie. She's nine. I had grown up with the movie but never read the book so figured I should read it before I said ok, to make sure it was appropriate. Very wordy so some of it probably will go over her head, but very similar to the movie so nothing I am uncomfortable with her reading. She hasn't picked it up yet, of course, but at least I enjoyed my time reading this book and it induced me to buy a few more of his novels that I am looking forward to sitting down to read.

If you haven't read this book then you better get you a copy, find a place to relax, and start reading

this book! Don't let the fact that this is a sci-fi book make you think it will be boring because it's not! Easy to read and to follow. The author has a way with words and definitely keeps you entertained till the last page. Personally, I believe this is better than the movie and that is hard to do.

My absolute favorite novel. The source material for my absolute favorite movie of all time. If you liked the movie, you will love the novel. Much deeper story, more backstory on the characters, and more plot points get more fleshed out than in the movie. The movie touched on a lot of them, but many were glossed over, and not really developed understandably. The only thing some newer readers might find weird, is that the technology dates the story quite a bit. It takes place in 1989, and a lot of the technobabble uses references more common back then. Its still a great read, and I've read it several times over.

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