

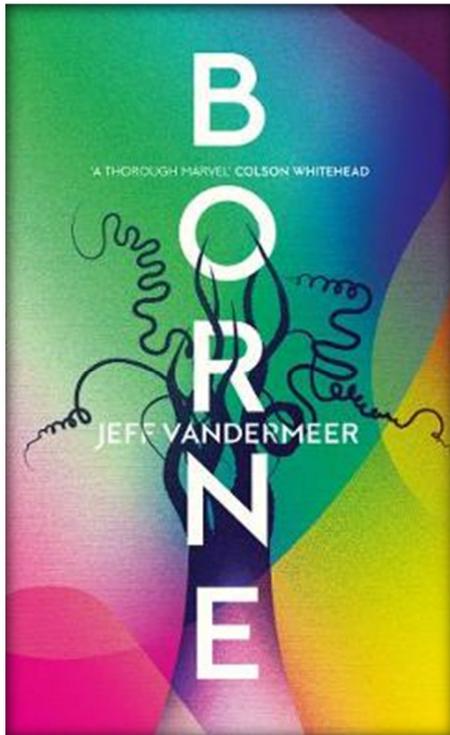


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4th

LoveReading Reader reviews of **Borne** by Jeff Vandermeer

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.



Catherine Bryce

A superb futuristic story and very creepy and very sad whilst being very exciting but keeps you riveted to the book from start to end.

This is one of the best sci-fi books that I have read in a long time and is a different take on the sci-fi fiction scene.

Borne is the main character in the book, but what is Borne? Is it a plant, an animal, a bio-engineered entity or something else? The author writes in such a fashion that the reader has sympathy for Borne but the reader doesn't know exactly what type of living form Borne is. Wick is a psycho drug dealer that also plays a main part throughout the story together with his girlfriend and

their unstable relationship living in a dystopian place all adds to the dark, creepy feeling the reader feels when reading the book and trying to survive day to day.

This is a story out of the ordinary and if that is your genre then this is the book for you.

Jennifer Rainbow

An engrossing eye-popping story, completely original, you haven't read anything like this. From a flying bear to worms that diagnose your illness, I don't have words to justify how good this story is.

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anything like this. Borne is a novel of a dark world and of the touching relationship between Rachel and the creature she discovers called Borne. You have to wonder at the ideas and imagination of Jeff VanderMeer- from huge, flying bears to worms that diagnose your illnesses. Genius. I just don't think I have the right words to justify how good this novel is and how unique.

<http://jensbookworm.blogspot.co.uk/>

Catherine Hogwood

A story that is as intriguing as it is captivating. What makes us human when the world has changed beyond what we can comprehend?

This novel follows Rachel. She is a scavenger who has learnt to adapt to the new world that has been mostly destroyed by The Company - a site responsible for manufacturing biotech. The Company also made Mord, who now rules parts of the city.

Rachel finds a small biotech she names Borne. She raises Borne like her own child and tries to protect him from the horrors of the outside world. This doesn't last long as Borne soon discovers the world outside and begins questioning exactly what he is and his purpose.

Rachel lives with Wick and their relationship is complicated. Wick specialises in biotech and has his own secrets. He is suspicious of Borne and tries to warn Rachel not to get too close.

This novel looks at Rachel's relationships and asks the question of what makes us human. As things in the world escalate and other threats arise, Rachel's world is soon in turmoil. The journey that arises reveals Borne's true purpose and shows that love is possibly what makes the world worth surviving for.

This book was captivating from the start and was very well written. Definitely for science fiction fans but I adored the characters and found the story intriguing. The world that has been created is well described and the characters both likeable and well thought out. I would definitely recommend this book to any reader with an imagination that wants to explore something new.

Phyllippa Smithson

Not as haunting as 'The Road' by Cormac McCarthy. It just seemed to wander vaguely at times but was worth the read.

Rachel is a scavenger in a future world who is feeling a sense of security after years of running from place to place as a refugee. Wick is the only real person in her life but his way to handle the world they are surviving in is to lose himself in drugs. Then comes Borne into her life.

What Borne is is unclear and I felt somewhat inconsistent – but perhaps that was the intention of the author to leave it up to the imagination of the reader?

Rachel finds a comfort in having Borne in her life as they face the deadly threat of Mord, magicians and a flying ear to name but a few.

Borne himself is creepy and weird and it's a credit to the writer that whilst he is super weird, he is also somewhat endearing.

The problem I had is the plot which drifted and just did not hold my attention.

Angela Rhodes

Oh my goodness, what can I say about 'Borne'? Apart from the fact that this has to be one of the best Science Fiction/ Fantasy books I have read for a long, long time!

Far into our future there's a city, a ruined city, one that lies in fear of Mord, the gigantic flying bear created by the Company. What the Company do is secretive, only Wick knows how bad they are, because Wick used to work for them. Now he along with his girlfriend Rachel, make ends meet by anyway they can.

Rachel whilst scavenging on the beach, finds a green mass that undulates at will. Seeing nothing like this before, she picks it up and takes it home. Once there Wick tells her the only way to find out what it is will be to take it apart. Rachel can't let him do that, and calls it Borne.

Wick has secrets, and so does Rachel but trust me they are nothing compared to the secrets Borne is hiding... His secrets will change everything, even how we look at things we take for granted.

Suzanne James

Into a city devastated by The Company a small, strange creature is found. What starts off childlike and wondrous soon becomes more sinister and nothing can be the same again.

I first discovered Jeff Vandermeer with 'Annihilation' (thanks to Lovereading), the first of the Southern Reach trilogy and I was hooked almost immediately. I devoured all 3 books in short shrift so I had high hopes for 'Borne'.

We are taken to a ruined world that could very well be our own future. The language and style of Vandermeer really build on the sense of desolation, tension and fear. Into this devastated landscape a strange creature brings a new sense of purpose to our heroine - to raise it, teach it and to keep it safe from friend and foe alike, whilst trying to survive and protect her own secrets.

You can't help but become invested in the development of Borne - as a creature he can be quite difficult to visualise (although the descriptive writing is very evocative, I suspect Borne is an entity who will be unique to each reader). There is something refreshing about seeing the world, albeit one we don't quite recognise, through the eyes of a childlike creature, marvelling and questioning everything he sees.

This development gathers pace and soon Borne is a creature that provokes fear, love and confusion in his protector. It is a relationship that ultimately leads to her discovering the secrets that form both her past and her future.

*It took me a little longer than with Annihilation but by the end **I was gripped by this dystopian world and Rachel's fight for survival there.***

You can follow Suzanne on Twitter: @suzannened

Clare Topping

A giant bear created by the Company flies over the city, eating people and knocking down buildings. His proxies spread fear as they go - claws and teeth delivering venom whilst they kill all they find. The Magician is fighting back, her own proxies helping her to rule parts of what is left of the city. In the meantime Rachel lives with ex Company employee Wick in the cliffs - a set of tunnels and apartments; scavenging for food and any useful biotech.

One day Rachel scavenges an amorphous blob from the fur of the sleeping bear. Slowly the blob grows, and develops, learning to talk, and learning fast. To Rachel it is like a child, but the child, Borne, soon outgrows her, its ability to shape-shift allowing it to explore the Dystopian and dangerous city.

The author has the making of a weird and bizarre story. Unfortunately, it is the makings only and the book never really delivers. I found it a mix of sci-fi movies and books - think 1960s Godzilla, Resident Evil and Mad Max rolled into one but with nothing really original. There are too many questions unanswered

which makes me think that the author was lazy in the plot lines and characters.

Ultimately it is a passable book, that doesn't really take you to the different and dark world that you would expect from reading the inside cover - if you want that, then perhaps try China Mielville.