



## The Dream of the Forest

*Stjepan Varesevac Cobets*

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The year is 2197. More than one hundred years had passed since the natural cataclysm on the Earth's surface. The surviving inhabitants of the Earth were now living in Heavenly Cities above the clouds and did not want to descend back to the unstable surface of the Earth.

Helen was a lawyer who lived in one of the cities. Her life was perfect, but soon she was to find out that all this was an illusion, for her dreams will be scattered like the leaves in the wind and the only thing left for her to return to would be her hometown.

But on her way home, a car accident on the heavenly highway turned her to a completely different direction. Helen was suddenly falling with the car down to the surface of the Earth and into a forest world that was completely foreign to her.

Was it true what they told her that no one had survived on the surface of the Earth? What if the truth was completely different? What if on earth there were survivors?

## **The Dream of the Forest Details**

Date : Published October 2nd 2018 by Createspace Independent Publishing Platform (first published June 14th 2018)

ISBN :

Author : Stjepan Varesevac Cobets

Format : Kindle Edition 350 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fantasy, Dystopia

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## From Reader Review The Dream of the Forest for online ebook

### **Maudaevee says**

#### **The concept and characters were very good.**

I liked the concept and characters quite a lot but the execution was not as good. I do think some of it was due to translation but the dialogue and grammar were very difficult to read in many parts of the story.

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### **Chesca says**

Most futuristic stories deal with the new world, but The Dream of the Forest dealt with what was left behind. It was an intriguing read.

The main characters could still be improved, but I greatly adore the depth and complexity of the antagonists.

On the writing, its clarity could still be refined but without reducing the figure of speech used.

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### **Ruth Woodman York says**

I received a free Kindle copy of this book from a Goodreads giveaway, in expectation of an honest review. Let me just say, I was torn on the rating. I would have liked to give it 4 stars, because I did like the storyline in general. But almost gave it 2 stars, so I split the difference. I think the story lost something in the translation. There were numerous spelling and grammatical errors. Helen, the female main character, was referred to has "his" or "him" numerous times, and there appeared to be missing words, so it made my reading go not as smoothly as I like. It could have desperately used an English-fluent editor to go over the translation. Parts of the story also felt rushed, or lacking something more in the dialogue, and could have used a bit more depth. If those errors were corrected, I'd have easily given the book 4 stars, possibly 5, as the idea was great.

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### **Sean-Paul Thomas says**

I've read Stjepan's magnificent poetry works before, but this is my first novel by the author and I must say that it was a really good read. Even though the story had a very detailed and slow start in the first few chapters, once we reach the forbidden land of the earth's surface, and the great loveable character of Arn the Shaman is introduced, this is where the story really excels and picks up its pace in my opinion. Overall I think the author did a magnificent job on the two main characters, Helen and Arn, and the reader really does get caught up in their tale followed by a need to see it through to the satisfying end. (although, you'll find no spoilers here)

Also, the world building of the forests back on earth was a joy to read. And I really loved Stjepan's descriptions. Overall, I loved the tone of the book once Arn is introduced, it just had the right balance of action and adventure, and even though it was a slow start, you have to stick with it in order to reach the real

meat of the story. It was a very enjoyable, and worthwhile read. Well done Stjepan.

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### **Mary says**

Unique storyline and read

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### **Raf Morgan says**

An interesting premise. The author has a great imagination. Helen lives in the Heavenly Cities above the Earth and believes its surface was destroyed. Arn lives on the Earth and has knowledge about the past of Earth but not very much about the Heavenly Cities so far above him. They should never have met, but Helen's car crashes off the elevated highway and she falls to the Earth where Arn rescues her.

I wanted to like this book but there are so many typos and a lot of the phrasing is awkward ...if this is the translator's work I would be upset if I were the author because it doesn't sound like English written by a native English speaker, it's stilted, clumsy and there are a lot of basic grammatical problems. Also I found the writing clunky in general. For example, every emotion is told to the reader rather than shown through their actions: ... he was hurt by her sarcasm, she was nervous... On some pages it's every sentence and it gets exhausting and boring.

Like another reviewer said, this book needs a lot more work. If that doesn't bother you and you want a story that starts out slow, kind of a survival guide to living in the wilderness on Earth and two people from very different places trying to understand each other, to a love story, to a story about war, this might be the book for you.

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### **Daniel says**

Got the book from the writer but my opinions are my own :)

So how to describe this book? Sci-fi, post apocalypse, lost in time and space. Who knows, it's a mish mash. It's a story of a betrayed women trying to survive in a hostile environment and find a new meaning in her life. It's an interesting tale if a bit predictable. Also it's an easy and fast read with hardly any down time or needles exposition.

Now for the complaints:

- The characters are a bit to simple. Good or evil but in the end to one dimensional.
- The plot is, as i said, a bit predictable and likes to lean on tropes a bit to much.
- The setting is interesting but sadly under utilized. We have a high tech world and a low tech world in close proximity but hardly any interaction between them aside from the beginning.
- and the worst part of the book are the dialogues. Stilted and unnatural sounding that they almost always manage to rip me out of the story. But they got better towards the end.

All in all there is potential but it still needs couple of passes to make it much better.

Cheers

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### **Todd Simpson says**

This was such an enjoyable book to read. It's well written, with a very clever and interesting plot. Stjepan Cobets has that unique gift of pulling you into the story, and I found it very easy to get lost amongst the pages for many enjoyable hours. There is a good mix of diverse and interesting characters. I really enjoyed following the main character Helen, and what she is put through.

Helen's life was pretty good, especially coming from a wealthy background where she didn't need to do very much for herself. She had a boyfriend she loved, a great place to live and nothing to worry about. So, it was quite a surprise when she found her car suddenly loosing control on the highway. Helen was lucky to wake up after the extent on the damage to her car, but there was an even bigger surprise waiting for her when finally woke up on Earth. She was used to living up in the clouds under a dome, where everyone was sheltered from the weather, wild animals and the inconvenience of finding food. Since the Earth had taken a fair old beating after the big earth quake and flood, it wasn't the most hospitable place to live. To survive there now was like living in the dark ages, and Helen was finding that out first hand. Luckily, she had been found by Arn, who she later learned worked as a kind of medicine man, called a Shaman. He was going to be her only chance to possibly get back home, to what Arn called the flying city up in the clouds. However, before that happened Helen was going to really experience how dangerous earth could really be. This story is full of adventure and intrigue and is definitely worth adding to your reading list. 5/5 Star Rating.

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### **Daniel says**

Friend of the author so take this as you will.

As it says this is just the first chapter of the story posted to give you a taste of the whole book. And as such it does an OK job. We get to meet our protagonist, antagonist and the basic plot. It's clunky, a bit goofy and the dialogues need a lot of work. But still its a nice beginning and after a couple of revisions it could be a fun read.

I'll try the finished work.

Lets say 2.5 rounded up to 3.

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### **Jennifer Arntson says**

It is quite an undertaking writing a novel; I cannot imagine the work and dedication it takes to have such a body of work translated into another language. To be honest, the prospect is as overwhelming as it is inspiring. Unfortunately for The Dream of the Forest, it just didn't work out well for the story. As such, I'll try to keep my options of the translation separate from what I would consider the intended narrative of the author.

I can only hope that the story in the authors mother tongue flows better than its English twin, because the

dialogue here is both repetitive and clunky and at times does not make much sense. It puts a damper on the most sensitive scenes of the story, perhaps taking its greatest toll on the developing love story between the two main characters, Helen and Arn.

There is little left to the imagination of the reader as every aspect of the story is told to the reader. The subtle art of insinuation and body language is non-existent. We are given a play by play, laying out exactly what each character is thinking, feeling, and even looking at. I'm not sure how much of this is due to translation, or an inability to 'show' a scene unfolding, but as a reader, I didn't have a chance to discover anything for myself.

As far as the story line itself, I can see an incredible potential in the overall arc. Helen finds out early on that she's been had and in an unraveling ball of emotions is in a car accident. She plummets from the advanced city in the clouds down to earth where she is rescued and subsequently nursed back to health by a shaman named Arn. Together they traverse through the forest toward the mines, where we are told workers might be able to escort her back home via some sort of transport method. The MC's attempts are interrupted by a cannibalistic tribe who eats men and keeps women prisoners to birth warriors for their nearly decimated tribe.

As I said, there is potential, but it's buried under four mounds of disappointment:

1. The characterization of all the characters is thin, but the worst by far is the antagonist tribe chasing them.
2. The work is littered with inconsistencies and blatant impossibilities, even in the created world.
3. There are scenes that add no value to the story-line and seem to be added simply as material to push the book's content into a R-rating read. Not only are they unnecessary, they're poorly written, and I'm not sure that can be blamed on translation issues.
4. Grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure are randomly inconsistent. This is probably no fault of the author, although makes for a difficult read especially when accents are used for the other tribe's dialogue.

Still, I kept on until the end, except there really wasn't one. The end of the story is so abrupt, I thought somehow, I hadn't downloaded the entire eBook. The epilogue wrapped up the complete story without telling us anything about how the story actually ended. The only thing I can compare it to is watching a 0-0 baseball game until the seventh inning, passing out, and being told the final score by the guy who locks up the stadium.

While I can commend the book for all its efforts, I cannot recommend it on content or readability.

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### **Stjepan Cobets says**

I wrote this book twenty-one years ago. It took a lot of time and details to fit into place so that the book could see the light of day. I'm happy because the book was finally released. It was translated, edited and published. I hope readers like the story in the book. I will be grateful to every reader who read and review my book. Your sincere thinking means a lot to me and helps me in further writing. :)

Regards,  
Stjepan

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## **S.L. Shelton says**

Although at times the story was challenging to follow, I found it strongly steeped in message and intelligently plotted. The Action scenes flowed well, and one is sincerely placed in Helen's experience. I would recommend a more thorough translation from the original work as some of the language subtleties did not translate well into English and the story flow is occasionally interrupted with awkward wording, but I found these moments infrequently and easily forgivable.

The central theme to the story, perhaps obscured by the thrilling action scenes and Helen's challenges in dealing with Arn, is the placement of the haves and have-nots in relation to each other, and more subtly, the flaws and challenges of both worlds...at least that's what I took away from the story.

I recommend this story to anyone who is interested in futuristic dystopian scifi and would ask that you try to look past the language issues. The story is entertaining and moving.

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## **Stjepan Cobets says**

Hello, dear readers,

I wrote this book twenty-one years ago. It took a lot of time and details to fit into place so that the book could see the light of day. I'm happy because the book was finally released. It was translated, edited and published. I hope readers like the story in the book. I will be grateful to every reader who read and review my book. Your sincere thinking means a lot to me and helps me in further writing. :)

With respect,  
Stjepan Varesevac Cobets

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## **Kat says**

Right away, “The Dream of the Forest” drops you into a futuristic world with holographic home assistants, anti-gravity suitcases, and cars that can drive themselves (with today’s kinks worked out.) And yet age-old relationship problems can never be solved by technology, as we see as Helen and Leon’s fractured life is revealed.

I liked the slow meting out of information in this one. The concept of a ruined earth with a highly advanced civilization living above them up in the clouds intrigued me right away. Helen and Arn make an interesting pair as they play off one another. Helen knows everything there is to know about the technological cities up in the clouds, and the history of the natural disasters that caused mankind to flee to them, and yet throw her in a forest and she’s so helpless she can’t walk a short distance or bit off a bit of jerky. Arn is a survivalist and shaman who has lived his life on the ground, abandoned after the rescue ships stopped coming, and while he knows everything about earth, he knows next to nothing about Helen’s life. It certainly makes for a fun interplay as they set off on their journey to return Helen home!

There are lots of characters in this one, and as our main group of survivors journey deeper into the woods and make new discoveries, you’re on the edge of your seat, hoping disaster won’t strike, intrigued by what

tidbit of history they'll discover next. I found the discovery in the bunker particularly cool. The one thing I found a bit tricky was the use of the tribal dialect with apostrophes replacing vowels sometimes five times in each sentence. While this was cool in the way it distinguished the Earth language from the heavenly city language, if you have vision problems and rely on a screen reader or TTS, the way TTS is unable to make sense of it makes the passages where the native tribes are speaking nearly impossible to decipher. Still, overall an interesting story. I look forward to more from this author!

Trigger Warnings: (view spoiler)

Please excuse typos/name misspellings. Entered on screen reader.

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### **Brenda Cheers says**

Helen lives in the future, where humans have built a world above the clouds to survive a cataclysm. She is smart, in love and looking forward to becoming a mother. Then everything changes...

I enjoyed being taken into Helen's world, where she copes with stress by being sassy and cracking jokes. She is also very spoiled, however, and this means she can be a bit of a pain.

There is lots of sex and too much violent rape, but the story bubbles along until a slightly confused and rushed ending.

A Dream of the Forest is a novel that needs further work. The author has allowed publication to occur while there are still many errors in word usage and grammar. I was taken out of the story while trying to decipher what the author meant.

Otherwise, a sound story which held my interest.

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