



The Beam: The Complete First Season

Sean Platt, Johnny B. Truant

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This collection contains the complete first season of the epic sci-fi saga, The Beam -- all SIX debut-season episodes by breakout indie authors Sean Platt and Johnny B. Truant.

Choose Your Side

In a grim future, choice is all you have

In 2097, the world is as perfect as you want it to be.

Choose Enterprise and the government stays out of your way, leaving you free to sink or swim — no help for the drowning.

Choose Directorate and all are equal, fed, sheltered and entertained by the government, every need provided for, and every man another cog in society's machine.

Every six years during Shift, citizens decide who they are. Enterprise or Directorate, lives are lived inside the North American Union, walled off from the rest of the world and the Wild East beyond the shell, enhanced by incredible A.I., nanobots that monitor and support daily living, and The Beam: the network connecting every human in the NAU.

New powers are rising as emergent technology blooms from an unknown source, and threatens to shatter peace and throw the nation into chaos.

What does the future mean when our present is stretched and reality blurred?

WHO ARE YOU?

The Beam: The Complete First Season Details

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Author : Sean Platt , Johnny B. Truant

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From Reader Review The Beam: The Complete First Season for online ebook

Gary Denton says

I just listened to this novel on Audible and while I liked the ideas and it was well-paced I didn't relate or empathize with the characters. Plus one of the co-authors has this thing about lingering for long chapters over ultra violent scenes, in this case how cool ultra virtual reality immersion is for a torturer and what it is like being flayed alive, and every bone smashed, organs ripped out, etc., etc., etc.

I am assuming it is just one of the writers. Also ruined their other series, 'Yesterday's Gone', by making one of the characters a violent terrible sociopath and more lingering over his gross and violent actions. I don't like being in a psychopath's head for that much of a book.

I addition to telling a good story have some characters I like and don't put me being tortured for long chapters or too often in the mind of a violent psychopath.

For fans who like episodic TV like 'Lost' with multiple characters and don't mind the ultra-violence.

Cláudia says

So, I give 4 stars for the writing and for the world they presented here. However, I have to say that they've pissed me off and if the season two is coming out, I AM NOT READING IT! The authors have lost me as a reader. What I got from this book was the equivalent to a soap opera, with many, although interesting, characters, tons of conflict and the only resolution I got was regarding a small story. NONE of the major plot lines were given any resolution and the last chapter is just teaser and cliffhangers. I feel cheated!

And according to their non-fiction book they wrote, is exactly what they advise against it!

I am an avid reader, and I understand the concept of series. I follow several series. These are serials, and i can accept the need for cliffhangers and teasers the 6 episodes they wrote!

Not for the book! I wont accept a story which final chapter is nothing but a loose end for each character!

I was planning to write several spoilers about the book, but decided against it....

I think this story is very interesting and I would like to know how it ends, but I wont. Because I refuse to buy the next season! Because I know it would end the same way.

I wont read anything else from them, they have lost me as a reader!

Belhor says

So believable. So perfectly thought out. Characters are very well developed. This is a rational (one of few possibilities) prophesy of our future. Loved it. I probably won't be reading anything for a few days maybe. I'll have to get out of this world first. Can't wait to read the second season. Wish I could find it faster.

Angela says

I love Platt's writing and have read a lot of his work so far (he's very prolific though with his writing partners - here with Truant, and with David Wright, so I always feel completely behind on his/their work).

I read the first episode of The Beam last year and thoroughly enjoyed it so I was pleased to see the first season up on Netgalley. Very well written and an excellent concept - I prefer this world to the one that was built up in Yesterday's Gone: Season One, and that's saying something as I think that series (what I've read of it so far) is fantastic.

For me, The Beam seems 'cleaner' than Platt's previous work. The characters are all very well portrayed and the sci-fi element to the story is well thought out. I took particular joy to the reference made about the 'respero dinner', as this was a favourite short story of Platt's I had read a couple of years ago and I enjoyed seeing it mentioned in this season. An excellent portrayal of a very plausible future society.

Garth Vader says

Completely hooked!

David Bruns says

The Realm and Sands authors have painted a grim future of super-internet (called the Beam), a North American Union that exists under a protective dome and a two party nanny state. It's scary easy to see how they extrapolated from today to their new world.

After reading their "Write. Publish. Repeat" book, I decided to check out their work for myself. I was not disappointed.

The story moves best when they are in a seamless flow of characters and technology. The last episode really dragged as they laid out some of the philosophical underpinnings to the world of the Beam. A necessary detour, but it tended to hold back the velocity of the story.

Looking fwd to the next installment!

David says

Cookie cutter characters, no dramatic tension, no surprises, interesting premise presented with indifference to character development, complex ideas, interesting style, or any real twists and turns. This seems to be what happens when people study writing at Uni [or have spent too much time in writing seminars or reading the generally crappy books on writing out there]....I'm seeing more and more Indie writers falling into this camp/trap....The Beam is just one more example of this.

A competent piece of work, but not more. Don't even get me started on the simple, active sentences...passive sentences are so much more interesting in that these invite the reader to participate in the construction of meaning and therefore the book they are reading.

Not Recommended

Frances says

The characters are strong, adventurous, and maybe a little quirky. (The title makes me think that it is a tv show but I don't know if that's true, but I would watch it if it is.) The story takes place in a world with so many layers. I kept asking myself if I would live in Organa, Directorate, or Enterprise. In Organa people try to live natural; in Directorate people live on the dole but can also work to make extra money; in Enterprise people use their talents to achieve success. Then every few years people can change where they want to live. If you like the show 'The Matrix' then I think you will like this book because I found a similarity between the two esp, when it came to 'The Beam' which is the book's futuristic term for the internet or being plugged in. Read on my Kobo Glo

Alissa Thorne says

This series is kind of like if Neal Stephenson's Snow Crash or Diamond Age was written in an epic fantasy format, then ran into a brick wall. It's a bit sprawling, has some pacing problems, and the characters are a bit cartoonish. Perhaps as implied by the "season" moniker, it has the feeling of a tv series in its troupes and level of depth. Still, I enjoyed it.

Karndog says

Cool concept. Deducted one star for forcing me to read the next book. Not even a cliffhanger, just ends abruptly. If you want more story you have to go to book 2.

Michael Ronn says

I'm a Beam fan, and I didn't think I would be. The story was well-developed and complex, and full of great twists. I loved the worldbuilding and the character work.

I listened to the audiobook version, and it is the best audiobook I've heard this year. This is also the first audiobook I've listened to without reading the actual book alongside it. I'm a big fan of Sean and Johnny, but sometimes their books can get dense--not in a bad way, but you have to delve really deep inside because their worlds are insanely detailed. But their style works incredibly well in audio, so well in fact, that this is my new favorite way of consuming their stuff. The story was so much fun--all the technology, the characters, and the way their stories interweave without many of them ever meeting. It's thought-provoking, too, and it really makes you think about the future. I'm really eager to see where it goes. I didn't think I would be a Beam guy, but I ended up liking it a lot.

The narration was stellar. I especially loved Rachel Fulginiti as Kai and Ray Chase as Doc. They really brought the characters to life. All of the narrators were good, but some were stronger than others.

Writing style-wise, there's a lot to love. It's sumptuous without being too overbearing and imaginative and intriguing. It translates extremely well into audio, too, which is a plus. Don't NOT read this without the audiobook! It's that good.

Hilary says

3.5 stars

Designed to work almost like a television series showing America's hyper-connected future, with multiple story arcs that must each resolve by the end, and it does seem to work, though the divisions and constant switching between characters made it seem like a *really* long book. If this were a TV show it would be on something like Fox and shown after 8pm (or after the watershed, for British viewers.)

Crammed with images of how our future could develop, it's sure to ignite your imagination, whether it's self-driving cars, downloadable skills, interactive surfaces to provide or body modifications that enable you to access every kind of information you might want, wherever you are.

There's so much in here it's hard to know what to mention. Lots of high-tech equipment, possibly surpassing any Philip K. Dick envisioning; extreme social divisions based on political choice (with echoes of Ben Franklin). I also caught connections to Marvel, Doctor Who, and the Hunger Games.

The backstory is revealed almost carelessly in a piecemeal fashion, as if unimportant. By the time I was a third in I realized there were only a couple of characters I actually cared about; I'm not sure if that was the authors' intention. I also caught a few editing errors too, both in misused words and factual inconsistencies within the book.

People may be annoyed by the repeated inappropriate use of the word "rape" when they really meant something more like "depredate".

Parental advisory: (view spoiler)

I really wavered in picking a star rating. The vision was incredible, both in technology and politics, and I enjoyed discovering the history and how our existing technology might develop to allow better, more intuitive uses of our data. The future of American politics also felt realistic, taking party divisions to extremes, but some elements of the writing were quite irritating, and there was too much graphic description at points.

I finally settled on 3.5 stars rounded up, but I won't be reading Season Two.

Disclaimer: I received a free copy from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Russell Schirtzinger says

This is an excellent thing to read. Sex, drugs and politics in a fantastic future setting. There is so much going on in The Beam that it's pointless to even really try going into any of it. If you like cybernetic nano filled

future settings with tons of extrapolation from todays politics, well, it will suck you in and keep you reading.

On the down side, or why I only gave it four stars instead of five, it is the first "season" of a series. That means, much like a season of a television show, it ends with cliffhangers... I would feel better about that if the whole series was complete and I could keep reading, but I know I'll forget a lot between seasons, and I'm kind of afraid that, like all the good television shows, the final season will never be made and I'll just be hanging forever.

Still worth reading though. :)

Rose says

I've read a few Platt/Wright collaborations and I really liked them all so when I saw that Sean Platt joined Johnnie B. Truant for a new series, I was very interested to see if it would be as good. It was.

The Beam was originally published as a serial book. Nothing new here as Platt has already done this a couple of times prior. I tend not to read serials as they are published. I can barely stand reading a normal series if it isn't complete. I'm a binge reader so if I find something I like, I want to keep reading it until it's done. That said, this series is not currently finished. Season 2 is already out there but I have no idea if this will stop at the new normal of three or if there will be more. I also mention this because if I were to have read this as a serial, I don't think I would have gotten past Episode 1. It gives a lot of info about the various characters in the story, but there is no actual story at this point. Lots of facts, lots of people, but nothing to make you want to keep going. It wasn't until I was into Episode 3 that I was really enjoying it so it was important that I had all of the episodes together.

This is a tale set about 80 years in the future. Canada, Mexico and the US have come together to form the NAU. There is a lattice covering the entire continent that protects us. Everywhere else is referred to as the Wild East. The internet has been upgraded and is now known as The Beam. It's accessible pretty much everywhere and is part of everyone's daily life – most cannot function without it. There are lots of cool teckkie things like nanobots, add-ons you can put into your body to work directly with The Beam, etc. I won't tell you about all of it because it was part of the fun of reading this book.

When you read the synopsis for the book, there seems to be an emphasis placed on the two groupings of Directorate and Enterprise. If you are a member of Directorate, you get enough money to live on but you never have to work. If you are Enterprise, you're on your own to become a fabulously wealthy entrepreneur or the latest member of the homeless. While this was a slightly interesting concept, I failed to see the point since there were some incredibly wealthy Directorate plus it really didn't seem to influence, for the most part, the underlying story. It really could have been written without this concept but perhaps it plays a bigger role in Season 2. We shall see.

For all the science fiction I read, I was really impressed with this one. Everything in it seemed very well thought out (with the exception of us having a giant lattice covering the continent and controlling the weather). Many things seem like the ultimate goal of what is currently being worked on or are something that will inevitably be created. And if you thought Big Brother was bad in 1984, wait until he's digitally enabled and can access you anywhere you are.

I highly recommend for anyone who like science fiction and/or futuristic stories.

Timothy Ward says

The Beam's greatest quality is in showing us how nanotechnology and an Internet 2.0 could shape the future, eighty years from now. You can tell they put a lot of thought into new technologies, how they would be used, and how a political and economic system would develop.

As for the story, there are a lot of pieces being set up in Season 1, and while I enjoyed it throughout, I was able to put it down until about the last fifteen percent. I am eager for the next season and hopeful that enough foundation has been laid so they can spend less time explaining the history. That said, a revelation about the early history of this technological revolution is shown at the very end, which makes me want to know more about the past, and maybe see if we are on the verge of watching it all collapse.

The plot is essentially a bad guy wants to monopolize a new technology and the large cast that we meet is all related to that pursuit. Who is the bad guy and who will survive to fight another day? Some don't even realize they are in such a battle, and those who are unaware become more interesting as they are forced to fight. I liked all of the characters and enjoyed how diverse the cast was (though not necessarily Diverse with a capital D that we see being called for of late--at least one person is Black, there are three female POVs, some of the names suggest non-USA natives, but no LGBT that I can remember.) I don't really care what people's races are, so I was more interested in their personalities and the passion in their hearts. When I say that they were diverse, I was referring to their different goals, qualities, and problems. Platt and Truant did a great job linking them together and making their desires conflict with each other.

I listened to the audiobook. Overall a great production, though sometimes I felt one of the narrators emphasized the wrong words. Not a big quip, and really, outstanding job to only have that one critique.

In short, I am excited to see where the story goes and continue to experience life eighty years in the future.
