



The Forgotten

K.A. Applegate , Katherine Applegate

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There's been an accident. Someone crash-landed a Yeerk Bug fighter. And the Yeerks have been trying to cover it up - quickly. But not before Tobias spots it. So the Animorphs and Ax decide to steal the ship to show the world that Earth has been invaded.

The Forgotten Details

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From Reader Review The Forgotten for online ebook

August Busch says

This one was had a lot of action and actually did time travel fairly decent.

Ashley says

I remember loving *The Forgotten* when I was a kid, but it really is pretty useless in the grand scheme of things, other than to establish that time-travel is a thing (this is achieved by falling through a *Sario Rip*, literally a hole in space-time, as the Andalites call them). That lazy genre classic, the Reset Button, shows up here and shows up hard. By the end, no one but Jake even remembers most of the events in the book.

Actually, most of the time-travel stuff in this is pseudo-science nonsense. Time-travel is hard to get right in the first place, but here it just felt like it was trying too hard, reaching for answers that didn't quite work, and that were for the most part way too convenient. A lot of the book felt like that, just off, like Applegate was out of ideas.

Imagine my surprise when I clicked over to Hirc Delest only to be informed that K.A. Applegate had a bit of a creative crisis in the midst of writing this, and panicked that she was out of ideas for the series. It really does show in the writing. Jake makes a series of really dumb choices, doubling down on those choices and refusing to communicate, and lets his impulses get in the way. More importantly, there doesn't actually seem to be a reason for him to have made these mistakes. They're just there, and not born out of some flaw he needs to correct or lesson he needs to learn. Just like the story of the Animorphs being lost in the Amazon, his arc is ultimately pointless. (There is some effort towards having Jake struggle with being a leader, but it doesn't really go anywhere.) I didn't expect this, since it used to be a favorite, but this is actually the weakest book in the series so far.

Next up, Rachel has an allergic reaction.

Stephanie says

Sometimes, success is just luck.

And that pretty much summarizes the entire Animorphs series.

This book was a nice departure from the usual pattern of “discover Yeerk plot; attempt to plan a solid mission; have something go awry; have to improvise; and barely make it out alive”. And at the same time, it also in a way acknowledged and explored just how lucky the Animorphs have been thus far. What if they didn't get lucky? What would the end result be? (Not that anyone *really* wants that answered...) I think more than this being a “Jake” book because it is his point of view, it is also very much a “wake up Jake” book, where he realizes just how lucky he and the Animorphs have been, and that if nothing has seemed easy or simple before, well, it is certainly not going to become that way any time soon. What's more, it also serves to show Jake that just because a mission presents itself, does not mean that they have to take it on. Furthermore,

it also helps drive home for him his role as leader, and just how serious everything is. Sure, he knows this fight is serious, and he knows how much danger the entire team has run in to, but I think this is where it all becomes completely, solidly, undeniably **real** for him.

Though I do have one fairly big question: why is it *only* Jake who has this experience? What twist of fate selects him to be "the one"? Surely it is not just because he is the elected leader? (view spoiler)

And why stop a good thing? Here are some of my favorite quotes from this book, largely for either their humor or their poignancy.

/Rachel, why is it that whenever I hear you say "let's do it" my blood runs cold?/ Marco asked. – page 23

Marco put his hand on my shoulder. "Phasers on full power!" he said in a Captain Picard English accent. "Arm photon torpedoes! If the Borg want a fight, we'll give them one! Make it so!"

– page 63 – While I *might* have recognized who Captain Picard was, and maybe even the Borg when I was what, 10 or 11? – probably the most I would have been able to say was that they were from Star Trek. And that was it. Now that I know more about Star Trek (okay, have actually finally *seen* some Star Trek), I can better appreciate all these Star Trek references which keep popping up throughout Animorphs.

After Jake has called out Cassie and Marco's names twice, and Rachel's once after crash-landing in a jungle:

/How about Tobias?/ a voice said in my head. – page 76 – Aw man, this just hurts. I read this as Tobias (and Ax) were basically forgotten by Jake. You know who is most important to him in this harried situation. Cassie and Marco foremost, then family/Rachel next. Third rung goes to Tobias and Ax :((And never mind that Tobias would likely have had the best chance of finding anyone a lot quicker than well, everyone else, even "out of his element".)

"Did we go forward or back? Are we in the past or the future?" [Jake asked]

/Yes,/ Ax said. /It's definitely one of those two choices./ -- page 79 – Ax-man, I love your answer. It is just *perfect*.

"Could we concentrate here?" I said gruffly. Actually, I was relieved to see everyone behaving normally. It's when Cassie *isn't* talking about animals and Marco and Rachel *aren't* teasing each other that you have to worry. – page 112

I know there is a difference between human life and the lives of other animals. I mean, I *guess* there is. And I definitely know there is a difference between human life and the lives of trees. But still, that mindless, pointless massacre of trees and the animals in them made me sick.

– page 122 – Wonders never cease about just how careless the Yeerks are about Earth, the *home planet* of the species they are trying to take over. Do they every stop to think, "If we kill everything on this planet which is not human, up to and including the flora, then our human hosts won't have a planet to sustain them, and they'll have to rely on whatever we can create on ships in space"? Man wouldn't that be a drag for the Yeerks! And while I'm on the subject... Yeerks must show some care for their hosts, because Hork-Bajir don't have super long lives like Andalites do. And considering the Hork-Bajir have been enslaved for over 30 years, at least, you have to figure that the Yeerks were doing something to make sure their best hosts were procreating.

[Cassie said,] "...There was no way he could know if it was the right thing to do. He just made the best decision he could. That's all anyone can ask from any leader." – page 135 – Just the sort of pep-talk Jake

needs; leave it to Cassie to give it to him, as usual.

Not much of a plan. But I was the leader, and a leader has to give people hope. Even when he doesn't have much himself. – page 142 – Wise words from a boy forced to grow up way too fast in a war that he had no choice but to take on and lead in.

(view spoiler)

Reanna Patton says

This one was interesting. A little time travel thing that wasn't TOO confusing. I generally don't like time travel just because it's confusing or people use it incorrectly or as an easy plot device. This was pretty entertaining though. Another Animorph adventure!

Nico says

the grittiest and darkest of the series so far. I enjoyed it because it had a real sense of how dangerous what's going on for these kids is

Jenny Clark says

The Sario Rip is quite interesting. I feel like this one was a little of a cop out, because guess what? None of it actually happened, except the very beginning and very end. Still, an interesting story and shows the "Grandfather Paradox" many believe exist with time travel. It's too bad they don't actually have the jaguar morph, it would be pretty cool for them to all have that.

This one was not much of a surprise, as once I started reading it, I remembered it from the last time I read it.

Jake is becoming more ruthless with every book now

"We need only Ax to handle this. No point risking anyone else."

And Rachel is feeding her anger and losing herself.

"And knowing Rachel, she would react by being more aggressive. Maybe too aggressive."

Jen says

I have the same complaint about this that I did about 10 (The Android), which is that I feel like Applegate decided to start pulling in any and every sci-fi/fantasy trope she knew. *Of course* there has to be time travel (although thank God it wasn't like the Animorphs ended up in the Wild West or something, that would have been ridiculous) because of some space battle of crazy.

That said, I really liked this. Part of that is because of the way Applegate handled the whole time thing and made it a plot device rather than a setting. Part of that is because I loved the fact that Jake gets to start dealing with how incredibly hard it is to be a leader, especially a leader of a group who regularly dances with Death and is trying to save, well, everything. His journey of uncertainty and growth was huge to me as a kid and is huge to me now.

And part of it was because of it being a very careful love song to the Amazon.

It's not a "yay save the rainforest because trees" book at all--I had so much appreciation for the fact that Rachel wanted to burn the whole place down after about the umpteenth time they were almost killed not by Yeerks but by bugs. But then the Animorphs begin to learn respect for the fact that the planet wasn't built solely for humans; there are wild places that must stay wild and live into their wildness whether or not we humans ever get to see that at all. This book makes the world big, as big as it is and as bright and frighteningly beautiful, which is one of the absolute gifts of this series.

One of my favorites, I think. Even despite the Sario Rip.

Kristen Coffin says

"I can't begin to explain what the rain forest is like. To explain it, you'd have to be a poet and a scientist and a horror writer."

Pro: Interesting. Especially if you like a change of scenery, want to see some exotic new morphs, or like the Amazon.

Con: Basically useless in the scheme of the series, except proving that time travel is now a thing that is possible. If you skip this book, it's not really detrimental to the plot of the series as a whole.

Serena says

Jake is having bizarre flashes of scenes involving him and the others in the rain forest of all places. Thinking he's going insane, he must plow forward in spite of it all as the faithful leader of the group when Tobias notifies them all of a downed Bug fighter being hidden and worked on in an empty strip mall. The Animorphs decide to go check it out and, in a bizarre and rapid-fire sequence of terrible decision making, sneak aboard and fly off with the hopes of landing it at the White House and outing the Yeerk invasion once and for all. Surprising no one, this plan fails and fails big.

(Full review here at the thelibraryladies.com.)

Ben Babcock says

It's time ... to travel ... in time.

Animorphs played with time travel once before, in #7: *The Stranger*, but that was at the hands of the Ellimist. This time, the Animorphs accidentally create a Sario Rip—technobabble for “hole in space-time,” which is technobabble for ... well ... you know ... stuff—when the Dracon beams they fired from a stolen Bug fighter intersected with the Dracon beams from Visser Three's Blade ship, and—

—what? Oh, yeah. The Animorphs totally steal a crashed Bug fighter, get it operational (thanks, Ax), and initiate an epic suborbital chase sequence with Visser Three. Sorry I skipped that part.

In terms of just pure awesome action sequences, *The Forgotten* has to rank up there with the first *Megamorphs* novel, which was really the Michael Bay of *Animorphs* novels. In this book, we have the aforementioned spaceship duel, with five kids and an Andalite facing off against the biggest, baddest six-shooter in the galactic west. The fight is so badass it punches a hole in the space-time continuum, and so everyone gets thrown back in time.

To the day before.

(It wasn't *that* big a hole.)

Jake is our narrator, so in between more epic chase sequences and monkeying around (literally—they morph monkeys), he worries he's going crazy. There is a totally legitimate explanation for his crazies (other than, you know, being a child leader of child soldiers in a messed up secret war). But I commend Applegate for broaching this subject. There is a lot of pressure on all the Animorphs, and more so on Jake than any other. Marco, in his trademark lack of subtlety, points this out: Jake is the leader, so he isn't allowed to go crazy. He can't have a day off; he can't mess up. Because everyone follows his lead, so if he makes a mistake, people could die.

Welcome to the big leagues, son.

Applegate uses the big ol' reset button excuse that is all too common in time travel plots. She can get away with this simply because, as children's/young adult literature, *Animorphs* is likely introducing a lot of readers to some of their first science-fiction stories. So what's cliché to me is going to seem pretty cool and novel to a new reader. And even to someone as jaded as I am now, I'll concede that the reset button makes sense in the context of what Applegate wants to do here. *The Forgotten* is precisely that: it's a pocket adventure for only Jake to remember, one where he learns the important lesson: sometimes being a leader is luck.

This idea kind of flies against the face of the big American Dream that you can get ahead purely by working hard. But it jives entirely with Applegate's series-long crusade against the glorification of war. I'm pretty sure most veterans will tell you that a large part of why they survived is just luck. They were in the right place at the right time, missed the bomb, the mine, the bullet—or got injured, but just enough to get sent home rather than killed. Similarly, we like to talk up the great strategic victories in the history of warfare and laud the minds of the Alexanders, the Attilas, the Caesars, the Napoleons. We don't talk nearly as much about how most of the time these people are lucky—or at least, the luck allows them to survive long enough to get good.

This also explains why the Animorphs seem to fail an awful lot. Marco himself lampshades the fact that their hasty plans always fall apart in this book. Applegate is deliberately and carefully trying to delay the power creep that is inevitable in a series about superpowered people. Even though Ax *can* fly a Bug fighter, things still go wrong, and they crash. The best plans inevitably fall apart on first contact with the enemy.

The Forgotten was not as engaging for me as some of the more recent books. However, I see the appeal, particularly for less experienced and jaded readers. And it's a good Jake book, if you are Team Jake. In fact, it's *mostly* a Jake book, and that's probably why I didn't enjoy it as much as I did. In addition to Jake being the only one who remembers what happens, the other Animorphs don't quite come through as distinctly as they do in other books. This is a super-Jake book, in other words. So if you need a Jake dose, Jake yourself up with this Jake. Jake jake jake jake.

Next time, Rachel burps crocodile DNA. Need I say more?

My reviews of *Animorphs*:

← #10: *The Android* | #12: *The Reaction* →

Jonathan Grant says

This was a cool one. Time travel with a countdown.

Ashley says

WOW! I was thinking this morning that it was getting really difficult to write a review on the Animorphs books, first of all because there are over 50 of them, and secondly because it's all pretty much

- 1) Find out the Yeerks are doing something
- 2) Investigate
- 3) Have everything go wrong
- 4) Fight
- 5) Narrowly escape, usually not making much of an impact

Now this book (as far as I recall) has no major plot points. Normally that would be a HUGE turn-off for me.

This book follows the main formula - but very, very loosely. What I loved about it was that it wasn't really the Animorphs fighting the Yeerks. Nope. This was about good ol' earth trying to kill the Animorphs. Which made all the difference. It was all getting so routine (and consequently, boring). The Yeerks are dangerous, the Yeerks are a threat, Visser Three is a horrible, nasty creature...you get the idea.

Makes you forget how dangerous our own planet can be.

The Library Ladies says

(Originally reviewed at thelibraryladies.com.)

Narrator: Jake

Plot: Jake is having bizarre flashes of scenes involving him and the others in the rain forest of all places. Thinking he's going insane, he must plow forward in spite of it all as the faithful leader of the group when Tobias notifies them all of a downed Bug fighter being hidden and worked on in an empty strip mall. The Animorphs decide to go check it out and, in a bizarre and rapid-fire sequence of terrible decision making, sneak aboard and fly off with the hopes of landing it at the White House and outing the Yeerk invasion once and for all. Surprising no one, this plan fails and fails big.

Losing control of the ship, they end up in outer space participating in a space battle with the Yeerks' Blade ship. They cross laser fire and both ships end up damaged and plummet to earth, landing in the Brazilian rain forest. But not only are they now miles and miles from home with a broken space ship and Visser Three and his minions sweeping the forest looking for them, but they realize that they've traveled back in time several hours.

Ax, of course, wasn't paying attention in school that day, but he theorizes that the space battle/laser intersection created a Saario Rip, a break in the space time continuum resulting in there now being two Jakes, two Cassies, etc etc all existing at once in different locations. And if they don't re-set the whole thing in time, both groups will be wiped out. This portion of the plot was just as confusing as most time travel plotlines are and at a certain point I just threw up my hands and went with it.

Ultimately, the group spends a ridiculous amount of time acquiring jungle morphs (monkeys and jaguars) and generally getting a thorough lesson on why the rain forest is deadly. Rachel (of course it's Rachel) almost gets eaten alive by a colony of ants. They're almost poisoned by a variety of frogs and snakes. And they make friends with the local people who aren't too thrilled with the Hork Bajir and other aliens now wandering around on their turf.

Jake and co. come to the obvious conclusion that they must return to the ship and hope to sneak on and hop a ride with Visser Three back to the U.S. and their own time period. Unfortunately for them, Visser Three seems to be smarter in this time period than he usually is and anticipates this move. He morphs some strange tree tentacle creature (how is that he has all of these super specific morphs ready at hand that seemingly would only work in these exact scenarios?) and captures and eats them all when they show up. Jake's death then snaps his consciousness back to before they stole the Bug Fighter and he quickly calls off the whole thing, leaving him as the only member of the group remembering any of it.

I still don't quite understand how Jake is the only one to remember all of this and why any one of the Animorph's deaths wouldn't have done the same. Maybe the others who were eaten weren't dead yet? So Jake technically dies first and then stops the whole thing? I dunno, it was all quite confusing, but a blast anyways! I loved the changed setting of having the story take place in the rain forest, and it was fun seeing Visser Three not be a complete idiot. After the nonsense in Cassie's book with his reaction to the skunk spray, he had begun to lose some of his fear factor and validity as a legitimate threat, so it was nice to see him back on form, even if it all gets wiped away anyways.

Our Fearless Leader: Jake's books are always interesting due to his unique position as leader of the group.

Through the others' eyes and narratives, we always hear about how much they all respect and appreciate the fact that he takes on this role. But it's only through his POV books that we truly understand how crushing this load must be in every single book. This whole story essentially revolved around the types of life and death calls that Jake has to make at every moment and how easily any one decision could go terribly wrong. He's not operating with any more information than the rest of them, but it's still up to him to choose whether to risk the safety of the group or of individuals.

At multiple points in this story, Jake has to send individuals into dangerous situations on their own (leaving Ax to retrieve a piece of the Bug fighter while they're in the rain forest to prevent Visser Three and the rest of the Yeerks from leaving without them, and then later leaving Rachel behind as she struggles to navigate the paths through the forest in her bulky bear morph). Not only does he have to make these decisions, but he has to live with the anger and fear of the others for doing it at all. Tobias is angry that Ax is being left to fend for himself, and the whole group struggles with the close call Rachel has with her bear morph being almost eaten alive by ants.

Towards the end of the book, it is clear that Jake has made all of the wrong decisions that lead to their "deaths." But, as we've seen through his eyes, at the time, he made the best decisions he could, which just makes their ultimate "fate" all the harder for Jake. This book is a good look at how easily things could go wrong for the group, even when making the best decisions they can. And man, poor Jake. He has to be the strongest member of the group to deal with this type of pressure every day.

Xena, Warrior Princess: Other than the horrifying ant scene, there were a few moments with Rachel that I found notable. One was the opening scene which was a comedic little bit where Jake and Rachel are square dancing. It's always fun when we get moments like this between Jake and Rachel when we're reminded that they're related and have a unique relationship to and knowledge of the other. Secondly, Jake has a very astute understanding of Rachel. After she's almost killed by the ants, Jake notes that whenever she's scared she reacts by getting mad, and that this anger can often express itself in recklessness. It's a nice reminder of how completely Jake must know and navigate the different personalities that make up the Animorphs so that he can best lead the group.

A Hawk's Life: As usual, Tobias is the one that starts off this mission as he has nothing but time to fly around and notice strange things like downed Bug fighters. But, for once, he actually gets to come along on this trip. Obviously a hawk doesn't do well in the rain forest, especially not a rain forest full of Controllers who are on the look out for animals that don't belong. Jake also notes that an extra challenge with Tobias is that hawks don't deal with hunger as well as humans, so Tobias' situation is even more perilous the longer they are there.

Peace, Love, and Animals: Cassie's animal knowledge is, of course, useful. She is able to identify where they are in the world by recognizing the types of monkeys swinging in the trees. I just don't get it. Cassie is so much more sane and likable in other character's books! It's almost like she's out-of-character in her own when she reacts so ridiculously to things. For example, in this book the Yeerks end up killing a lot of the local animals and trees in their attempts to flush the Animorphs out. When she's asked if she's upset about this she says that of course she is, but the best way for her to save the planet is to not die, get back to their own timeline, and beat the Yeerks. Not get bogged down in trying to save some specific trees. This! This makes sense! But we just got done seeing her have the completely opposite thought process in her own book when she essentially prioritized a small bit of forest, a nest of baby skunks, and a termite colony above the safety of the group! I don't get it. She's so much more relatable, rational, and sympathetic in books like this than her own.

The Comic Relief: Marco doesn't do much in this book. He's good for his quips, as always, but his usual contributions (smarts and planning) aren't used much in this book.

E.T./Ax Phone Home: As always now it seems, the group wouldn't get far without Ax's knowledge of technology. But I think Applegate made a very good decision with his re-occurring "I wasn't paying attention in school that day" routine. Obviously he's way more technologically advanced than the rest, allowing them to even think about trying to fly the Bug fighter. But it's good that he doesn't have a complete understanding of things like Saario Rips and so forth, otherwise he'd be a bit too close to a deus ex machina in all of these stories.

Best (?) Body Horror Moment: The ants! The ants! Why is it always ants?!?! The whole scene where Rachel is being eaten alive in bear morph by an ant colony was probably one of the most horrifying scenes in the series to date, and that's really saying something. There were unnecessarily vivid descriptions of ants carrying off pieces of flesh and crawling into mouths and eyes and...nope, just nope.

Couples Watch!: There's a cute scene in the beginning when Cassie comes to watch Jake and Rachel square dance and Jake is super embarrassed by it all. But at least he has a healthy outlook on it and is relieved to see that she's laughing her head off at him, rather than pitying him.

If Only Visser Three had Mustache to Twirl: Visser Three has a smart plan! He has a smart plan, guys! He also has a couple good snarky lines that were pretty funny, especially when his underlings went crazy and started shooting up the forest and he questioned the thought process that lead them to destroying the trees...cuz obviously the "Andalite bandits" morphed trees...

Adult Ugly Crying at a Middle Grade Book: There really wasn't anything too soul crushing in this book. Lots of action, less feels. I mean, I guess I should have gotten upset about then all "dying" and everything...but we all knew that wasn't going to happen so I couldn't get too worked up about it.

What a Terrible Plan, Guys!: The whole thesis statement of this book was "Jake has terrible plans and it sucks to be the leader." I really feel that the whole "let's steal the Bug fighter and fly it to the White House" had some glaring flaws from the start. Beyond the fact that none of them knew how to fly it, Ax's techy knowledge aside, the whole thing was a massive gamble that was going to get their cover blown with them having no control of the actual outcome beyond the point where they landed. Not only would the Yeerks be trying to shoot them down, but I'm pretty sure the U.S. government would have something to say about an alien aircraft approaching the White House.

Favorite Quote:

More proof for my "Marco follows (loves??) Rachel" theory!

"We didn't vote," Rachel said. "But if we had, you'd have voted yes." "How do you know how I'd have voted?" Marco demanded. Rachel smiled. "Because I'd have voted yes."

And a good Marco quip about their terrible planning:

Marco said sarcastically.

Scorecard: Yeerks 3, Animorphs 5

I'm giving this one to the Yeerks, since if it weren't for convenient timey-whimey tricks, Visser Three pulled off 1.) an actually well-thought out plan, 2.) a useful and appropriate morph, and 3.) killed all of the Animorphs. Further, even after Jake closes the Saario Rip, the Animorphs still fail to take advantage of the massive opportunity that was the downed Bug ship.

Rating: It's not furthering the overall plot at all, but it was a great stand alone story! The change of scenery to the rain forest added for a lot of unique fun!

Nikki says

I know this one is mostly filler, with pretty much nothing of great importance to the main plot, but I can't help but relate to Jake in this one, as he deals with the pressure of being the leader and having people look to him for answers.

Rebecca McNutt says

Interesting book in the series, but I was sorta just reading it for nostalgic value - I have all 60-some books in the series so I've been going through them to see if they're as good as when I was in grade 5 - nope, definitely not. :-/

Jesus says

Aunque adoro esta serie de libros no me gusto mucho las aventuras en la selva, aunque ame el dilema de Jake con la responsabilidad asi que un 3,9 para mi

Alan Gilfoy says

"More great action"

This book did a good job focusing on the fast paced action aspect of the series.

I figured the Yeerk ships in orbit were hidden from human radar or something, but it's good to have that addressed in character instead of KAA ignoring the issue.

Watching the boxing match was a great obstacle in the name of maintaining their cover. The scene itself was a great bit of Berenson personality. It seemed like great guy stuff without going overboard into chauvinism. However, I wonder if similar behavior from Dan contributed to his and Naomi's divorce.

I assume the new experimental Bug fighter had incremental improvements, so previous ones are similar. I liked the details of how Bug fighters operate. I already knew the crew was one Taxxon and one Hork-Bajir, but apparently the Taxxon stands as the pilot and the Hork-Bajir sits as the gunner. Aliens aside, that doesn't

seem like too odd a ship crew.

The Dracon beam contact reminded me of a story about a pistol duel where they don't hit each other and find a lump of lead in the middle of the field from the bullets hitting each other.

The Sario Rip plot device was interesting in and of itself and as a way to not reveal the Bug fighter and thus the Yeerk invasion quite yet.

katie lang says

i hate giving animorphs books anything under three stars because it seems like i don't love every child in them with my ENTIRE HEART and there was a lot of a+ jake content in this book, but, i hate! time travel! so much! i can't! deal! it is absolutely personal!

Weathervane says

Just not that interesting, all things considered. Mainly a filler book, as nothing that happens ends up having any relevance to the main plot. And I dislike how Jake is the only one who remembers anything.

Also, some of the Animorphs seemed to act a tad out-of-character.

Unremarkable.

Joy says

This has always been one of my favourite covers in the series (hot orange clouds! Jake in a purple shirt! kitty!) and the story has a lot going on but I actually think it holds together. Solid book.
