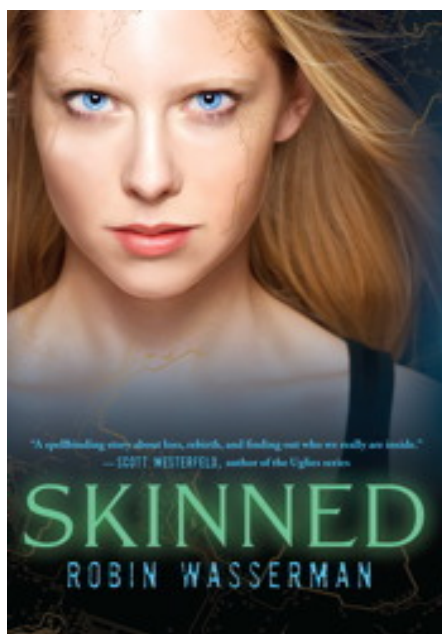




Skinned

Robin Wasserman

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Skinned

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Skinned Robin Wasserman

The Download was supposed to change the world. It was supposed to mean the end of aging, the end of death, the birth of a new humanity. But it wasn't supposed to happen to someone like Lia Kahn.

And it wasn't supposed to ruin her life.

Lia knows she should be grateful she didn't die in the accident. The Download saved her--but it also changed her, forever. She can deal with being a freak. She can deal with the fear in her parents' eyes and the way her boyfriend flinches at her touch. But she can't deal with what she knows, deep down, every time she forces herself to look in the mirror: She's not the same person she used to be.

Maybe she's not even a person at all.

Skinned Details

Date : Published September 9th 2008 by Simon Pulse

ISBN : 9781416936343

Author : Robin Wasserman

Format : Hardcover 368 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Science Fiction, Dystopia

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From Reader Review Skinned for online ebook

Laura says

Sigh. I really liked The Adoration of Jenna Fox, so I guess I was predisposed to not really like this one based on the jacket description. What I didn't realize was how little I'd like it - post-apocalyptic society, where you can breed/test/screen for genetic wants, high-tech, blah blah *and* if you have enough credit, you don't have to die. You can "download" instead.

Problem is, Lia's quest for identity post-download and her questions about what makes people human just weren't drawn finely enough for me. I guessed the ending, and most of the twists, well before they happened and ultimately, I didn't care.

Carolyn F. says

[the sister was responsible for the car wreck (hide spoiler)]

Aleshanee says

Jugendbücher sind oberflächlich und voller Klischees?
Hier ist ein sehr gutes Beispiel, dass es auch anders geht!

Anfangs war ich noch etwas skeptisch.

Lia Kahn, die Protagonistin, wächst in einer Welt auf, in der die Technik die Menschen immer mehr beherrscht. Ja, noch mehr als schon jetzt ;)

Sie ist 16 Jahre alt, verwöhnt und sehr von sich eingenommen. Ihre Familie ist reich und vor allem ihr Vater hat überall großen Einfluss. Lia ist immer up to date, ihre Freundinnen sehen zu ihr auf und die Jungs himmeln sie an. In dieser Rolle gefällt sie sich ziemlich gut und auch mit ihrem Freund Walker läuft alles bestens. Nur ihr etwas distanziertes Verhältnis zu ihrer Schwester Zoie ist etwas durchwachsen; aber das kümmert sie nicht wirklich.

Bis jetzt hört sich das noch sehr nach diesen typischen Jugendbuch-Charakteren an, von denen ich ziemlich gelangweilt bin. Aber mit Lia passiert etwas, etwas dramatisches und sie muss irgendwie lernen, damit umzugehen. Die Konsequenzen ziehen immer weitere Kreise und aus der Ich-Perspektive erlebt man sehr intensiv, wie Lia sich verändert ...

Die Geschichte steigt ein, als Lia im Krankenhaus aufwacht. Sie hatte einen schlimmen Unfall und wäre gestorben, hätte man nicht ein neuartiges Verfahren an ihr vorgenommen: Sie steckt ab jetzt in einem künstlichen, perfekten Körper. Ihr Gehirn und damit ihr Wissen und ihre Erinnerungen wurden in einen Computer eingespeichert, die sie abrufen kann. Sie muss nicht essen, nicht atmen, wird nicht altern, auch nicht sterben und keinen Schmerz empfinden - doch auch alle anderen Gefühle sind nicht mehr da.

"Ich war nur ein Geist in der Maschine."

*Ein MechHead. Ein Kabelhirn. Ein Frankenstein. Ein Hautdieb.
Ein Skinner." S. 39*

Es ist ein langer Leidensweg, der sehr gut beschrieben wurde. Ich hatte etwas völlig anderes erwartet und musste mich erstmal darauf einstellen, dass Lias Entwicklung sehr detailliert erzählt wird. Das war aber nötig, damit man das, was weiter passiert, gut nachvollziehen kann.

Die Reaktionen der Umwelt auf Lias Veränderung sind ziemlich heftig. Auch wenn in dieser Zukunftsvision die Technik allgegenwärtig ist:

in Form von genetisch modifizierter Natur, Körperliftings, programmierten Autos, dem allgegenwärtigen sozialen Netzwerk und stimmungsbeeinflussenden Drogen, steht man in der Gesellschaft den "Skinnern" äußerst kritisch gegenüber. Die weitläufige Meinung geht sogar soweit, dass sie diese reanimierten "Computermenschen" als nicht menschlich ansieht, als Kopien, die keine Rechte haben sollten.

Dieses Gedankenexperiment ist beängstigend, vor allem, weil man sich sehr gut vorstellen kann, dass es tatsächlich so verrückte Entwicklungen in unserer Zukunft geben könnte und man stellt sich während dem Lesen immer wieder die Frage: Was würde ich dazu sagen? Wie würde ich mich verhalten, wenn mir "so jemand" gegenübersteht? Wird man das Gehirn tatsächlich einmal "kopieren" können und wo bleibt dabei die Seele?

Gerade mit der Figur Lia, die ja eigentlich kein wirklich sympathisches Mädchen ist, leidet man doch mit. Vor allem wenn man den Hass und den Vorwurf spürt, mit dem sie sich täglich auseinander setzen muss: von den anderen aber auch von sich selbst. Ihre Familie ist hier auch keine Unterstützung, denn der Vater wirkt wie ein kalter Kontrollfreak, die Mutter wagt kaum ihre Meinung zu sagen und die Schwester Zoie ist scheinbar ein sehr nachtragendes Biest.

Allerdings lernt sie noch zwei Jungs kennen, die einen großen Einfluss darauf haben, was weiter passiert.

Einmal **Auden**

"Woher willst du wissen, dass ich wirklich einen freien Willen habe? Woher soll ich wissen, dass es so ist? Klar, ich habe das Gefühl, selbständige Entscheidungen zu treffen, doch wer weiß? Er denkt, dass Gott alle Fäden in der Hand hält. Woher will er denn wissen, dass ihn Gott nicht wie eine Marionette tanzen lässt?"
S. 241

und **Jude**

"...diese Perfektion ist unser einziger Makel. Sie altern, sie werden krank, verletzen sich, immer ist irgendwas. Sie verfallen. Wir bleiben immer gleich. Wir schweben durch die Zeit; sie ertrinken darin. Sie haben einen Stichtag; wir nicht. Und genau das können sie uns nicht verzeihen." S. 368

Nichts ist einfach und alles kompliziert - und es gibt einige sehr tiefsinnige Gedankengänge die bei mir sicher noch eine zeitlang nachwirken werden.

Ich hoffe, dass man im zweiten Band auch noch etwas mehr über die Welt erfährt, denn es gibt nicht nur die Reichen und Mächtigen, zu denen Lia gehört, sondern auch die Unterschicht, die Städter, die in den verseuchten Ruinen leben. Ohne Bonus und ohne Chance auf ein angemessenes Leben mit medizinischer Unterstützung und den Annehmlichkeiten der Reichen.

Die Entwicklung am Ende - da weiß ich noch nicht genau, was ich davon halten soll ... mal sehen, wie es weitergeht :)

Fazit

Außergewöhnlich, fesselnd und teilweise auch verstörend, wenn man sich mit dem Thema des Buches auseinandersetzt. Endlich mal ein Jugendbuch, das tiefer geht, das einen gedanklich herausfordert und das hoffentlich mit der gleichen Intensität weiter geht!

© Aleshanee
Weltenwanderer

Cold Awakening

- 1 - Skinned
 - 2 - Crashed
 - 3 - Wired
-

Vibhuti says

Okay, this book is confusing and boring. So boring that I'm not even going to bother finishing it. The beginning is kinda confusing and for the next couple hundred pages all the main character's doing is whining about her life as a machine. She describes how her life is falling apart and all I want to do is shake her and scream "GET OVER IT! YOU'RE A MACHINE! JUST ACCEPT THAT FACT AND STOP BITCHING AND MOANING ABOUT IT!" The beginning is interesting but it gets boring as the book progresses.

I'm not saying that the author's writing isn't good, because it is, but somehow, it isn't that great at the same time. I know that I shouldn't judge because I haven't finished it, but it just lost that initial spark it had in the beginning, and I didn't bother to finish it.

sylas says

WHOA. WHOA!!! i have no idea how i feel about this book. okay, that's only kind of true. i have SO MANY feelings about this book. first of all - is this book EXTREMELY ableist, or extremely radical in its discussion of disability? I CAN'T TELL! i think that the future of auden's character will elucidate this more. okay, i can't write in paragraphs anymore. here are some feelings-related bullet points:

1. lia's whole body is a prosthetic! whoa. and the way that people relate to her about it is such a well-crafted commentary on disability in dominant culture.
2. this book offers a really complex conversation about issues/ideas of quality of life and capacity.
3. lia has so much internalized ableism that is discussed in really interesting ways. her personal growth over the course of the novel is also powerful and... complicated.
4. people who were already using prosthetics and other adaptive technology were given prosthetic WHOLE-BODIES as though this was an upgrade.

WILL OTHER PEOPLE PLEASE READ THIS BOOK AND HELP ME MAKE SENSE OF MY FEELINGS?! please and thank you.

Grace says

I'm going to present this review in a series of half-explained gifs.

In the beginning, I was just casually reading through it.

And then I started getting into it.

I was enjoying the story and beginning to get irritated with everyone's constant blatant disregard of Lia and the fact that she was still human...inside.

Then the story moved onto Zo - or Zoie the Hoie as I like to refer to her - and of course, I hated her.

But it wasn't just your regular hate.

This was deep, burning hate that even the fiery pits of hell couldn't compete with.

And then there was the scene with Walker (*Cough* Douche bag! Cough*) and Zo at the back of the school, practically *dry humping each other!*

Lafayette, speak for me!

Once we got past that, Auden's heart felt love confession, another bitch out from Zo and finally reached the part with her dad.

Oh my...

Yes, I cried. And though I'll claim I hate it, I kind of like it when authors make me cry. It proves to me that their actually pretty good at what they do.

Then of course there was the part with Auden right after the waterfall incident.

My word! Such profanity! I know I shouldn't...I'll try not to...I'll try to resist...but I...I...

Poor Lia

Few! *Wipes brow* Nearly had a brain aneurism.

I know the kid's laying in bed with multiply injuries that he'll be stuck with for the rest of his oh-so human life. But some of the things he said were pretty nasty...

I was a little disappointed to realize I disliked him from then on. From this day forward, from page 339 to the last in the series, the image of Auden will forever be tainted in my eyes.

Sighs Oh well...

5 stars (4.5 at the least)

Till next time,

Karin says

Lia shouldn't have been in the car in the first place. By doing a favor for her sister, she has changed her life forever. A one in a million chance. The navigation system in her car malfunctioned and she crashed head on with another car. Her body broken - her skin burning, Lia waited for help. Unfortunately, her body didn't survive the trauma of the accident. However, her brain remained in tact.

Lia wakes up several weeks later to find that she is alive. She has been downloaded into a new body. A body that isn't flesh and blood, but circuits and wires covered by synthetic "skin." Lia doesn't want to be a skinner, a mech-head, a freak. She'd rather be dead. Instead she has to go through the indignity of learning the most basic of activities all over again.

Eventually, Lia returns to school only to find that the people she depended on most aren't as receptive to her as she'd hoped. Companionship comes from an unexpected person. Lia doesn't want to admit she isn't the same as she was before the accident. She refuses to believe she is only doing what the computer is programmed to do.

Lia meets a group of radical mech-heads that force her to confront her situation. Is it dangerous for her to live amongst people acting as if she is exactly like everyone else? Is she causing the people she cares about the most more harm than good?

SKINNED by Robin Wasserman is a spell-binding, futuristic story filled with issues of medical ethics, family dynamics, and loss. If you enjoyed the Ugliest Trilogy by Scott Westerfeld, you'll enjoy SKINNED. The story is powerful and keeps you hooked until the end. I was excited to see that SKINNED is the first book in a planned trilogy. I desperately want to see what happens next in Lia's complicated existence. Robin Wasserman's website includes cool downloads based on the book like desktop wallpaper, screen savers, and avatars. Go check it out.

Carrie says

May contain spoilers, cursing and ranting.

When something bad happens to you, like an accident as what happened in this book to our main. It doesn't always mean death. If your brain is still working you can be downloaded into a new body. Some people if they have enough credit can have one specialty made if there is enough time for it. But the thing is you are no longer human. You can't bleed, eat, breathe. You can feel pain to a degree only with extreme actions. Hot and cold mean nothing. You can feel slightly but it's not the same. You don't need to bathe, brush your teeth or use the bathroom. You're a machine that looks human and mentally you still are the same person but it's never the same.

It was going so strong, so good. But then things started to stand out. Little things that annoyed me. Nothing major just certain wordings for example "eating lunch" but how is she exactly doing this?? She doesn't eat. She has no need to eat, she doesn't have a stomach. The author could have used the sentence, 'she spent her lunch hour'. Like I said not major but annoying when it continued to come up.

And fuck Zo why are you such a bitch, like seriously. I did not like Zo at all. There was never a moment where I went ok fine she's experienced this tragedy, but nope she's just a bitch.

Blargh end rant

Edit: You know what Lia, the main character she's a bitch as well. If all this shit never went down and things were different or rather not different she'd still be a self centered bitch.

OK now it's an end rant.

Over all I did enjoy the concept and I'll continue on with the series, hopefully the characters start to be less annoying.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Sarah Bean the Green Bean Teen Queen for TeensReadToo.com

Lia Kahn was perfect. She had a perfect life, perfect friends, and a perfect boyfriend. She was popular and beautiful and everyone wanted to be with her and know her -- until the accident changed everything.

When Lia is in a fatal car accident, she finds herself awake in the hospital. She should be dead, but she knows she's alive. She can't feel her body, but she knows it's there. Lia has become the latest patient in the "download process" -- a way to download your memories and brain functions into a computer-based body that is made to look and act human. Lia is angry about the download process. She doesn't want to be a "skinner" -- the awful nickname for download recipients. But she also isn't ready to give up on her life.

Being a skinner isn't easy, though. Groups of people have rallied against the download process, calling it unethical and saying the skimmers are without a soul. Lia's friends seem to have turned on her and her boyfriend can't stand to be near her anymore. She's Lia, but she's not the same Lia, and she's not sure how to handle her new life.

Add in the mysterious group of skimmers that Lia encounters, plus humans that would do anything to be part of the download process, and Lia isn't sure anymore what exactly it means to be human.

SKINNED presents an interesting look at what really makes us us. Are we human when we have flesh and blood, or is it our memories that make us who we are? Can we ever have the same life again? An interesting and engaging look at medical ethics and humanity, SKINNED is the beginning of a new trilogy.

Melissa says

If I could have given this a negative I would. I know it's a bit harsh, and I understand that plenty of people like this book but it held nothing for me. Foremost the book does offer the interesting debate 'what does it mean to be human' but honestly I have a hard time thinking that the same people who predetermine the entire genetic makeup of their children would really be so opposed to a body that you can choose the qualities you want AND live forever. The only thing that makes me understand why Lia is such an outcast is that 1: she didn't get to choose her body (which makes her look different etc) 2: emotions n feelings are a bit off (but i'm sure technology would fix that soon enough).

Also I understood by the first 100 pages Lia is an outcast n people treat her like a freak. The whole book doesn't need to be dedicated to confirming that fact. And not to mention after about the 8th potential or implied rape scene the author puts Lia through I was really just flat out irritated with the author. I got it the first time around how the background characters feel about Lia. Let's move on.

The author could have saved herself by actually having the character DO something instead of being miserable and whiney throughout the whole book.

Basically save yourself and just read the synopsis and move on. You'll get a lot more than actually reading it.

Wicked Incognito Now says

Okay. I'm not going to finish this book, but it isn't because I don't think it's a perfectly acceptable book. It is. The writing is actually very good, and the author presents a lot of interesting questions about what it means to be "human."

This author has a compelling voice and the novel reads a lot like a Scott Westerfeld novel. Even the paperback size and cover look like an Uglies novel. However, Westerfeld draws the reader in much faster with rising action and character development.

I'm just not on board with this book. So far, I dislike the main character an awful lot. I'm 100 pages in and nothing much has happened except a lot of whining about her circumstance. I can see where the story is going (I portend much disappoint from the Zoie and Walker front) and frankly all I can think is: "meh."

Shellan says

Das Cover gefällt mir wirklich gut, irgendwie hat es was.

Die Charaktere sind sehr außergewöhnlich. Lia, die einst wunderschön, reich und beliebt war mausert sich zur Außenseiterin und auch ihr gesamter Charakter verändert sich. Ihre Familie steht auch nicht so recht hinter ihr, vor allem nicht ihre Schwester Zoie die bis dato immer in ihrem Schatten stand. Am schlimmsten aber sind ihre dümmlichen Freundinnen Terra und Cass, ganz zu Schweigen von Walker ihrem fast-Ex-noch-Freunden. Auden, der ebenfalls ein Außenseiter ist bringt sie wieder zum lächeln und Jude zeigt ihr ihr neues Leben.

Der Schreibstil reißt den Leser mit und lässt ihn die Gefühle fühlen, die Lia nicht mehr fühlen kann. Er konnte mich gleich zu Beginn fesseln und mitreißen.

Die Story zeigt einem die dystopische Welt, in der Lia lebt. Ihr Leben war perfekt - sie war wunderschön, beliebt und reich. Und dann passierte dieser Unfall und alles hat sich geändert und jetzt ist ihr Leben ziemlich scheiße. Hinzu kommt natürlich auch noch, dass es auch noch extrem kompliziert ist. Ohne Freunde und einen richtigen Rückhalt versucht sie sich in ihr neues Leben einzuleben. Dabei hilft ihr der süße und schüchterne Auden. Doch so richtig lebendig wird sie erst, als Jude auf den Plan tritt.

Der Einstieg in den Roman viel mir etwas schwer, weil alles etwas verwirrend war, aber diese Irritationen wurden sehr schnell aufgeklärt, so dass ich alles schnell nachvollziehen konnte. Die Welt ist wirklich beeindruckend und ein fantastischer Mix aus der Zeit heute und einer skrupellosen Zukunft, denn alle Menschen leben mehr oder minder nur noch in einer virtuellen Welt. Und wenn dein Körper nicht mehr kann - dafür gibt es schon Mittel und Wege. Die Idee hinter dem Roman und der Entwurf der Charaktere macht dieses Buch zu etwas Besonderem, das mich gefesselt hat. Man hat gemerkt, worauf Menschen wert legen, wie schnell sie Urteile fällen und Vorurteile gnadenlos wirken machen - in gewisser Weise kann man das Gelesene also perfekt auf unsere Welt beziehen, was das Ganze irgendwie noch makaberer macht. Manchmal ist es auch für den Leser ziemlich schwer gewesen zu begreifen, welche Lia Kahn man gerade erlebt, die Echte oder die Maschine? In solchen Momenten fühlt man sich genau wie die Menschen in ihrer Umgebung.

Die letzten Seiten haben mir noch einmal richtig den Atem geraubt, denn diese unglaubliche Katastrophe macht einen einfach sprachlos.

Das Ende ist ein Ende des alten Lebens und ein Beginn des Neuen, so dass der Leser die Erwartung an das zweite Buch hat, das dieses dort aufgeklärt wird - ich bin schon jetzt gespannt

Fazit:

Der Auftakt zur Skinned-Trilogie konnte mich fesseln und vor allem durch die extremen Gefühle packen.

Die Welt in der Lia lebt erinnert mich so sehr an unsere Welt, dass es teilweise wirklich gruselig ist.

Kathy says

What in the world is up with Young Adult literature? The F word was all throughout this book and premarital sex was openly accepted, embraced and expected. I would never recommend this book to a young adult or an adult for that matter - not that I didn't enjoy the book or love the story but simply because of the language and sex in the book.

The story reminds me of the Uglies/Pretties books. It's an interesting story full of interesting subject matter. I actually really enjoyed the story but I just wish Robin Wasserman would have cleaned it up so it was a more appropriate read that I could recommend without a huge disclaimer.

I'm struggling what to rate this book. It would be 4 stars if it weren't for the language and other things I don't like. I guess I'll go with 3 stars.

Grüffeline says

1,5 Sterne.

Ich habe dieses Buch von Regal genommen, weil ich die Thematik interessant fand. Solange man sich noch einfand in diese Welt (die übrigens mehr als krank ist), war auch alles soweit ganz okay. Aber leider gab es keinen einzigen Charakter, der mir nicht unheimlich auf die Nerven ging und auch Lia war echt anstrengend. Mal Hü, mal Hott. Nie wirklich Tiefgang, alle Charaktere bleiben oberflächlich, hatte ich das Gefühl. Der einzige mit Potenzial war Auden, aber selbst der ging mir irgendwann tierisch auf den Keks. Normalerweise finde ich es gut, wenn Bücher Gefühlsregungen hervorrufen, aber man sollte nicht über das fast komplette Buch hinweg mit den Augen rollen... An den Charakteren entlang entwickelte sich leider auch die Geschichte, die durchaus was sehr interessantes hätte werden können.

Die Welt, in der Lia lebt, sagt mir überhaupt nicht zu. Alle nehmen Drogen, um sich so zu fühlen, wie es gerade passt (Gefühle machen dich zum Menschen, ihr Volltrottel. Wenn ihr das so reguliert, seid ihr auch fast nur noch Maschinen, die gerade ein Programm abspulen!) und es gilt: Wenn deine Onlineprofile nicht mehr sind, bist auch du nicht(s) mehr. Und unsere Kinder sind selbstverständlich auch alle so, wie wir sie gerne hätten, Makel gibt es nicht mehr (ja, das gab es schon in anderen Büchern, fand ich da auch schon nicht okay, aber hier hat mich extrem gestört).

Mit diesem Band zusammen lege ich dann wohl auch erstmal die Folgebände zu den Akten, denn ich verspüre keinerlei Motivation, Lias Geschichte weiter zu verfolgen.

Tandie says

Meh. A poor man's Cinder. Just okay.

TheBookSmugglers says

[Full Review Link](#)

Lia Kahn is dead.

I am Lia Kahn.

Therefore — because this is a logic problem even a dimwitted child could solve — I am dead.

Except here's the thing: I'm not.

Lia Kahn had the world. She was beautiful, driven and smart. Born blonde and blue-eyed from a gene depository hand-tailored by her parents, Lia was the kind of girl that the world revolved around – apple of her parents' eye, darling of her high school, a sister, a friend, and a girlfriend. But then one day when she reluctantly agrees to cover for her underachieving sister Zoie at her job, Lia is in a freak car accident. In a series of improbable, unfortunate events, her car's self-driving mechanism crashes headlong into a truck and Lia is horribly injured and burned alive.

Then, she wakes up.

Lia knows that she has died. She can think but she cannot move her body or open her eyes or speak. Gradually functions return to her body and she's able to communicate by blinking her eyes, and then by a machine hooked up to her brain. She sees the extent of her injuries, and the face in the mirror looking back at her is not her own. Lia has become a skinner, a mech, an automaton programmed to think it is human with Lia Kahn's memories. The new Lia feels and acts as herself, her downloaded silicone brain a perfect replica of Lia's organic one. When her family, friends, and boyfriend turn away from this new Lia skinner, she must come to terms with what has happened to her, and what she is. Is she human or machine? Is she even Lia anymore?

Robin Wasserman's *Skinned* will draw obligatory comparisons to Mary E. Pearson's outstanding novel *The Adoration of Jenna Fox* as they are very similar in concept, though they differ wildly in their execution. Though *Skinned* isn't as polished, stylistically beautiful or lyrically haunting as Ms. Pearson's take, Ms. Wasserman's novel is more overt and forceful – which is both good and bad. *Skinned*, narrated in the first person by Lia, is a tale of self-discovery at its heart. Dead and reborn, Lia struggles with big concepts – what does it mean to be human? What does it mean to be Lia? She has all of her memories and thinks with Lia's brain, but her engineered body of wires and gadgets do not resemble her old form in any way. Of course, there's the anti-skinner sentiment from friends, family and strangers which is to be expected and about as subtle as a hammer over the head in its execution (there's even a religious fanatic element, violently opposed to these mechanical aberrations). This storyline lacks finesse, broadly retreading very familiar sci-fi territory.

But, there are a few interesting questions that the novel quietly raises (unconsciously, perhaps): humans in Lia's rich and privileged world have test-tube babies, with genomes hand selected with traits they desire (boy/girl, hair/eye/skin color, intelligence, beauty, a family physical trait, emotional empathy, etc). There's a degree of uncertainty with some of the non-physical traits, but children are made to order in this dystopian vision of the future. Too, at one point Lia argues with her track coach about those on the team with robotic body parts who are not discriminated against as Lia is. So, the question (that is never asked but implied) isn't just 'what is human?' but rather 'what is the defining limit of human?' There's also a blink-and-you'll-miss-it touch on race in this dystopian view of the future when discussing the skimmers other than Lia – those who were experimented on to become the first mechanized creatures. Unfortunately, Ms. Wasserman doesn't explore these issues very much at all in *Skinned*, though I'm hopeful these are topics that will be touched on in the second book.

Far more interesting than the tired and somewhat ham-handed discrimination angle is the storyline of Lia's inner struggle. As a character, Lia is a spoiled princess brat. She's pretty and rich and popular, and as those traits are wont to breed, Lia is a shallow bitch. When she finds herself displaced from her position atop the

social totem pole at school, however, Lia learns that there is more to life than setting fashion trends and going to parties, and she begins to tap her own unexplored emotional depth. Though it's hard to sympathize with Lia initially, I have to applaud the author for creating a normal, self-obsessed teenage girl. Like the brats on *The Hills* or other insipid MTV or CW shows, Lia resonated as real because she was infinitely believable as a self-entitled snob. For all Lia's faults, she isn't a too good to be true heroine – she simply is who she is, and she felt like a genuine character because of that. As Lia discovers that her old “friends” want nothing to do with her, and she forms a new friendship with outcast Auden, Lia grows and changes. She questions whether or not she should try to be human or join the team of other skimmers, embracing her differentness. Lia questions herself, her role in life, and most especially, her role in her family.

Which brings me to my favorite part of *Skinned* – the volatile, rocky relationship between Lia and her younger sister Zo. When Lia returns from the hospital, she finds that her unmotivated and unpopular younger sister has usurped her throne of teen royalty at school. Zoie sets trends, she steals Lia's friends, and Zo rubs it in Lia's face at every turn. Zoie's motivations are layered and though it seems like she's simply being a bitch, I relished in the confrontation the two sisters finally have in the novel. Of all the characters in this book, Lia and Zo are the two standouts.

I should also mention that *Skinned* is a dystopian, post-apocalyptic novel set in a version of the future where nuclear war has decimated the Middle East, and radiation and disease has claimed all of the major cities of the United States (and presumably the world). The atmosphere is destroyed as the world is covered by constant gray clouds and plunged into cold. A select few – those rich and influential enough – have escaped the cities and live out cushy lives in a futuristic version of suburbs; but the rest of the population scrounges in the ruins, mutated, hungry and without energy. This vision of the future is a bleak one, and especially effective since it's told through the perspective of a rich kid who doesn't know – nor does she care – much about the outside world. It's a cold, cruel hierarchy and one that I desperately hope is covered more in depth in the next book. We get a few tantalizing glimpses at the ruinous cities, a taste of how those who grew up there have had to live, but I want so much more.

Finally, what's a YA speculative fiction novel without its Obligatory Romance? Yes, *Skinned* has one of these – heck, it's even a triangle of sorts. But, it's a bit of a twist. Auden, the geeky outcast boy from Lia's school, befriends her instantly and crushes on her (of course). Lia, however, wants nothing to do with Auden romantically. Then, there's Jude, the original skimmer who leads a group of mechs just like Lia, helping them embrace the new creatures that they are – not human, but not machine either. The usual yawn-inducing romantic shenanigans ensue. BUT – unlike other paranormal teen romances, however, these are very flawed characters, playing out some bitter roles. I like that *Skinned* doesn't end happy for anyone involved – especially Auden and Lia, and I give Ms. Wasserman major kudos for that.

It wasn't a perfect book and walks on well-trod ground, but *Skinned* is a worthy read in its own right. And I am eager to see what happens in the next novel, *Crashed*.

Rating: 7 Very Good – but there's room for improvement. I eagerly await *Crashed*!

Judy says

Seit dem ich meine Ausbildung begonnen habe fällt es mir immer schwerer mich auf Bücher zu konzentrieren. Ich lese vielleicht wenn es hoch kommt fünf im Jahr was mich persönlich sehr traurig macht. Jetzt in meinem Urlaub habe ich dieses eBook dabei gehabt und ich beginne wieder zu begreifen was ich am

lesen immer so faszinierend fand und immer noch finde.

Skinned von Robin Wassermann ist der Beginn einer dystopie wie ich sie gerne habe. Sie regt zum denken an. Wie meistens wird eine Selbstverständlichkeit oder ein Makel unserer eigenen Gesellschaft in den Vordergrund gestellt und vergrößert und erweitert bis es ein Problem darstellt oder langsam zum Problem wird. Hier ist es die Technologie die überhand gewinnt. Alles wofür man keine Menschen braucht wird von Maschinen und Computern gemacht. Doch was wenn die Grenzen zwischen Maschinen und Menschen verwischt wird und man daran zu zweifeln beginnt wann eine Maschine aufhört und wann ein Mensch anfängt?

Lia ist ein erfolgreiche, populäre und ziemlich egoistische junge Frau die leider zur falschen Zeit am falschen Ort war und nach dem tödlichen Autounfall wacht sie im Körper einer Maschine auf. Ihre Erinnerungen, ihr Gehirn wurde in einen maschinellen Körper verpflanzt und es führt dazu, dass sie sich genau diese Fragen stellt...bin ich ich weil ich die gleichen Erinnerungen habe wie der Mensch in diesem Auto oder bin ich nur eine Maschine die sich einbildet so zu sein, weil sie so programmiert wurde? Und was hält die Gesellschaft davon?

Man kann wirklich nicht viel sagen ohne zu viel zu verraten, aber eines kann ich sagen, dass es eine wirklich interessante dystopie ist die mit einer grundsätzlichen, moralisch ethischen Frage beginnt und einen zum denken anregt und eventuell durch die gewählte Perspektive auch dafür sorgt das man eventuell umdenkt. Der Stil ist leicht und flüssig, man hat nie das Gefühl es kommen Gedankensprünge vor oder etwas ist einfach nicht logisch. Ich habe das Buch ab einem bestimmten Punkt nicht mehr weglegen können und es in mich aufgesogen und genau das erwarte ich von einer dystopie, von einem packendem Buch. Ich weiß für viele ist panem der Genre Vertreter doch ich habe in Skinned und auch in der Trilogie von Ursula Poznanski das gefunden, was ich wirklich in dystopien suche. Das hinterfragen von grundsätzlichen ethischen Fragen, von fragen, die wir uns nicht stellen aber vielleicht sollten. Man kommt nicht drum herum sich über diese Dinge Gedanken zu machen. Man muss sich damit auseinandersetzen und sich seine eigene Meinung bilden, egal wie diese Meinung ausfällt. Und ohne groß auf die weiteren zwei Teile einzugehen, genau das machen die Nachfolger eben auch, man wird gezwungen seine Meinung zu reflektieren und zu überdenken und das macht für mich eine dystopie aus. Das man gezwungen ist sich mit einem Thema auseinanderzusetzen bis man seine eigene Meinung felsenfest bildet. Es ist ein Prozess der mit der dystopie weiterläuft und egal wie die eigene Meinung am Ende ausfällt, man hat sie mehrfach durchdacht. Man würde gezwungen sie zu durchdenken und während die Meinung natürlich auch vom Buch beeinflusst wird, so geht man dennoch jeden kleinen Schritt in seinem Kopf durch und ohne es zu wollen hat man Ende des Buches doch eine gefasstere Meinung zu dem Thema als zuvor. Eine Meinung die man begründen und auch verantworten könnte.

Und weil mich dieses Buch eben so beeinflusst hat, so zum nachdenken angeregt hat, kann ich auch nicht anders als ihm fünf von fünf Sternen zu geben. Die Thematik, das Szenario, die Charaktere mit all ihren Macken und Schwächen und Mängeln aber auch mit ihren Stärken machen es einfach.

Brigid ☆ Cool Ninja Sharpshooter ☆ says

Awesomesauce. It was really good. :) It started off a little confusing, but it had a very cool and sort of risky concept to it. By risky I mean that it could have failed epically; I see a lot of authors take on this kind of plot and then just sorta let it die, but Skinned pulled it off. Not only was it addicting and exciting, but it got me thinking too. There was more depth in it than I expected; it had a thought-provoking theme about identity, and what makes someone who they are – and not only that, but what makes someone a human being.

A couple of little things bothered me, though: First of all, there were times when the main character kinda

got on my nerves. I started liking her more towards the end, but for a majority of the book she was a little whiney. I know she was in a pretty crappy situation, but still ... Well, at least she matured somewhat in the end, and I started feeling pretty bad for her.

The other thing was that, at times, I could tell this book desperately wished it was Uglies. Even the cover art and the way the book was formatted seemed very similar. The world in which it took place was very Westerfeld-esque: the Skinners are sorta like Pretties or Specials, it's a similar futuristic/post-apocalyptic setting, the society is very technology obsessed and they even have some similar lingo.

But, despite those few instances of similarity, it had a lot of originality too. Over all, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Tuba Özkatz says

RR--> 3,5

Farklı bir kitap gerçekten. Daha önce böyle bir şey okudum mu, hatırlamıyorum. Ama elbette birçok film, dizi ve kitap konusunun birleşimi hali gibi. Bilmem kaç yıl sonrası, nükleer felaketler, su savaşları, seller derken dünya gerçekten kötü durumda. Hatta gökyüzünü hala kaplayan kirmizimsi bir sis var, sadece ay görünüyor öyle böyle. Yıldızlar sadece fotolardan görmüşler. Aşırı baskı diye bir durumlar var, kafalarından sürekli oralara baskı yaparlar, zonlarında (yani bu bizim sosyal medya hesapları gibi) yaşıyorlar resmen. Yani garip bir dünya. Şirketler her şeyin yönetimini ele geçirmiştir. Şehirler sefalet içinde, sonra şirket kasabaları var, onlar biraz daha düzgün. Tıbbi yardım falan var. Bir de bu aşırı kızılgırmızı gibi zenginlerin mekanları var.

Ama yanlış anlamayın, bu tarz detaylar sürekli görmüyorsunuz. Laf arasında geçen şeyleri toparlayıp size sundum. Bence kitabın başında dünyanın nasıl bir dünya olduğunu açıkçası güzel olurdu.

Çünkü biz dünyayı değil, o dünyanın içinde yaşayan genç bir kız inceliyoruz. Onun kafasında.

Kız zengin, zenginlik, babasının çocuğu gibi bir şey.

Tabii bu yeni çağda bir şey daha var: Yükleme.

Bir insan öldüyse beynini çıkarıp anılarını aktararak yapay bedenlere atıyorlar. Bir çeşit makinemsi oluyor, ama aynı zamanda o insanın anılarına sahip. Ben oyum diyor falan.

Yaşam, ölümü, yalnızlık, insanların gölgesini, arkadaşlık ve salaklık anlatıyor.

Kızın "Ama bu benim hatam değil" diye düündüğü her şey, bence onun hatasıydı D: Bu kadar. I'm out :D

oliviasbooks says

This was a quite gripping piece of science fiction, right in the line of Scott Westerfeld's Uglies series, Mary E. Pearson's The Adoration of Jenna Fox and Circuit of Heaven by Dennis Danvers.

All of these titles tackle the question of what is really needed to make us human, what should be scrapped up and remolded, when large parts of our body or our mind are gone - if we can that is, of if there should be a physical limit to holding up our existence here on earth, of if we are allowed to tamper with an organism that has officially already ceased to be and to try our hands at creating artificial intelligence that mimicks or copies the ones of actual persons, and finally, of if the new person - physical or digital - will be me when is has aquired my memories and my personality.

Robin Wasserman's approach to point out - not answer - these dilemmas is a very thrilling and emotional one. It resonated within me for a while this morning. Certainly it helped that the post-war, post radioactive crises setting with a strict split of the world's population into bonus-points-stuffed haves in spacious, digitally/technically enhanced country-based buildings and company-bound, no-rights, no medical-favours have-nots in contaminated city-ruins had a pretty realistic feeling.

Although the book ends on a cliffhanger, I do not need to rush out to get the sequel - which doesn't mean I would mind to read it eventually.

I recommend "Skinned". But maybe I would recommend The Adoration of Jenna Fox and Circuit of Heaven more.
