



Originator

Joel Shepherd

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A quarter of a million people die in the destruction of the moon Cresta. The League civil war is accelerating out of control, but projections indicate that as their technologically induced sociological dysfunction continues, all of humanity may face a similar fate. In the aftermath of Cresta's destruction, Sandy Kresnov discovers the alien Talee operative Cai in Tanusha, there to learn just how far the technologically-induced insanity has gone. The Talee have seen this before, and they are terrified of anything threatening a recurrence.

Meanwhile, Sandy's old nemesis Renaldo Takewashi, the self-proclaimed "father" of synthetic intelligence, comes to the Federation seeking asylum. Talewashi may even have a cure--previously unknown Talee technology implanted into a human child subject--Sandy's little boy, Kiril. But it is exactly this technology that the Talee fear, and they will exterminate anyone caught using it.

Now, Sandy must fight to save her family from a terrible new threat, but doing so may plunge humanity into another destructive war between humans, or worse, against the massively-advanced Talee. And what final secret are the Talee protecting about the origins of synthetic humans like Sandy that could either liberate Sandy's fellow synthetics from bondage or spell disaster for all humanity?

Originator Details

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Author : Joel Shepherd

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From Reader Review Originator for online ebook

Jeff says

Second one of the series for me an an excellent wrapper of story arcs, if getting very philosophical. Good action, with Cassandra & Jane doing a hands on demonstration for the smug Talee. & that opens up can of space worms !

Brian Mccamey says

Very good read!! I just could not put it down... very thought provoking, entertaining book. It seems the more Sandy strives for some kind of "normalcy"; the more complicated and terrifyingly violent her life becomes. She deals with issues no newly single (or married) parent should have to deal with, political intrigue of unthinkable proportions, and manages hang on to her sanity and optimism like no other. I just hope we keep getting the chance to view more of Sandy, Danya Svetlana, Kiril, Vanessa, Rhian, Ari, Raylee and all the rest of her extended family.

Joseph Manes says

this is such a grand story spanning a great range of sci fi themes

It is a satisfying series ... Starts with a boom runs with great abandon and concludes with a satisfying twist that just leaves you longing for the next book

Henry Lazarus says

Joel Shepherd sixth tale of android Cassandra Kresnov finds that the Federation is being infiltrated by the Originator ((trade from Pyr) species that created the technology that created her and other GI's . The Talee have destroyed themselves twice and are very leery of any technology that led to their apocalypses. Sandy's adopted son Kiril was fitted with a growing uplink connection that improves on the connector driving elements in the League literally nuts. In fact for humans it's a solution to the problem. To get at him the Talee GI's who look like humans, put Sandy's home in artificial reality . Only the GI's can shake it. High action with lots of fun. Review printed by Philadelphia Weekly Press

Clay Kallam says

Australian author Joel Shepherd is on book five of his Cassandra Kresnov series, which is unusual in many ways. First, the protagonist isn't human – she's a synthetic version grown in a vat that has superhuman reflexes and strength and a slightly different mental structure. GIs, as they are known, were developed for combat by the League, which is the rival of the Federation, but Kresnov defected from the League to the

Federation, along with other GIs, amid a host of political and military complications.

Shepherd is especially good at those kinds of complications, and in “Originator” (Pyr, \$18, 399 pages), there are plenty of them, as deeper levels of an already convoluted situation are revealed. In addition, Kresnov is becoming more and more human in her emotions as she gets older – and even though she has the experiences of a much older human, she is still young in years.

Shepherd also is unafraid to add some intellectual meat to the stew, discussing reasons why human beings are so willing to believe what they’re told, and “Originator” is a worthy successor to the very strong books that have preceded it.

elidemelnibone says

J'ai beaucoup aimé cette série. J'ai été bluffée par le développement de l'histoire au cours des 6 livres. L'univers est original et cohérent, complexe et passionnant politiquement et technologiquement. Le personnage central l'humaine "fabriquée" Cassandra Kresnov grandit avec l'histoire. Les autres personnages sont aussi attachants. Cette société du futur n'a pas une culture américano-centrée et c'est intéressant. Les rapports humains / aliens Talee sont complexes. Des explications sont données, et quelques ouvertures peuvent laisser espérer que l'auteur nous ramènera auprès de Sandy et ses amis, ou dans ce monde qui s'élargit au fur et à mesure. Le style de l'auteur est très fluide. Je mets 5 étoiles pour ce 6ème tome, pour mon plaisir de lecture de toute la série. A lire dans l'ordre.

Chip says

4 to 4.5 stars. Much better than I'd expected - certainly avoided the feeling of "been there before, seen that before" I had with the immediately prior book. Resolved questions (including questions I hadn't even previously pondered) well - and not predictably. A little bummed that this is (probably) it for the series ... although Shepherd did add some new plot strings to hang future books on, so there is some hope I suppose of future books in the series (or at least the Kresnov universe) at some point.

Marshall Richard says

An enjoyable series. Gets better with each one.

Lushr says

There's no better sci fi, than the stuff which analyses and makes sense of what humans truly are, in turn setting forth their path. After an incredible ride of 6 books worth of fast-paced action, thrilling politics and engaging characters, it all winds into an elaborate and carefully woven tapestry, and when you look back you see the point of the whole story. It's an incredibly fulfilling way to end(?) a series. These most recent three books show a maturity and depth you don't see often in this fairly throwaway genre, I'm putting the

Cassandra Kressnov series up there with the Samuil Petrovitch series and Daniel Suarez' Daemon series. Really glad I found this!

Craig says

Equal, at least, to the best in the series.

Pati Roberson says

This series is still thought-provoking and good reading.

TSN says

The Cassandra Kresnov series really are excellent!

Jaron Harris says

Mr. Shepherd continues his excellent Cassandra Kresnov series here with another excellent entry. If you have enjoyed his previous books in this series, this one is well worth your time.

Will says

Just love these books....

Patrick St-Denis says

Although I've been shouting it from the rooftops for the last couple of years, it appears that Joel Shepherd's Cassandra Kresnov book sequence remains what could well be science fiction best-kept secret. Every single installment is an intelligent and action-packed read and this series should definitely be on everyone's reading list. If I say it enough, perhaps more and more SFF fans will finally give this series a shot. . .

If 23 Years on Fire was meant to bridge the gap between the first trilogy and what came after, Operation Shield pushed the envelope even further and set the stage for what was meant to be a terrific finale in Originator. Needless to say, Shepherd doesn't disappoint and he brings this second trilogy to a satisfying end. With poise and aplomb, this is an author in complete control of his story, tying up loose ends in surprising and sometimes shocking fashion and opening the door for a lot more to come.

Few science fiction writers can come up with such politically charged yet balls-to-the-walls works that also

tackle social and moral issues. And given the quality and the depth of these novels, I feel that Joel Shepherd never got the credit he deserves from critics or his peers. These books are all awesome and *Originator* is a worthy addition to what is doubtless a superior SFF series.

Here's the blurb:

A quarter of a million people die in the destruction of the moon Cresta. The League civil war is accelerating out of control, but projections indicate that as their technologically induced sociological dysfunction continues, all of humanity may face a similar fate. In the aftermath of Cresta's destruction, Sandy Kresnov discovers the alien Talee operative Cai in Tanusha, there to learn just how far the technologically-induced insanity has gone. The Talee have seen this before, and they are terrified of anything threatening a recurrence.

Meanwhile, Sandy's old nemesis Renaldo Takewashi, the self-proclaimed "father" of synthetic intelligence, comes to the Federation seeking asylum. Takewashi may even have a cure—previously unknown Talee technology implanted into a human child subject—Sandy's little boy, Kiril. But it is exactly this technology that the Talee fear, and they will exterminate anyone caught using it.

Now, Sandy must fight to save her family from a terrible new threat, but doing so may plunge humanity into another destructive war between humans, or worse, against the massively-advanced Talee. And what final secret are the Talee protecting about the origins of synthetic humans like Sandy that could either liberate Sandy's fellow synthetics from bondage or spell disaster for all humanity?

As always, Shepherd came up with another intricate and well-crafted plot that reads like an excellent blend of political thriller and fast-paced science fiction. And yet, though political intrigue plays a big role in this book, what with the conflict between the Federation and the League, but also within the Federation itself, as there are numerous power struggles between the FSA, the CSA, the Fleet, and FedInt. *Originator* is probably more space opera than all of his predecessors. Indeed, a lot of revelations regarding synthetic intelligence, the GIs, and especially the mysterious Talee and their origins are unveiled, answering questions readers have been asking themselves for years. Hence, the worldbuilding plays a massive role in making this one a compelling and thrilling conclusion to this series.

Cassandra's moral awakening continues to be a fascinating facet to follow, as Shepherd raises even more philosophical issues through her character. How she copes with her developing "motherhood," now that she is the legal guardian of Danya, Svetlana, and Kiril, definitely continues to make for some interesting character growth. The emancipation of sentient androids remains a central theme and those "human rights" issues play a key role throughout this new installment. The interaction between GIs is also evolving and they ponder about their identity and what they want out of life. Familiar POVs return, but it's also nice to get the perspective of newer faces like Danya and Raylee.

The last two volumes suffered from inconsistent pacing issues from time to time, but *Originator* is paced quite adroitly. Sure, the rhythm picks up exponentially when the author goes all out with his crazy action sequences. But for the most part, the pace remains relatively even and there is not a dull moment from start to finish. Shepherd found a way to create just the right type of balance between political intrigue, character development, worldbuilding, and action-packed battle scenes.

And even though *Originator* appears to bring this second trilogy to an end, the book opens the door for countless new and unexplored possibilities. I have a feeling that we'll see Sandy, Ari, Vanessa, Rhian, Ibrahim, and the rest of the gang again before long.

Meanwhile, do yourself a favor and pick up Crossover, the very first volume in the saga. You'll thank me later and berate yourself for not listening to me and having waited for so long to start reading this fun, smart, and entertaining series!

Highly recommended!

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