



Lethal Velocity : A Novel

Lincoln Child

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It's like nothing anyone has ever seen before. Utopia is the brand-new frontier of theme parks, a fantastic collection of Worlds each so authentic it takes the average visitor's breath away. Teeming with cutting-edge holographic and robotic technology, it has captured the nation's imagination. But it has also attracted a group of ruthless criminals. After infiltrating the park and its computer systems, their leader—calling himself John Doe—sets the parameters: If their shocking demands are met, none of the visitors to the park that day will be harmed; if not, then all hell will rain down. Dr. Andrew Warne, the brilliant engineer who designed much of the park's robotics, suddenly finds himself in a role he never imagined—trying to save the lives of thousands of innocent people . . . one of whom just happens to be his daughter.

Praise for *Lethal Velocity*

“A beautifully crafted scare-fest . . . heaven for techno-thriller fans.”—*People* (**Page-turner of the Week**)

“Terrific . . . a sensational piece of popular entertainment . . . [Lincoln] Child has created a fictional wonderland that is both high-tech and nostalgic. . . . If you are looking for intelligent fun, it doesn't get much better than this.”—*The Washington Post Book World*

“[A] whiz-bang plot . . . springs to life from the opening pages . . . Child does an outstanding job of depicting the workings of this fantastic playground.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“A riveting read . . . part mystery, part science-fiction, and all page-turner.”—*Roanoke Times*

Previously published as *Utopia*

Lethal Velocity : A Novel Details

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Author : Lincoln Child

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From Reader Review *Lethal Velocity* : A Novel for online ebook

S says

This book was remarkably dull for being a thriller. Within a couple chapters, it began to feel like a chore to read it. I wasn't into any of the characters from the very start. Then I got the audiobook since I needed something to listen to, and I listened to the rest of the book until the epilogue. Read the epilogue from the actual book.

I just never bought into the premise of this book. A futuristic, amazingly technologically advanced theme park that has turned the amusement park world on its head and is the MOST AMAZING THING EVER? And within 6 months of opening, it's already entrenched in the world consciousness as the must-do attraction of the century? That just didn't jibe with me.

It was also a problem that it was describing all the super-technological advances, except they all seemed pretty humdrum here in 2014. Not like anything special at all, really. And it was written before cell phones were ubiquitous, so it's got all this amazing technology... yet they have to find a walkie talkie or a landline to figure out where the hell anybody is. Doesn't work here and now.

Anyway, I didn't enjoy the story that much. It just all seemed.... almost like a kid's story, but with waaaaaaay too much detail. On top of that, the narrator on the audiobook had this unbelievably annoying end-of-sentence-lilt he used on several of the characters. Drove me nuts. And occasionally it came out just in the regular narration which was also annoying.

Tracey says

Utopia is not a bad book; it's just not a great book. I'm spoiled by mystery writers such as Jeffery Deaver and Anne Perry who build suspense like master architects of breathtaking mazes that delight and confound but still let people out at the end. Yes, okay, Lincoln Child (Is that his real name??) wrote a thriller, not really a mystery: In an idyllic new theme park that draws on the latest technology comes a bad guy who threatens serious harm unless he's given the technological secrets to the park, Utopia. There are no real surprises here, so I found: We're informed early on that there's a bad guy coming in from the outside, and that he has a team working with him. It's a short hop to deducing that he had inside help, and not so hard to figure out who it was.

That plot could still be interesting, and it was, though I found myself having to overlook the predictability that Child seemed unable to get away from. There's the protagonist's unhappy backstory, the romantic complications, the character introduced later in the story who just so happens to prove super-helpful. There's the small taste of some minor characters who get bumped off in short order. There are proverbial shotguns hung over fireplaces everywhere; I don't know if Child tagged these elements too plainly or I just got good at spotting them, but darn near every object or person I identified as someone/-thing planted to be important later in the story indeed showed up as important later in the story. The plot sounded so good, and yet the telling had a paint-by-numbers feel, which unfairly discounts all the research that the author did.

Child had coauthored more than a few books before *Utopia*; I'd like to think that this effort was simply a rough step away from working with someone else.

(less) [edit]

Tiffany says

When it was UTOPIA, this book was my absolute favorite in Lincoln's repertoire (and still is, to be honest). Everything, from the inside map of the amazing theme park that it is Utopia to the technology that runs it and the terrorists that destroy it, is amazing. Page after page. A must read for any techno-thriller lover!

Bonnie Lynn says

Looking forward to this Lincoln Child suspense novel where a high-tech futuristic amusement park is taken hostage by unknown bad dudes for unspecified reasons, My expectations must have been too high. The book had it's moments but, for me, not many. My opinion would be different Had I cared for even a few of the characters. The fact is I worried more about the robot dog and random park visitors than I did about anyone who'd been given a name in the novel. This doesn't mean I won't seek out another book by this author because I will, however, Utopia isn't one I plan to read a second time.

Paul says

I was very intrigued with the setting of this novel more than anything as I am a huge fan of amusement parks. It delivered on some new ideas for rides and park themes, though it would be better served in a movie than in a book. Too much description can bog a novel down, especially a thriller.

But this book didn't really deliver on the thrills in my opinion. I expected rides to be incorporated into the action a bit more. It got much better towards the end, but the characters remained rather wooden and it was easy to figure out who was going to be the "bad guy" given the soap opera-like tone. I don't know if this is my fault, but the plot of this seemed really a stretch; it didn't seem like the bad guys had to go to such elaborate lengths to achieve their goals.

It's a decent read, but I wouldn't go out of my way to recommend it.

J.P. says

The best parts of this book are the descriptions of a futuristic amusement park. Short on suspense and there isn't much character development

it'chy says

took me longer than expected;
it seems i have more hobbies than i care to admit

hurray for teresa bonifacio!

p106: a postcard labeled borokay beach, philippines was affixed to the inside of the lab door.

p419: sitting alone at the rear of the payload compartment, john doe had removed one of the countless stacks of currency and was making origami cranes from the contents.

The Cats Mother says

This has a great premise - terrorists take over the worlds greatest theme park - Die Hard meets Westworld - but I found it disappointingly slow and predictable. I had not read anything by this author before, but have seen his bestsellers in shops, and picked it up somewhat at random, keen to see what it was like. Robotics expert Andrew Warne visits futuristic theme park Utopia, run by his ex-girlfriend, with his teenage daughter, on the day a team of baddies have infiltrated the park to hold it to ransom.

I read plenty of thrillers, but this had way too much technobabble for me, and while the central characters seemed initially appealing, they aren't developed much, instead we are introduced to a bunch of randoms whose sole purpose was to be injured/killed off, in unpleasant ways. I speed-read the last quarter to get it over with, but don't think I missed much. It would make a good film, with all the high-Tech park rides and robots, but as a book it was rather a letdown.

Gertie says

3.5

Chris Friend says

I liked this book more the further I got into it. At first, I thought it was a former Disney employee trying to dream up a great scare at something unimaginatively similar to Walt Disney World, with the only major addition being a glass dome atop the property, what amounts to a running joke at Disney. About a fourth of the way in, the dialog was so reminiscent of soap operas that it was very difficult to take the story or the characters seriously.

Things improved as the plot began to pick up pace, and by the end, I found myself actually caring about the characters, both human and robotic. This is juvenile fiction, which isn't usually my cup of tea, but the plot was engaging, and the characters were **usually** more than surface-deep.

I "read" the audiobook version of this text and was pleasantly surprised. The actor portrayed the characters brilliantly and used his talent with accents to bring the large cast to life. It was a very pleasant read.

Dave says

OK, good not great. Theme park shake down thriller featuring widowed robotics professor with teen daughter. WestWorld meets Ocean's 11 for the taking of the Pelham 123 with a hat tip to Jaws. Escapist fiction like fiery cheese puffs.

Scott Sigler says

I'm a big Lincoln Child fan, and this one had all the elements of the strong Child novels we've come to expect. The science is a blast, the characters are fun and the pacing is brisk. For me, though, it seemed to be that the whole was less than the sum of the parts. I think it was the setting -- a high-tech theme park is very cool in theory, and getting behind the scenes should have worked, but in the end it just didn't thrill like the rides it described. Something about describing an imaginary roller coaster, describing imaginary fully immersive but fake theme park settings, and then going behind the scenes of those settings just didn't captivate me. Has nothing to do with Child's ability to tell a story, just one of those combinations that didn't hold me.

Roger says

SUMMARY: The setting is a fantastic amusement park near Las Vegas. A group of bad guys infiltrate the park and threaten mass destruction and death unless the park turns over some very valuable assets to them. I kept thinking of Disney World on steroids as I read the book. I don't know if the author intended the comparison to Disney World or not, but it was hard for me to avoid.

COMMENTS: I listened to a complete audio version of this book I got from the library.

While the book was "okay", it was by no means great. I wouldn't go as far as telling someone to not read it. But on the other hand, I would not recommend or encourage anyone to read it either.

I'm having a real problem putting into words the negative feelings I have about the story. Part of it is the decisions by the characters just don't feel consistent with what is happening around them. Maybe that has to do more with how the story is told than the actual decisions. I don't know.

Also I just didn't connect with the person I consider the main character, the visiting AI consultant. He was viewed by the evil people as a major threat to their plans. And while some of their actions did involve the computer systems, a lot of it also involved high explosives. Since they were so very proficient with guns and explosives, why would they be as concerned as they appeared to be about a professor with nothing like that in his history. It just seemed to be forced to me.

Kristin Lundgren says

Another great one by Lincoln Child, writing solo. This is the second go around for me, previously having read it about 8 plus years ago. It is a very well-researched, strong thriller in an amusement park, miles

outside of Las Vegas, set in a deep chasm, so that visitors approach the front of the park on ground level, and it falls away behind the park to several levels of offices, maintenance etc, . The park is under a large dome, sectioned into four themes - Gaslight, a perfectly recreated Victorian London, complete with Jack the Ripper holograms waving bloody knives and running around, fog, and tea, lots of it. It also "rains" every so often, just for about 90 seconds, a light mist, just enough to keep it cool and damp. It even smells like old London might. The next is Callisto, a bustling spaceport, with tons of fabulous roller coasters and scream rides, along with robots. All the robots are connected to a main frame via a metanet, or AI intelligence device that takes what the robots have "learned" each day, uploads it to the mainframe, and down loads it back to them each morning. The next is Boardwalk, a recreation of a turn-of-the-century boardwalk, like Coney Island, down to the costumes, food and rides - a wooden rollercoaster cleverly disguising the latest in modern roller coaster technology with a steel inner frame. The last is Camelot, a medieval recreation, complete with staged battle scenes and shows, with fire breathing dragons. Specialists are brought in from everywhere, to ensure that the park is perfect - food specialists in history, orchid specialists to tend to the orchids, fireworks guys, and Andrew Warne, who has been summoned by his one time love, now head of the park, Sarah, to look at the metanet, due to some possible bugs. A widower, he brings along his teen daughter Georgia to let her have some fun after what he thinks is a short meeting. But he is told he will have to dismantle the whole metanet, his baby and the vision of the original founder of the park, now dead, Eric Nightingale, who envisioned more of an immersive experience and less on rides, and casinos, and vendors. Warne is appalled, it is his life's work, and since he is currently floundering , he needs this metanet to work. They start looking at why there have been one-time glitches in various robots, with one major one in a ride that resulted in a broken leg. As they dig deeper they begin to see that the code has been altered, but by whom. Meanwhile, upstairs in the offices, Sarah is being visited by an arrogant man, who says he controls the park, and she must do as he says. As he stages bigger and worse accidents around the park, they must race to save the park and themselves, as they are effectively trapped inside the dome, with a madman and his crew holding them hostage. Taut, well written, and meticulously researched, this is Child at his best.

Farhan says

This is only my second novel by Child but I am already a fan of his sleek and compelling techno-thrillers. Utopia is the most modern and technologically-advanced theme park of the world. Its rides and attractions use cutting-edge technologies such as highly realistic holograms and robots with artificial intelligence. When the park is held hostage by a team of ruthless criminals, the responsibility of saving the lives of seventy thousand-odd guests falls on the shoulders of the robotics professor responsible for developing the park's main computer network. I have no idea why Hollywood isn't already drooling over this story which has a delicious premise and is populated with mind-blowing futuristic gadgetry.
