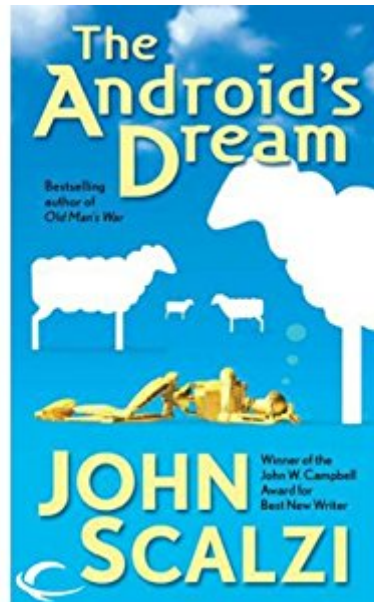




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The Android's Dream



Synopsis

A human diplomat creates an interstellar incident when he kills an alien diplomat in a most unusual way. To avoid war, Earth's government must find an equally unusual object: A type of sheep ("The Android's Dream"), used in the alien race's coronation ceremony. To find the sheep, the government turns to Harry Creek, ex-cop, war hero and hacker extraordinaire, who with the help of Brian Javna, a childhood friend turned artificial intelligence, scours the earth looking for the rare creature. And they find it, in the unknowing form of Robin Baker, pet store owner, whose genes contain traces of the sheep DNA. But there are others with plans for the sheep as well: Mercenaries employed by the military. Adherents of a secret religion based on the writings of a 21st century science-fiction author. And alien races, eager to start a revolution on their home world and a war on Earth. To keep our planet from being enslaved, Harry will have to pull off the greatest diplomatic coup in history, a grand gambit that will take him from the halls of power to the lava-strewn battlefields of alien worlds. There's only one chance to get it right, to save the life of Robin Baker - and to protect the future of humanity.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 10 hours and 34 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: December 7, 2010

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B004FHVZIK

Best Sellers Rank: #6 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science Fiction > Adventure #15 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Alien Invasion #35 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Science Fiction

Customer Reviews

This audiobook was recommended by a friend. I am so glad I ordered it. I am hooked again on audiobooks thanks to this one. It was enjoyable from the very first sentence. I am going to buy more of Scalzi's books now. If you like Hitchhikers sort of humor and sci fi, this is a story you have to read/hear. Oh... and Wil Wheaton does a fantastic job on the audio versions. I would look for him

again on any audiobook.

John Scalzi has a dark sense of humour and a sarcastic bent that comes out in his wise cracking characters. Inside his characters have grit and poise but the outside version we see in his stories is anything but sarcastic, cocky, irreverent and side splitting funny. Humanity and the alien Nidu are at peace. At least on the outside. Inside humanity has major problems with the Nidu. Half the world wants to kick them back to their home world while the other half wants to exploit any advantage they have with the Nidu as reluctant partners. While the Nidu only control a small fleet of war ships, those ships far outclass anything Earth has in its fleet. Our story starts with a high level meeting between human and Nidu diplomats to hammer out an agreement. Unknown to the Nidu the Earth's head diplomat hates their guts and is just dragging on negotiations to aggravate them. However he does have an ace up his sleeve, or rather in his shorts, as he has had installed a special technology that manipulates farts to send messages to the Nidu who converse with smells. Moving on from that we then have two opposing groups trying to find a special breed of sheep called Android's Dream. The Nidu need one for a special ceremony. So one group desperately tries to find the sheep while the other group methodically works to kill them all. In a saga that travels from Earth to the home world of the Nidu we have a nonstop roller coaster of a story. Twist and turns are everywhere and the plot twists are well thought out, developed and highly entertaining. HIGHLY recommended book and Author

This book by John Scalzi literally starts off with a lot of gas. During trade negotiations between the planets Earth and Nidu, Dirk Moeller of Earth, fitted with a special device from a man known as the Fixer, farts Lars-Win-Getag of Nidu to death! Dirk Moeller, laughing uncontrollably, collapses with a massive heart attack. It seems that the sentient lizard-like creatures of Nidu are smell sensitive and can interpret the meaning of each fart. The Nidu Ambassador to Earth, Narf-Win-Getag, arrives at the office of the Secretary of State Jim Heffer. The ambassador threatens war with The United Nations of Earth, believing his trade negotiator was smell insulted on purpose. Of the 617 Nations in the Common Confederation, Nidu was only ranked 488th in military power, but unfortunately Earth was ranked 530th, and the Nidu had the Glar Destroyers and the Planet Cracker bombs! Narf-Win-Getag explains that their leader (The Fehen) has died, and his son will be coronated in two weeks. The Nidu need a special breed of sheep for the Coronation, and the breed has been mysteriously wiped out. The demand is simple: Find the electric blue sheep, known as the Android's Dream, for the Coronation, and there will be no war. This is where our hero, Harry Creek, and

heroine, Robin Baker enter the story. Harry, a war hero from the Battle of Pajmhi 12 years ago, is assigned the task of finding the blue sheep. He later enlists the aid of pet shop owner Robin Baker. He also has the help of a dead war veteran, his friend Brian Javna, now a semi-alive computer program in a IBM machine. The ensuing pages are wrought with many twists and turns along with many questions: Does the Nidu Ambassador really want the sheep found? Is the Secretary of Defense, Bob Pope, on Harry's side? Does Robin Baker have the Android's Dream DNA in her body? Can Harry solve this mystery with so much opposition? You will have to read all 394 delightful pages to find out. What's unusual about this book is all the interesting side characters. They include the human-eating Takk, the computer geek Archie McClellan and the thug Rod Acuna. If you are a sci-fi fan, this is a must read. Congratulations to John Scalzi for another exciting novel.

Although I've read other books from Scalzi, I had never heard of this one. It is a great standalone story that is, more or less, completely resolved in this single book. To summarize without spoilers, humans are all messed up and so are the aliens they deal with. And to prevent war, a lot of strange events have to happen.

Mind-blowing concepts throughout the book. Spoiler Alert: An individual person gets recognized as a nation. A dead guy becomes a supercomputer. Farting as a weapon. Scalzi is a master storyteller. His stories always have an element of humor.

Typical Scalzi but a novel story and an engaging listen, Wil Wheaton does a great job as narrator. I drive about 35,000 miles a year and this will make it into the regular rotation. If you enjoy his style you should enjoy this one.

While much of this book seems to be derivative of other SciFi writers, I believe Scalzi was trying to both satirize and honor older SciFi themes while throwing in current science (gene manipulation, etc.). Most obvious is Ron Hubbard's founding of Scientology based on his prior SciFi writings--you never know if Scalzi is making fun of Hubbard and Scientology or actually explaining how it might actually work. Or maybe Scalzi was trying to create a modern HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY. In any case, the book is stuffed with subplots, twists and turns, characters ridiculous yet (in a book of fiction) "believable". I considered the end somewhat weak, but maybe it was just the Zenith of all the factors above, ultimately showing that the book is a satire and not a tribute.

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