

[PDF] The House Of The Scorpion

Nancy Farmer - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The House of the Scorpion

Author: Nancy Farmer

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Description:

Fields of white opium poppies stretch away over the hills, and uniformed workers bend over the rows, harvesting the juice. This is the empire of Matteo Alacran, a feudal drug lord in the country of Opium, which lies between the United States and Aztlan, formerly Mexico. Field work, or any menial tasks, are done by "eejits," humans in whose brains computer chips have been installed to insure docility. Alacran, or El Patron, has lived 140 years with the help of transplants from a series of clones, a common practice among rich men in this world. The intelligence of clones is usually destroyed at birth, but Matt, the latest of Alacran's doubles, has been spared because he belongs to El Patron. He grows up in the family's mansion, alternately caged and despised as an animal and pampered and educated as El Patron's favorite. Gradually he realizes the fate that is in store for him, and with the help of Tam Lin, his bluff and kind Scottish bodyguard, he escapes to Aztlan. There he and other "lost children" are trapped in a more subtle kind of slavery before Matt can return to Opium to take his rightful place and transform his country.

Nancy Farmer, a two-time Newbery honoree, surpasses even her marvelous novel, in the breathless action and fascinating characters of *The House of the Scorpion*. Readers will be reminded of Orson Scott Card's Ender in Matt's persistence and courage in the face of a world that intends to use him for its own purposes, and of Louis Sachar's in the camaraderie of imprisoned boys and the layers of meaning embedded in this irresistibly compelling story. (Ages 12 and older) --*Patty Campbell* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Farmer's (A Girl Named Disaster; The Ear, the Eye and the Arm) novel may be futuristic, but it hits close to home, raising questions of what it means to be human, what is the value of life, and what are the responsibilities of a society. Readers will be hooked from the first page, in which a scientist brings to life one of 36 tiny cells, frozen more than 100 years ago. The result is the protagonist at the novel's center, Matt a clone of El Patron, a powerful drug lord, born Matteo Alacr n to a poor family in a small village in Mexico. El Patro n is ruler of Opium, a country that lies between the United States and Aztl n, formerly Mexico; its vast poppy fields are tended by eejits, human beings who attempted to flee Aztl n, programmed by a computer chip implanted in their brains. With smooth pacing that steadily gathers momentum, Farmer traces Matt's growing awareness of what being a clone of one of the most powerful and feared men on earth entails. Through the kindness of the only two adults who treat Matt like a human Celia, the cook and Matt's guardian in early childhood, and Tam Lin, El Patron's bodyguard Matt experiences firsthand the evils at work in Opium, and the corruptive power of greed ("When he was young, he made a choice, like a tree does when it decides to grow one way or the other... most of his branches are twisted," Tam Lin tells Matt). The author strikes a masterful balance between Matt's idealism and his intelligence. The novel's close may be rushed, and Tam Lin's fate may be confusing to readers, but Farmer grippingly demonstrates that there are no easy answers. The questions she raises will haunt readers long after the final page. Ages 11-14.

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