

Agenda 2060: The Future as It Happens

A. I. Fabler

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Agenda 2060 is a darkly humorous novel that looks at the future of global society.

Society has collapsed, been reshaped, and might be on the verge of collapse again in A. I. Fabler's science fiction novel *Agenda 2060*.

In the year 2056, individual state governments have been overthrown, and there is now one government. All monetary debt, public and private, has been cancelled. All tools, governmental and social, that were created on the basis on capitalist patriarchal society have been abolished. In their place, a new social order has taken root, based on the inherent personhood of all humans, regardless of their race, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

Or so it seems.

Jordan, a non-person, was de-platformed when mathematics were outlawed. He retreated to the fringes of society and resolved to abide by the new rules, even as they destroyed his relationships. Alexa, a government statistician, happens upon Jordan in the performance of her duties. Having been tasked with calculating a way to balance the budget of the new world order, she deems it best to call upon the assistance of someone who, prior to becoming a non-person, was both a respected mathematician and her former professor. In so doing, Alexa makes discoveries that could destabilize the ideological and practical foundations of the new society.

The book is fascinating in approaching familiar political and social unrest and taking both to the extreme. Without being overbearing, the book points out flaws in society by turning them on their head and looking at them from the other side. Underlying the new society are the twelve articles of Agenda 2060; they call for practical, actionable solutions to foster sustainable equity in society across the board. The bulk of the book takes place in the three-year run-up to the agenda's evaluation year of 2060. Alexa's task of balancing the budget carries with it a much darker connotation, as it has to satisfy both its stated purpose and an underlying inequity—though inequities are not supposed to exist anymore. But they do, albeit flipped in favor of an identity-forward agenda. Attempting to bring those inequities into balance again requires sacrifices that have an eerie similarity to present circumstances.

Balanced on the razor edge of terrifying truth and utter harm is the beauty of the book's satire. The major underpinnings of the book rest on pure logic and reasoning. The goals of Agenda 2060 are inarguable, but human nature, and the tendency of society to have a cabal of super rich individuals and corporations immune to ideological shifts, makes achieving them a near impossibility. With Jordan standing in as the mouthpiece for pure logic and reasoning, and Alexa as the everywoman who feels that she has a good understanding of how the world works (and who is then dumbfounded to realize that nothing has changed), the book is able to maintain that balance in all its contradictions. The connection between the two is what makes the book's truths resonate. That they are both older is a bonus that speaks to the maturity of the book's handling of its topics.

The book makes it easy to sink into its future; it places no major barriers to entry. Everything from the overthrow and

new social structure to mathematical equations and economic reasoning is explained with as much depth as is necessary to be immersed in the story. Even in areas where the math is over complex, the enjoyment of the book as a whole is not impacted.

Agenda 2060 is an engaging, disturbing, and darkly humorous satirical novel that looks at the future of global society.

DONTANÁ MCPHERSON-JOSEPH (November 1, 2021)

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