



Fable

Daniel James

Amazon KDP

(264pp)

979-871192925-3

In the gripping fantasy novel Fable, supernatural elements break into the real world as friendships turn dark and deadly.

In Daniel James's intriguing fantasy novel *Fable*, teenagers and drug pushers exist in a gritty world into which touches of the supernatural bleed in.

Neil, Matt, and Sam are good friends. Neil is level-headed and trying to outgrow his dependence on drugs. Matt is a natural athlete; even his frequent marijuana use fails to impair his performance on the field. And Sam identifies with past eras, referencing the music and movies of the 1970s and 1980s.

The boys' banter is sometimes barbed; they make jokes about school lunches, and make awkward attempts to impress girls. But these ordinary experiences are interrupted when Sam runs into trouble with Jason, an enforcer for a local drug pusher. The resultant clash leads to the reemergence of Frogmore, a fourth, otherworldly friend whom Neil once filed away as imaginary, and whom he thought he'd left behind.

Neil doesn't want Frogmore to return; he is haunted by "something bloody and permanent" that Frogmore brought about when he was a child. But the malevolent spirit returns nonetheless, and Neil's life frays with each dreadful event that ensues. Though Sam is the impetus for Frogmore's return, it is Neil who is forced to make hard choices in the wake of the being's supernatural reentry.

Frogmore—a cartwheeling, cap-wearing parody of a British dandy who dresses in tweed and complains about the "hoi polloi"—has a knack for mayhem and disturbing eating habits. He is fierce when it comes to protecting Neil; he's also jealous, and so represents a potential danger to Neil's friends. After he reappears, additional bizarre elements enter the tale, which plays out as a tragedy, with ample bloodshed and considerable tension and dread. Throughout, there is little doubt that the situation will snowball until Neil decides how to react to Frogmore's ultimate plans.

Neil, Matt, and Sam are the best fleshed out members of the cast, whose human enemies are constructed as familiar bullies, and are not characterized far beyond that. A mad scientist is also introduced, but he's developed according to tropes, too. It's the boys' realistic camaraderie that is most centered in this otherworldly story: despite the supernatural events that surround them, their honest conversations about their lives, parents, and drug use are at the nexus of the book's true emotional heft. "I can't turn my brain off. Ever. That's why I need to get stoned," one character complains. Such moments contain suggestions of allegorical underpinnings to this strange story, though those allusions are not brought to the fore.

In the gripping fantasy novel Fable, supernatural elements break into the real world as friendships turn dark and deadly.

MATT BENZING (February 1, 2022)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to

Source: <https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/fable/>

have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.