



Green Valley

Louis Greenberg

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A technological utopia collapses into a prison of nightmares in Louis Greenberg's science fiction thriller *Green Valley*, a breakneck novel that explores what remains of human nature in a world of virtual reality.

When society grows concerned about nonexistent privacy and the consequences of being attached to “The I”—a virtual-reality device fitted to a person's neural network—the shadowy Zeroth corporation creates an independent enclave where devotees of their technology can live in virtual reality bliss while the rest of the world rebuffs even the interference of CCTV. Though encased in a sprawling concrete warehouse, the citizens of Green Valley are promised safety and security in the sunny streets of computer-generated communities.

But that facade comes crashing down when children from Green Valley start turning up dead in the streets of Stanton, their bodies riddled with nanotech and bereft of any obvious cause of death.

With Stanton P.D. showing little interest, police consultant Lucie Sterling—an unassuming analyst with secrets of her own—starts digging into the deaths, but the greater good isn't her only concern. Lucie's niece, Kira, has gone missing from Green Valley, and Lucie will go to any lengths necessary to ensure her safe return. Through an unlikely alliance with a Green Valley insider, Lucie peels back the curtain on the promised utopia, exposing a slimy underbelly of power and corruption that leaves her fearing for her life as much as for her sanity.

Dark twists lurk around every corner, with tension building as Greenberg unfurls a world at once horrifying to imagine and too close to home. The familiar siren song of technological advancement floats from the pages, beckoning with promises of satiated longings, but the grass isn't always greener—especially in Green Valley.

DANIELLE BALLANTYNE (July/August 2019)

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