

Percivious: Insomnia**J. J. Cook****A. J. Cook**

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In the exciting science fiction thriller Percivious, the government may be withholding science related to human evolution.

In medical doctor A. J. Cook and J. J. Cook's science fiction thriller *Percivious Insomnia*, mindbending scientific theories and complicated media and government relationships could lead to the destruction of the species.

Cooper, a confident, cocky developer with a pharmaceutical research company, has been working on a groundbreaking sleep aid, Noctural. But the promising new drug has stopped working for some patients, including Malcolm, the revered head of a competing company. As a result, the director is about to pull the plug on the drug.

In a nearby conference center, a geneticist reveals his Human Pinnacle Theory, arguing that the human species has stopped evolving and that, as the environment continues to change, humans will begin to die out. Following this presentation, a tenacious reporter, Mandolin, follows a mysterious lead. As Cooper puts his reputation on the line to supervise unsanctioned testing of Noctural, and as Mandolin gets closer to the truth about an international government cover-up, science and international espionage converge, putting the survival, and even the origin, of humans into question.

The book's chapters are short and focused on single characters, times, and locations. As they move between characters, unexpected connections are made, such as that Mandolin's mentor, Jack, is a close childhood friend of Cooper's. Their stories, which at first seem isolated from each other's, come together to form a complicated web, filling in the larger picture because of the added angles. This cinematic style breaks the book's complex information into chronological, concise portions and results in a quick pace.

The book covers scientific theories and journalism practices using familiar language and necessary exposition, making it both accessible and relevant. Its action sequences are specific when it comes to characters' physical movements and physiological responses. Here, as elsewhere, the book's language is precise and controlled—to the extent that, when detailed descriptions are absent, it is evident that what is present is important to follow and remember. However, the characters are also described with an economy of details, and these include some tropes: Cooper is a dashing, career-focused egoist; Mandolin is a fearless reporter and ex-ballet dancer who becomes Cooper's girl Friday; and among the book's villains is a wealthy UAE mastermind.

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SARA BUDZIK (August 21, 2020)

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