



## Pilgrim Tale

**Tim Murgatroyd**

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Personal vendettas lead to political upheaval in Tim Murgatroyd's *Pilgrim Tale*.

A hundred years in the future, after the Great Dying has wiped out much of the world's population, Michael Pilgrim and his family and friends in Baytown, England, are struggling to harvest enough food while trying to live happy, fulfilling lives. When technologically advanced drones begin attacking and a powerful figure named Big Jacko moves into town, chaos ensues, with Michael taking the lead against these brutal newcomers. Big Jacko, who wants to take Michael's huge family home out from under him, becomes Mayor and later Pharaoh, rising through the ranks while Michael and his comrades suffer violence, war, and oppression.

The large cast of uniquely captivating characters—ranging from Michael's teenage nephew, Seth, who betrays his family by siding with Big Jacko, to the mysterious, beautiful new museum curator, Helen, and her quietly yearning sister, Mhairi—all round out the story and give life to its power struggle between the menacing government and the community of Baytown. Michael's reverend brother brings a personal, human dimension to his battle to save England, and all of the sibling pairs' ever-shifting relationships evolve as a reminder of how the bonds of family push people to protect those they love, even when they're not on the same side.

The technology involved in the story isn't explained, including the purpose behind the genetic modification of some people. Though the bleak desert world isn't fully explored, it makes for a compelling backdrop to the characters' struggles. Gory, gruesome details abound but always serve the development of the plot. Pages turn fast in this adventurous dystopian novel, with its nods to *War of the Worlds* and *Mad Max*.

AIMEE JODOIN (May/June 2019)

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