

## Time Next: Book Two of the Time Zero Trilogy

**Carolyn Cohagan**

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Mina returns in *Time Next*, the harrowing second installment in the Time Zero trilogy.

Mina has just escaped her life as a Propheteer. If there's anything her time as a rebel taught her, it's to trust no one. Those who wish her harm are at a distance now; still, as she enters the world of the Unbound, she has reason to be wary. Her friends are kept from her, much of the new culture confounds her, and she is tormented by those who consider her a danger. Despite all reassurances that she is safe, Mina feels anything but.

The Unbound consider Mina freed; she feels trapped by their so-called liberation. Such contradictions are frequent. When asked if she is glad to be out from under her veil, Mina expresses mixed feelings; the veil, she reveals, was intrinsic to her religion. Without it, she feels exposed.

Previously, *Time Zero* offered an insider's look at a very different culture. As Cohagan reminds the audience in her introduction to *Time Next*, the Unbounds' society builds from a combination of real-world principles; every rule that Mina is expected to follow is one that is enforced by a current culture. With this knowledge, it's not hard to draw contemporary parallels.

But *Time Next* also does the work of highlighting alternative perceptions, things not often noticed when peering out from one culture into another: rules aren't always experienced as oppressive from within.

This dystopia emphasizes cultural sensitivity. *Time Next* does an excellent job of holding a mirror up to aspects of our own society. In many ways, Cohagan allows her audience to step back into their own world through a different entrance. This is a believable reconstruction of the world we know.

In this middle book, Cohagan reveals the layers of Mina's new world with skill, letting the audience delve deeper into her complex life. This series is sure to spark discussion and, hopefully, self-reflection.

HANNAH HOHMAN (March/April 2018)

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