



2009

### Pastworld

Tessa McMillan

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#### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

McMillan, Tessa (2009) "Pastworld," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 30 : Iss. 4 , Article 22.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol30/iss4/22>

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Beck, Ian. *Pastworld*. Bloomsbury, 2009. ISBN 9781599900407. \$16.99. 355 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Science fiction;

Subject: Amusement parks --Fiction; Genetic engineering --Fiction; Murder --Fiction; Books--Reviews;

Eve cannot remember her childhood. All she can remember is living with her blind guardian, Jack, in old Victorian London. One night Jack returns home with news that a dangerous man wants to take Eve away. Eve makes the choice to run away from Jack to keep them both safe. As she runs away, a ragged beggar chases her through the streets. A street performer, Jago, sees Eve's dilemma and rescues her. Eve joins Jago's traveling show and learns that Victorian London is just a huge amusement park, called Pastworld, that people from the current world visit to experience the past. After her disappearance, a group of men from the Outside go searching for her to keep her away from the mad killer known as the Fantom. The truth comes out that the creators of Pastworld genetically created Eve and Adam, the Fantom, to be tourist attractions to Pastworld. Adam would be a "Jack the Ripper" character and Eve would be his constant victim who would be resurrected after each killing. But her creators refused to carry out their orders for moral reasons. Eve was hidden away and Adam escaped to wreck havoc in the Pastworld. All come together in the end to face the consequences of their actions. Eve refuses to follow through with what she was created to do and saves those who have watched out for her.

Beck's book is an intriguing and spell-binding read. The story mirrors such authors as Wilkie Collins and Agathe Christie but with a science-fiction twist. This book is intended for older young adult readers because of the graphic descriptions of murder scenes.

Volume 30, no. 4 (March/April 2010)