



2019

Leaning on Water

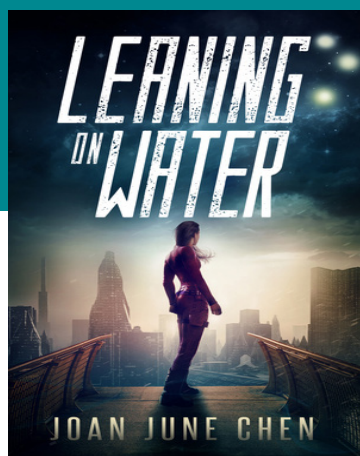
Karen Abbott

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Book Review

Leaning on Water

Author

Joan June Chen

Illustrator

Reviewer

Karen Abbott

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

514

Year

2018

Publisher

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

ISBN

9781985705043

Livinthea (Livi) Park is the top pilot at the Galactic. She has an intuitive feel for flight and fine-tuned reflexes that are almost too good to be true. Unbeknownst to everyone, including Livi herself, Livi carries the Mark of Dresden—a rare mutation that makes it possible for her blood to assimilate into nanobots that can enhance her abilities and prolong her life. When she is discovered by the Quadrati, a drone race intent on the destruction of humans, Livi must choose to remain human or become a Bionic, a human who has undergone the nanobot transformation. Friendships, loyalties, and determination are all tested as Livi is thrust into the forefront of the war and pushed to her physical and mental limits.

This is a great adventure with twists and turns keeping the story and main character in constant motion. The plot maintains a rapid pace that engages readers and keeps them wanting to know what will happen next and how each conundrum will be resolved. Livi is a noble and courageous young woman who, although headstrong and stubborn, is extremely loyal and courageous. She pushes herself with a strong personal drive for excellence and for those on her team. She is a great example for young women and young men, as is the camaraderie found throughout the book. A possible weakness of the novel is that it feels like three distinct stories. The first ends when Livi is taken from the Galactic to live with the Bionics. The next section ends when she becomes a Bionic. It is exhausting to keep going, and each section really feels distinct enough to be its own story. Since it all ends with another cliffhanger, perhaps there are already too many books in the works. Overall, this is a wonderful thrill ride that satisfies an urgent need for adventure.

*Contains mild violence.