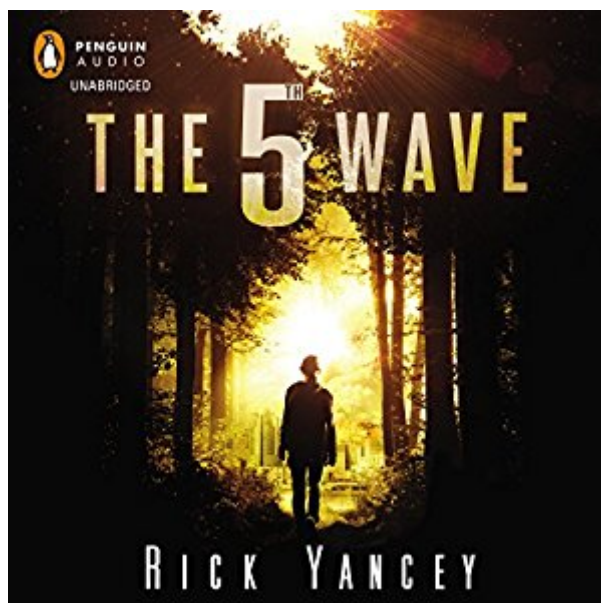


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The 5th Wave



Synopsis

The Passage meets Ender's Game in an epic new series from award-winning author Rick Yancey. After the first wave, only darkness remains. After the second, only the lucky escape. And after the third, only the unlucky survive. After the fourth wave, only one rule applies: Trust no one. Now, it's the dawn of the fifth wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them. The beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker. Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother - or even saving herself. But Cassie must choose: between trust and despair, between defiance and surrender, between life and death. To give up or to get up.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There is something about alien invasion that I find so utterly terrifying, yet so compelling. When I first heard about The 5th Wave by Rick Yancey, I knew without a doubt that I had to read it. Previously, I had read Yancey's Monstrumologist books and found myself utterly impressed with his writing style - pacing and plot were not sacrificed for syntax. Yancey's science fiction novel absolutely lived up to the expectations I held for it - namely that it would be strongly written, make me think, and have me invested in the characters. The Others have attacked humanity through different waves. The first wave of attacks leaves people without use of electricity. The second wave results in coastal destruction. The third wave brings plague. The fourth wave involves the Others, the aliens, hunting the last specks of humanity. So, what does the fifth wave of attack have in store?

Yancey's plot weaves loss, fear, and questions of what comprises humanity in an epic, pulsating story. Told through a variety of point of views, *The 5th Wave* is about a girl, Cassie Sullivan, who decides to save her brother Sammy despite the insurmountable odds against her. Along the way, she meets Evan Walker who is a bit of a mysterious loner dude, but he just may be Cassie's only shot at rescuing Sammy. Cassie Sullivan is hardcore. With an M-16 she follows the mantra, if something is shooting at you, shoot back. She was not always that way though. Before the invasion, Cassie was a frizzy haired girl that no one noticed. Yet, she adapts to her new life. Straight up, Cassie is incredibly compelling. I rooted for her to come out okay and unscathed for the whole of the book. I loved that she used her brains before she uses her M-16. I love that Yancey paints an interesting image of a girl who is willing to trust and fight to live, when she has every reason not to. *The 5th Wave* is an epic book with an epic main character. Yancey does not skimp on secondary characterization, either. Evan Walker, for example is characterized as a 'Noticer' and this is often repeated throughout *The 5th Wave*, and backed up with example. Then there is Zombie, a boy who has several point of view chapters and finds himself conscripted, along with other children, to wield weapons and hunt the Others, as though they were adults. Zombie is given a whole backstory and he spends much of the book trying to rectify an awful mistake he made during the invasion. Sammy, Cassie's brother, is given a point of view section as well. I found it interesting, seeing the invasion from the eyes of a very young child. As a reader, I could not help but hope that Sammy would retain his innocence and not be changed. But of course, that is a lot to ask. The world built in *The 5th Wave* is fascinating - what happens during an alien invasion? What happens when the aliens are able to inhabit human bodies? It's an interesting question that the book postulates and one that allows for a world similar to ours but with key differences. For example, cars no longer work and so, Cassie must travel on foot along lonely highways with no company but abandoned automobiles. It's a bit terrifying, the thought of our world without people and technology. I also have to admit that *The 5th Wave* reminded me a lot of *The Host* by Stephanie Meyer, in the way that the Others invade and take over, only *The 5th Wave* is better. Stylistically, I much preferred Yancey's view of hostile takeover to Meyer's. What I really liked about *The 5th Wave* is that it does feel literary without sacrificing pace. I love that Yancey shows one can write an intelligent book that ponders deeper questions and not be boring. *The 5th Wave* is very well-written. It asks questions such as 'what makes us human?' and 'is survival worth it when all hope is lost?'. This is a book that made me think while entertaining me. I found myself tempted to dog ear a few pages as I went along, as the writing is invigorating. For example, there's a section where Cassie is questioning the existence of God to Evan. It's not overwritten, yet is still a bit philosophical. I think if you are looking to be blown

away by a science fiction book but have been apprehensive about trying them, give *The 5th Wave* by Rick Yancey a shot. It is exciting. It is emotional. It is compelling. It is smart. There's a lot of hype for *The 5th Wave* and honestly, that hype is not undeserved. Recommended for readers looking for their next young adult fix.

As a mother of teens, I often read YA as a means to see what they are reading as well as have informed discussions about the books to enhance their learning. Over the past few years I have enjoyed commercial staples like *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, discovered hidden gems (such as the criminally over-looked *Unwind*) and endured moronic drivel like the *Twilight* series. As others have mentioned, I had high hopes for *The 5th Wave* based on stellar reviews and what appeared to be an interesting premise. Although the book started out promisingly, I had to force myself to complete it as it became more and more derivative and tedious - borrowing from TV shows like *Falling Skies* and books like *The Hunger Games* (and even *The Passage*) in a manner that bored and annoyed me. There is so little in the way of original thought here, I am stunned that the book has been so well received. Characters that seemed intriguing when they were first introduced quickly become so predictable that you could almost anticipate their actions and statements before you turned the page. As other reviewers have mentioned, the whole concept of the aliens and their mission in the story is not fleshed out enough to make it interesting or compelling. In fact, I found myself saying "oh please" out loud once or twice as the whole invasion seems constructed as a way for the characters to have certain experiences as opposed to a well-developed concept about these invaders and the larger implications for humankind. While I do realize this is meant to be YA material, I still thought the book was far too one-dimensional and would bore most savvy young readers who have come to expect more for the whole dystopian genre. I also was irritated with yet another heroine who is introduced as strong and smart right up until she starts swooning over a guy. As the *Hunger Games* series has shown, you can introduce teen romance without making your female lead into a simpering fool. Additionally, for those of you with kids who enjoy sci-fi, there is really not much in the way of the here and what is included in the plot about the aliens is quite dull and never really packs a punch in terms of plot or social commentary. This is much more in the genre of "teens finding their way in a dystopian hell-scape" and not crafted very well in that model. I wanted to like *The 5th Wave*, but it fell very short.

This book can be a lot of fun if you either a) don't pay much attention to details or b) aren't worried about factual lapses. As for plot - standard issue inscrutable aliens arrive in earth orbit and proceed

to wipe out most of the human race. As it later develops, they could have accomplished their goals without as much as a minor disturbance. However, that would be beneath their dignity (seriously) so instead they embark on an incredibly complex scheme to kill everyone. Written as a YA novel with a sixteen year-old protagonist, it requires some heavy-duty suspension of disbelief. But I still found it very enjoyable for the first half with some scenes that were actually moving. Characterization was an especially strong point. Unfortunately it then lapsed into an extended parody of military boot camp and the story began to fall apart as the author tried to cover a couple of gaping plot holes. There are several unlikely events, a few preposterous ones and a couple that are flatly impossible. All this leads to an utterly unlikely rabbit-out-of-the-hat conclusion. The characters try to lampshade this with only moderate success. The viewpoint character also makes a lot of fun of popular science fiction plot lines without seeming to realize she is inside one. I hope this was the author's intention. Finally, I had trouble with the military content since the author apparently did not trouble himself to learn much about the military or anything about weapons, although both are heavily featured.

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