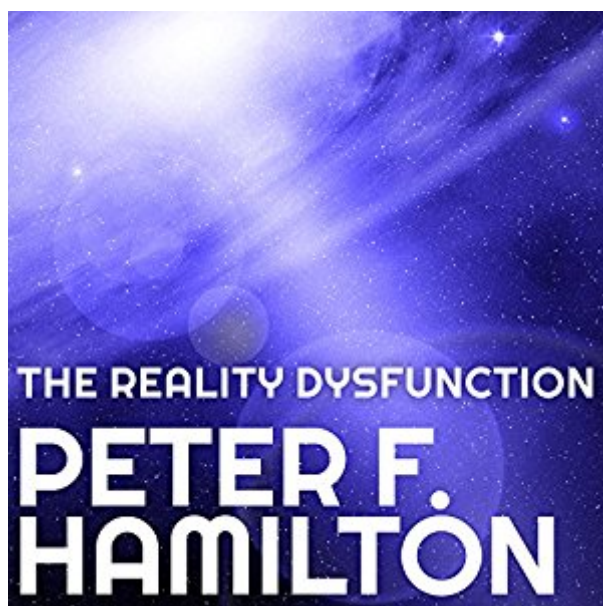


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The Reality Dysfunction: Night's Dawn Trilogy, Book 1



Synopsis

In AD 2600, the human race is finally beginning to realize its full potential. Hundreds of colonized planets scattered across the galaxy host a multitude of prosperous and wildly diverse cultures. Genetic engineering has pushed evolution far beyond nature's boundaries, defeating disease and producing extraordinary spaceborn creatures. Huge fleets of sentient trader starships thrive on the wealth created by the industrialization of entire star systems, and throughout inhabited space the Confederation Navy keeps the peace. A true golden age is within our grasp. But now something has gone catastrophically wrong. On a primitive colony planet, a renegade criminal's chance encounter with an utterly alien entity unleashes the most primal of all our fears. An extinct race that inhabited the galaxy aeons ago called it the Reality Dysfunction. It is the nightmare that has prowled beside us since the beginning of history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It has been over a year since I finished Night's Dawn and I still feel I lack the words to do it justice. Peter does not simply write a story. He creates for us a universe that is founded in the practical application of existing scientific theory. He then populates that universe with real people with all of their complexities, motivations and warts. Even minor characters are given sufficient depth that we care what happens to them; and bad things do happen. And in this backdrop we wrestle with concepts that have eluded the philosophers of the ages: What is the nature of the soul? Can we create true sentient life? What is death and what does it mean to the human condition? How can

humans best co-exist in an ethical manner that respects the individual and still promotes the overall advancement of the species? These weighty questions are explored in a well paced action based story with just the right mix of sex, violence and drama (and even a little comedy). Read the free preview. There is nothing that I or any other reviewer on here can say that surmises the experience better than investing in those five chapters yourself. If Peter's rendition of the mating flight of a sentient spaceship does not at least make you slightly misty eyed, perhaps this series is not for you. But there is only one way to find out.

I feel like Hamilton had the right intentions for creating an epic space-opera but just missed the mark. After reading all the critical acclaim for the book and seeing it most of the Top 25 sci-fi book lists I gave it a shot. The book starts off well but by about the 50% mark I started to wonder why I was still reading the book. I decided to carry on and slog through the rest but got about 80% of the way through the book before I just couldn't take it anymore and wondered what else I could be reading. I felt like the book would have been much better if the author kept focus on just a few key plot-lines and removed a lot of the excess. Even after sifting through all of the uninteresting parts to unearth whatever main plot is present, the story told is still not all that compelling.

I agree it started slowly but when you're building a rather massive story idea, the foundation just has to take time. At first I was in 'ok, what happens to X?' mode and resented the detail. As I read more, I started forcing myself to relax and enjoy the detail. You realize each character is giving you a different perception of central idea. The author really wants you to get the feel of each situation. Characters are revealed like peeling an onion - you get deeper each time they reappear. The fundamental idea behind it? I don't buy it but hey, it's fiction - and he remains true to the 'world' he has created - the crucial thing. It kept me up too many nights. I've been reading Sci-Fi since the late 50's so Asimov, Heinlein, etc. Also newer by Stross (Accelerando the best) , Neil Stephenson (Cryptonomicon! Snow Crash...) and my all-time favorite, Bujold - the Vorkosigan series - her characters have an unmatched reality. This compares well.

I stayed away from this book due to the bad reviews about too much writing and not enough editing. What a mistake. The writing allows you to fully get absorbed into the world. I found that thinking of the more "random" sections as cool short stories that will eventually tie in to the main story helps. This is hands down the best book I've read in the sci-fi genre. And for the people offended about the sex, grow up. It's not near as detailed and "all over the place" as other reviewers would

have you believe. Pick this up if you like epic stories at all.

Like much of Peter Hamilton's work, this is a demanding and challenging read with considerable plot complication and multiple narratives. It is a hybrid SF style involving some fantasy/myth in the SF mix which he often does. Characters are enjoyable and the ideas are interesting. Some may find the vision of hell and reanimated souls a bit too much to swallow but if one can suspend disbelief there is a considerable threat and all the accompanying drama and disbelief. The conclusion is serialised so it ends like an episode and is far from complete - get the next in the series or be frustrated. It is a long read and at times slow but overall a good SF/Fantasy read which shows considerable imagination.

Peter Hamilton has a penchant for writing complex novels with well developed characters. Nothing wrong with that! Reality Dysfunction is two parts sci-fi and one part classic horror. What makes it rise above the pulpy writing of so many authors is the time and care he puts in to the multitude of characters and the detail of the era in which they live. I will not give a synopsis of this book, as it has some surprises that are worth waiting for, but I will tell you this is the third time I've read this series, and each time I find something interesting I missed the first time around. There is one caveat: this is not a kids book, there are some pretty graphic scenes described. They are part of the plot and well crafted, but pretty scary none the less.

This is an enormous story spread across a wide range of places and characters. It is so detailed and believable. I was not sure what to expect from the book when I started but very soon became engrossed in the interwoven tales and the flood of ideas that come pouring from the book. I seem to have come across this a little later than many, but I am so really impressed with this book. I have read his Greg Mandel series and enjoyed it, but for me this is on another level all together. You need to be ready for the rise. It is not a short read but totally engrossing for the whole length.

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