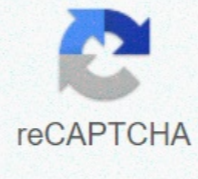




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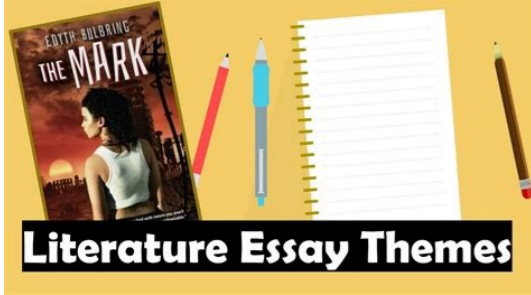
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The mark edyth bulbring study guide

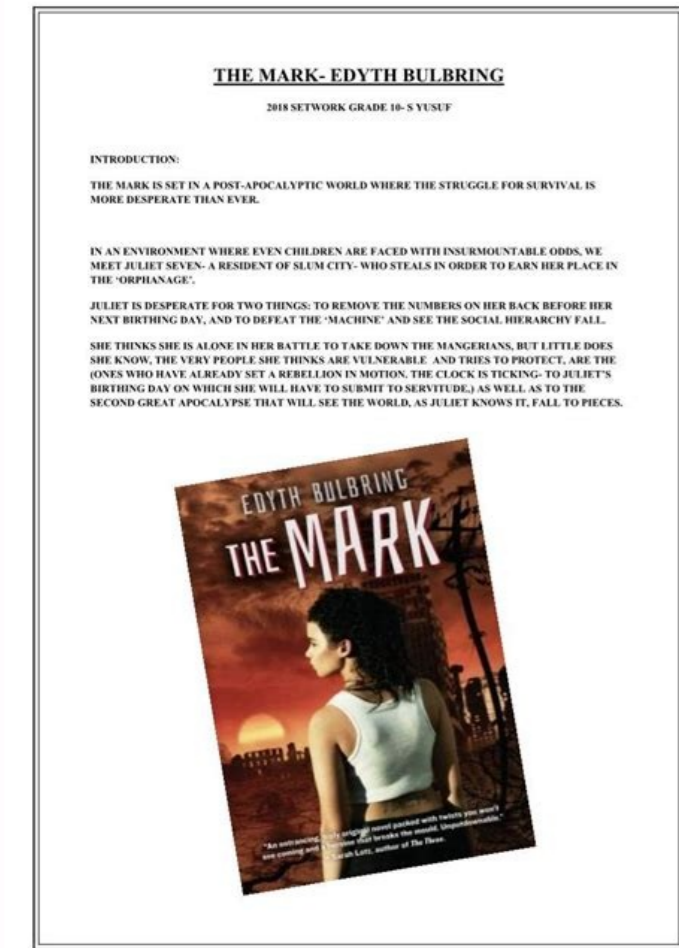
You're Reading a Free Preview Page 2 is not shown in this preview. Jump to ratings and reviewsIn the future, the world has flipped. Ravaged by the Conflagration, this is a harsh world where the relentless sun beats down, people's lives are run by a heartless elite and law is enforced by a brutal brigade. A mark at the base of the spine controls each person's destiny. The Machine decides what work you will do and who your life partner will be.



In this world, everyone must make their contribution. Some more than others. Juliet Seven – "Ettie" – will soon turn 15 and her life as a drudge will begin, her fate-mate mate will be chosen. Like everyone else, her future is marked by the numbers on her spine. But Ettie decides to challenge her destiny. And in so doing, she fulfils the prophecy that was spoken of before she even existed. Genres: Dystopia, Young Adult, School. Edyth Bulbring is an award-winning author of nine Young Adult novels: The Summer of Toffee and Grummer which was shortlisted for the English Academy's 2010 Percy FitzPatrick prize for Youth Literature (Oxford University Press, February 2008); Cornelia Button and the Globe of Gamagion (Jacana, April 2008); The Club (Jonathan Ball Publishers, September 2008); Pops and The Nearly Dead (Penguin, March 2010); Melly, Mrs Ho and Me (Penguin, September 2010); Melly, Fatty and Me which was awarded the English Academy's 2012 Percy FitzPatrick prize for Youth Literature (Penguin, September 2011); The Mark which was awarded the English Academy's 2016 Percy FitzPatrick Prize for Youth Literature (Tafelberg September 2014) and Snitch which won the 2017 M.E.R Prize for best Afrikaans or English youth novel (Tafelberg, May 2016). She was born in Boksburg and grew up in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. She worked as a journalist for fifteen years and was the political correspondent at the Sunday Times of South Africa covering the first democratic elections. She likes dogs, trees and junk shops. Displaying 1 - 30 of 39 reviews June 14, 2018I read this because it is one of the new prescribed books for grade 10 at the school where I'm doing observation at the moment. I'm a little sceptical of genre fiction being used as prescribed texts (even though I obviously enjoy science fiction and the like in general) so I wanted to see what the rationale was in choosing a book that is obviously following the dystopia, girl-hero trend. And after reading it, the rationale was clearly someone looking at the cover and going 'this has a teenage girl and that Hunger Games thing was popular, teenagers will like this, phew let's clock off early today'. All other considerations aside, this book is a terrible choice for a prescribed text, both for first and second language speakers. But first, the good. I didn't give this book only one star because there were some redeeming features, especially in the second half when the story takes off. The world has some interesting aspects (I especially liked the use of hadeda birds, because I loathe them so that got a visceral reaction) and with some editing and further development there's potential there. However, there is a whole lot wrong here (and keep in mind this is a book to teach from). The writing style is juvenile—not in terms of content, but the actual structure and style. The author uses no contractions, which I used to do when I was twelve because I thought it sounded fancier. It does not. It makes your writing sound stilted and over-formal, and when the (first-person) narrator is an orphan who grew up in the slums, it makes for a very weird, distant-sounding voice. There are short, broken sentences lying around everywhere, which would have helped the book read a lot faster if it wasn't for the stilted language. Unfortunately, the combined result is very stop-start, like someone who doesn't know how to drive. WAIT, just reminded of a huge problem: the blurb on the back of the book holds ABSOLUTELY NO RELATION to the content. Seriously. What?? I was so confused and kept waiting for the family-killing to start, but nope. Perhaps the back sets up the series which this is obviously intended to be? Which is a terrible choice and makes this book even worse as prescribed literature. Anyway, main character, Ettie is a decent character, but her internal monologue is too sparse, too lacking in emotion, and this together with the writing style kept me from connecting with her. She states that she has to hide her true feelings all the time so people don't use them against her, which is fair enough, good and believable character trait, but then her thoughts need to show her actual feelings. She is an inexplicable robot much of the time. This is made worse by the fact that for a large part of the story, Ettie isn't really the hero. Or at least, she is unaware of and uninvolved with the machinations going on around her. I do think that the side-kick or the bystander viewpoint can be interesting, but once you realise what's going on it just kind of makes her seem like an idiot. Of course, she is the actual Chosen One, but none of that becomes relevant in this book. She doesn't actually DO anything, she just survives for the entire first half, and some of the second. The world-building, like I said, had some interesting parts. Generally, however, it was really disjointed, and seemed like the author had looked at all the popular YA dystopias of the last 5 or so years and just took something from each one. There are references to floods, 'conflagrations', diseases, no agriculture or normal food, but no explanations. Which is fine in principle. I don't need to know exactly how the world ended. But maybe pick ONE disaster? Or explain the combination better. There is also no setting, and the names don't point to any specific location or culture. This is a little disappointing, since the addition of some South African flavour (seriously, the hadedas were the best part) could have done the story a lot of good. If all of the above had been fixed, this would still be a terrible prescribed book for one crucial reason: way, WAY too much new and made-up terminology. Locusts, Guardians, Pulaks, Rejects, Drainers, drudges, Posh, fate-mate, bug juice, Labors, Mangerian Compound, Mangerian families, Handlers, wardens, tellers, traders, post-traders, The Machine, marks... Any student who doesn't read this book with intense attention (or doesn't read it at all, which, let's be honest, is often the case), will be hopelessly lost. An okay book, but a really bad idea for prescribed work. June 11, 2015Before you roll your eyes at what you may consider to be yet another YA dystopia read, you can be reassured that The Mark by Edyth Bulbring isn't cast in the same mould as The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins as so many recent releases have been. Instead, the work has a grittier, more scratchy-behind-the-eyes feel that one would expect with George Orwell's 1984. Ettie, also known as Juliet Seven, isn't the special girl with the super abilities who is going to save the world and overthrow the evil ruling elite. She's no one. She's a drudge, a young woman fated to work in a menial job until she's only fit for the Reject Dump. Her Mark, which she desperately tries to remove throughout, means she's trapped in the roles cast for her by others. We discover a world that is, as Bulbring puts it, "Post-Conflagration". What exactly went wrong, we don't find out, but it's beside the point. Humanity and nearly all the life on the planet (apart from flies) have been driven to the edge of extinction. The Machine is all that keeps mankind going, regulating a rigid caste system in which only a few are lucky enough to number among the Elite. The sun is no longer a life-giving source of light, and any who do not play by the rules in this harsh world are deemed Savage, and cut off from society. When not training for her future in service of the elite, Ettie is also part of a criminal underground that scams the "Posh", and she makes no excuses for behaviour nor does she possess many redeeming qualities, beyond her rigorous self-interest. Though she's clearly not a nice person – and some of her nasty comments are true gems – her devotion to her friend and companion Kitty, whom she will go to the ends of the earth to protect, shines through; and also her love of literature that transports her to magical worlds so vastly different from the reality in which she is immersed.



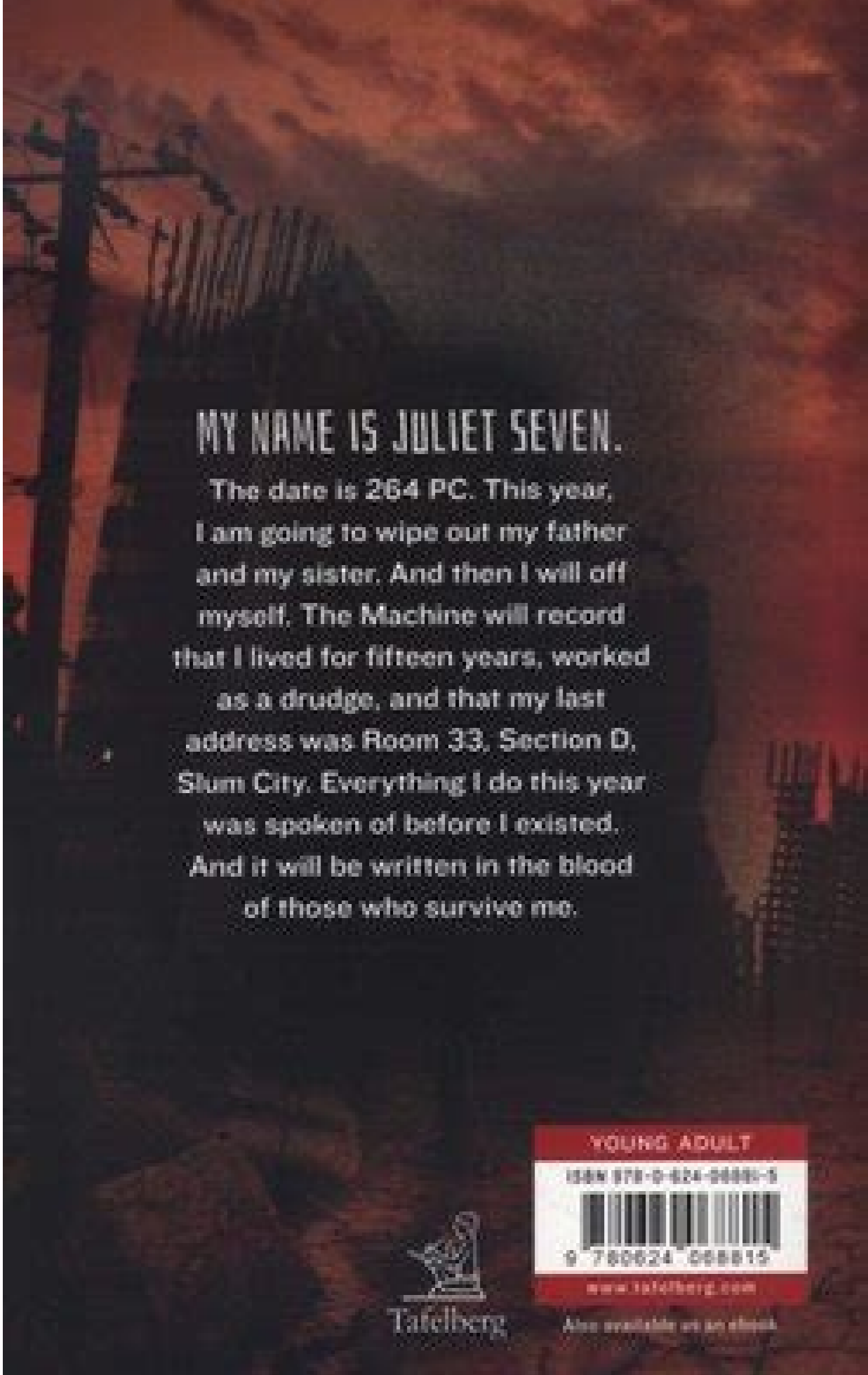
The main theme throughout the story is that of escape, and not being satisfied with preordained lots. Ettie's attempts to break free from an oppressive system lead her through many unpredictable twists and turns; as soon as I thought I knew which direction Bulbring was going to take readers, she confounded my expectations. The Mark is a fast-paced, gritty and uncomfortable read and Bulbring maintains a cracking pace, blending elements of SF dystopia with nuances of magical realism. Pick this one up if you're looking for something slightly different. February 9, 2022Another book I had to read for work. Honestly, I found it clumsily written. It often felt like the author was swapping out a strong storyline for lots of fluffy words and descriptions. And though I read the last two pages three or four times I cannot understand the ending, and this was just when I was finally starting to get into the story. It also does not help that I find Ettie an excruciatingly awful character with absolutely no depth, she is made purely of hatred and distrust and is honest with almost nobody in the entire story. The whole thing just feels like a novice version of the Hunger Games. Adding: For a novel set in South Africa, it is absolutely comical to me that the "heroine", who comes from the slums; is white. I cannot understand how the author would justify such a decision. March 11, 2023Yet again I find myself asking why this was chosen as a school network book. Yes, the author is South African and I want to support South African writers.



But I find myself less inclined to want to support them when they are forced on me and I feel that the reason is not in the best interests of our kids. I found the characters rather stunted. I know that there is a distinction between appearance vs reality (let's use the phrase that EVERYONE is going to use to discuss this - well indoctrinated kids) but there is very, very little that actually shows the reality and not the appearance. I don't want to take it as fact that a character is really kind and caring. I want actual proof of it - and in more than one place, please. The world building was well done, but I feel it was at the expense of the characters. The significance the lesser characters have is lost in the world building as they appear to be a means to reveal another fact, and are not people in their own right - until the end. oops. Spoiler. Maybe. But, what I detested the most was the ending - especially for a school book - even though it is my pet hate in all circles. The ending is a gimmick to make you buy the next book. It ends on the cliffhanger. No book should end on a cliffhanger. It means the story is incomplete and not properly structured, or else you are wanting to milk your readers for twice the amount of cash. I refuse. This will not be the first book I have abandoned here. Structure your plot properly, care for your readers, especially in this country where SA books cost a fortune, and we will care for you in return. 2023: This class loved the story, and so I found myself enjoying it more this time around.



I still feel there are far better dystopian novels out there, but if this gets kids reading, then I am not going to say anything bad about it. But, I can't help thinking about how they would have reacted over something like The Hunger Games... except they have watched the movie. 2019 2022 dystopian September 22, 2021To be honest this was an average book, it was kinda of confusing at the beginning, well mainly Part one, it was just wasn't well constructed but Part Two was better and more enjoyable and less confusing. So I guess as you read on you get use to the book. Also another thing the ending was a bit trashy, it need more to it. It just felt so rushed and crammed. It really could've been written in a better way. Some good things about the book, I liked the sense of humour in it mainly Part two and I liked the use of Personification with the weather, so different and creative. And Ettie was a nice character, the jokes, comments and thoughts she makes are good. She's so self kept and has been self kept for so long that she has become her own entertainment. I love that about her. Yeah I think that's all I have to say about this book. bye :) June 7, 2022 November 1, 2018The Mark is a dystopian novel that takes place after the world has burned and the sun beats down mercilessly.



It is hell on earth in more ways than one. The elite few have all the privileges and use their power to dominate everyone else. There are horrific human rights violations in every chapter. One of them is to discard people once they lose their usefulness. A girl named Juliet, who goes by Ettie, is raised as an orphan and trained to do menial labor as a drudge. She has learned that to survive, you have to be a nobody and trust no one. She blends in so well, that people assume she lacks intelligence and has no feelings. She also pretends not to know how to read, since kids like her aren't taught that skill. The story is told through her eyes and her thoughts are dripping with sarcasm. Ettie uses concepts from classic books and fairy tales to describe her world. She calls her handler, Xavier, a tricky hobbit and the doctors in lab coats Frankenstein 1 and Frankenstein 2. She also uses lines from nursery rhymes, which point to happier times and which are in stark contrast to her harsh reality. It's her love of stories that helps her connect with one of the children of the elites. Ettie, like everyone else, has a number on her back to keep her under the control of the elites. For years she has been trying to find a way to remove the mark, but without success. The Machine tracks her mark and determines what work she will do and who she will marry, but she doesn't like being controlled by the Machine or by a vague prophecy.

She has a purpose to fulfill; a prophecy that is whispered by a scattering of rebels. No one believes that the prophecy is about her, except for the hadeda ibis birds. These are large ugly birds whose eyes have been cruelly removed to trigger their ability to foretell the future. Whenever Ettie is near, they screech at her warnings about her future. This is a well-written story. There are twists and turns that will keep you guessing. The use of sarcasm is the right choice of humor for this hell on earth. If you're looking for a happily-ever-after, then this book isn't for you. It also doesn't have a complete ending. It's written for young adults, but because of the brutality, it should come with an age restriction of 16 and up. March 16, 2021What a pleasure to read an enjoyable school set work that my son is busy reading. And written by a South African. Edyth builds her characters up well and it is interesting and humorous reading what thoughts are added to what is actually being said out loud. The play on names of particular groups of people highlighted what we sometimes think of those groups. All in all a very good book for Grade 10. April 30, 2021A good read with wtf moments. It just lacked character depthness and wholesome content. ACTUALLY, NO. hold up. I dont understand coz this whole book is centred around one plot but it kinda doesn't happen. Like Ettie is the "chosen one" but what does that mean and does Ettie even know?

This was never elaborated on. The blurb and story do not match. idk... weird book but it was kinda interesting tho. October 20, 2019 story line is a bit difficult to understand from the beginning, but as you continue reading the story make more sense and you get a understanding of what is actually happening in the book. It is a GR 10 novel so was a must to read this book. I enjoyed the book very much. I recommend picking up this book just at least once. October 6, 2020 This is the best book I have read it has one of the most surprising end and just leaves you wondering when the next book is coming which I honestly hope is coming this book is the perfect mix between reality in the future and comedic kind of way Juliet confronts her situations trying to change her on providence. April 10, 2021 I had to read this book for English class and I can safely say that this book has taken me off the dystopia genre the plot is horrible, the story is repetitive and the ending was anticlimactic. I know its a sequel and this isn't the final book but the book was supposed to be interesting enough for readers to actually want the second book. September 19, 2018 Oh please this book is awesome.... I know there isn't descriptions about the characters in this one... that's because the author wanted us to create them ourselves.... this book is so savage whoa.... hoping for a part 2 February 14, 2019 This book was just simply amazing I enjoyed reading it, there was never a dull point in the book, I was on the edge of my sit with every twist and turn that came along with this book just simply loved it. October 8, 2021 One of the best books I've ever read. Filled with so much twists. It contains drama, action and a touch of romance. Honestly I didn't think I would be so in love with it but I struggle to read the last chapter because I didn't want it to end. Excellently written book. February 9, 2019 Awesome but ending is shit. March 2, 2019 Juliet Seven (aka Ettie) lives in Slum City in a post-catastrophe version of Cape Town, South Africa. An event known as the conflagration has left half the moon dark and blasted and led to the big drowning which left old Cape Town submerged. Ettie is destined for the life of a Drudge serving the upper class and an arranged marriage when she reaches 16 years old. But Ettie is unusual – for one she can read – and she just may be The Chosen One. Chosen for what we don't know yet but it may be to bring down the feudal society of the State of Mangeria where she lives. The Mark is a dystopian young adult novel. Being a card-carrying geezer, I'm not in the target demographic. But you know what, a good story is a good story and this is a good story well told. I'm not about to deny myself the pleasure. Part of my enjoyment of dystopian literature is how the author extrapolates a possible future and Edyth's book is a first-rate piece of world building. I can easily envisage that a devastated world where the technology that survived is in the hands of the elite leading to a feudal society where most of the population are Drudges who serve the Poshes. This world is harsh, hostile, unforgiving. Drudges who are no longer productive are discarded, thrown out of the city finish their short lives as rejects. What technology remains is in the hands of the Poshes and specifically the ruling Mangerian families. They operate The Machine, a computer (we assume), that makes decisions on every aspect of life in Mangeria including what work a Drudge will be trained for and who they will

marry. The Drudges are kept under control by the Locusts, the law enforcement arm of the justice department and by their dependence on factory produced food. Ettie is a likable and repeatable strong female character. She sees more and thinks more critically than most of the adults in her world. She is adept at applying what she calls her masks to adapt to situation in which she finds herself. She struck a deal with a blind book collector who taught her to read in exchange for Ettie reading to him. This gives her access to a world of books and ideas and her first person narrative is peppered with references to stories such as the Magic Faraway Tree (which I also read as a young reader), Alice in Wonderland, and The Hobbit. The first half of the book creates a detailed and vivid picture of Ettie's world. I found it a believable world that didn't stretch credulity. One of the major details that should resonate with us today is that sunscreen and sunglasses are now absolute necessities. With the climate change warnings we see nearly every day this doesn't seem far-fetched. Also, little details, like cockroaches being one of the few species of insects to survive adds to relatability of the story. The second half sees Ettie placed in service with a Mangerian family and we begin to see what happens behind the scenes and things start coming together that will propel the story onward. There are fantastical elements with Ettie as The Chosen One whose coming has been foretold and soothsaying hadeda birds. This is where me not being part of the target audience shows. Back when I was in my early teens I would have loved the idea of being The Chosen One. Now, I find myself thinking that the story would work as well without the mystical bits because of the excellent world-building and strong protagonist. But it's all good and I look forward to seeing how Edyth develops The Chosen One plot line. The sequel, The Reject is now available as an Amazon Kindle edition. Questions to be answered: What is Ettie's destiny as The Chosen One? How much of the world is affected by the post-conflagration devastation? I very much enjoyed The Mark and it is one that I know I would have devoured when I was in my early teens though in the 60s my enjoyment would have come from excitement and escapism. There are a lot of web articles about the popularity of dystopian young adult fiction and a surprising number asking if adults should be reading these books (the answer is yes). Elissa Nadworthy actually talked to teens about dystopian literature. Relatability is a factor. Here are a few selections from the NPR article, Why Teens Find the End of the World so Appealing, 2017 Elissa Nadworthy NPR "There tends to be a common teen-angst thing, like: 'Oh the whole world is against me, the whole world is so screwed up.'" Will explains. Teenagers are cynical, adds Aaron Yost, 16. And they should be: "To be fair, they were born into a world that their parents kind of really messed up." Everyone here agrees: The plots in dystopia feel super familiar. That's kind of what makes the books scary — and really good. Think of it like this: Teen readers themselves are characters in a strange land. Rules don't make sense. School doesn't always make sense. And they don't have a ton of power. The fact that these books offer a safety net, a place where kids can "flirt with those questions without getting into trouble." that's reason enough to keep teachers and parents buying them off the shelf. January 10, 2020 I truly hated the ending, but the rest of the book was okay. It was neither terrible nor brilliant. April 24, 2020 It is a book that was written by a girl whose name was Juliet who had a number in her back. April 13, 2021 May 15, 2021 June 5, 2022 Read this for school. The writing wasn't it but the story was interesting (not interesting enough to make me want to read the second part till this day) September 12, 2022 May 10, 2023 Displaying 1 - 30 of 39 reviews Get help and learn more about the design.