



## The Hope Store

*Dwight Okita*

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# **The Hope Store**

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Two Asian American men, Luke and Kazu, discover a bold new procedure to import hope into the hopeless. They vow to open the world's first Hope Store. Their slogan: "We don't just instill hope. We install it." The media descend.

Customer Jada Upshaw arrives at the store with a hidden agenda, but what happens next no one could have predicted. Meanwhile an activist group called The Natural Hopers emerges warning that hope installations are a risky, Frankenstein-like procedure and vow to shut down the store.

Luke comes to care about Jada, and marvels at her Super-Responder status. But in dreams begin responsibilities, and often unimaginable nightmares soon follow. If science can't save Jada, can she save herself -- or will she wind up as collateral damage?

## **The Hope Store Details**

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Author : Dwight Okita

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## From Reader Review The Hope Store for online ebook

### Donna says

Interesting concept! I wish there really was a Hope Store that could help the hopeless struggling with depression.

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### Connie Jasperson says

A poet and playwright, Dwight Okita's debut novel, *The Prospect of My Arrival*, a finalist in the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Awards, was one of the more absorbing sci fi novels I've ever read. So, I was quite intrigued when I saw he had a new novel, *The Hope Store*.

#### But First, THE BLURB:

Two Asian American men, Luke and Kazu, discover a bold new procedure to import hope into the hopeless. They vow to open the world's first Hope Store. Their slogan: "We don't just instill hope. We install it." The media descend. Customer Jada Upshaw arrives at the store with a hidden agenda, but what happens next no one could have predicted. Meanwhile an activist group called The Natural Hopers emerges warning that hope installations are a risky, Frankenstein-like procedure and vow to shut down the store. Luke comes to care about Jada, and marvels at her Super-Responder status. But in dreams begin responsibilities, and unimaginable nightmares follow. If science can't save Jada, can she save herself -- or will she wind up as collateral damage?

#### MY REVIEW:

Okita's cerebral yet poetic prose is gentle and approachable, even when depicting the harsher realities of his worlds. Set in a Chicago of the future, the story opens with Jada Upshaw, an amazing, multidimensional character. A well-educated woman, Jada is, at the outset, intent on killing herself. Her despair and confused emotional state is laid bare, but shown with the delicacy and respect Okita brings to all his characters.

Luke Nagano describes himself as "a boy with a big heart but no idea where to put it." This holds true through the entire novel, as Luke himself is the embodiment of hope. Of Japanese descent, Luke is a native of Chicago, and is deeply rooted in Midwestern American culture. He is deeply in love with Kazu Mori, a rock-star scientist from Tsukuba, Japan. Luke's thoroughly American blundering through life causes him to make occasional missteps, inadvertent cross-cultural clashes which create tension. Kazu is forgiving, but is completely dedicated to his work. Their love/work relationship drives the plot, also creating tension.

The relationships and thoughts of both Jada and Luke are shown throughout the narrative, but Luke and Jada still have secrets from the reader, keeping me turning the pages.

Okita shows the actual science behind the Hope installation with masterful strokes. Instead of devolving into a drawn-out explanation that most readers would skip, he offers just enough information about the key elements, a framework for the reader to hang their imagination on.

Beyond the great characters and the futuristic setting is the deeper story. Hope, the lack of it, the desire for it, and the lengths we will go to acquire it is what drives this tale. Intrigues, private agendas, and in some cases, desperation drive the story to a satisfying, logical, yet still surprising, finish.

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I highly recommend The Hope Store. I found it cerebral, sexy, and thought-provoking, as all Okita's work is.

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### **nukie19 says**

5 stars for the story and idea. 3 stars for execution, for an overall 4 stars. I loved the uniqueness of a store about hope and how hope, and the lack thereof, can so tremendously affect a life. However, I felt the book could have used another edit in places. For instance, the story is told with alternating narrators and in at least one place, the chapter title indicates the wrong narrator - not a big deal, but a bit disjointed at first. I also felt like the two owners of the Hope Store had personalities that overlapped too much and I would feel like one of them should be having an experience and it was really the other. Overall, I'd recommend it, but think it would really shine with one more critical editor.

I received this book as a Goodreads giveaway.

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### **Rachel Stansel says**

A wonderful and interesting story about hope and how it impacts the way we see ourselves and the world. Relatable characters. Really enjoyable. If pretty extensive suicidal topics bother you, this isn't for you.

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### **Iya says**

A huge thank you to Edelweiss for my copy of this book.

This review was originally posted on my blog, That Binge Reader.

This book was great. Jada Upshaw is an incredibly complex, and let's face it, bitter character--she tries to commit suicide multiple times during the course of the book. Throughout the book we see multiple sides of her, but the two main ones are the one with "desina sperara" or hope impairment, and the one who has gotten hope installed. She has so many emotions and she's so human and I think the author did an incredible job showing us that.

The plot was well-made, and it switches between the points-of-view of Jada and Luke. The scenes are wonderfully written and though simple, hold volumes of emotion. You should all read it.

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### **Hazel says**

I normally never read si-fi but enjoyed this book.

You will really enjoy this book if you like a books on hope.

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## **Alison DeLuca says**

The Hope Store is another wonderful title from Dwight Okita. The Prospect of My Arrival is one of my favorite novels, and The Hope Store showcases the same spare, poetic prose. I love when writers display artistic sensibility, and Okita is one of those word artists.

The book follows Jada Upshaw, a woman who is hope-impaired. She has 'desina sperara,' a condition that makes her hopeless and has driven her to consider suicide.

In order to help people like Jada, Luke Nagano and his lover, Kazu, have just opened a store to install hope. This isn't as esoteric as it sounds: Okita has created his own meticulous universe in near-future Chicago. As I read, he made me believe in the process. All the best stories pose What If questions; in this case, the writer's experiment is Hope as a commodity.

The Hope store's logic sells the idea. Even as Luke and Kazu open their new business, they are mobbed by protesters who call it The Hype Store. Jada becomes the face of their campaign as a suicidal woman who has a new life.

Of course, everything comes with a price. Jada is thrust into celebrity status even as her happiness grows and intimacy with her boyfriend deepens. At the same time, an exposé reporter approaches her to research The Hope Store from the inside.

All of these plot arcs are handled expertly by Okita. The point of view switches from Jada to Luke, made clear by chapter headings, and is very easy to follow. The writing is crystalline. However, there are hidden layers of emotion in deceptively simple scenes. I can see why there has been such a long wait between the author's titles: Hope, like Prospect, has been crafted into a masterpiece.

The characters spring to life in the very exciting story. Jada, Luke, Kazu, and even Blair Mathers (the journalist) are living, breathing people. They take you by the hand and pull you into their world.

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