



Withur We

Matthew Bruce Alexander

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Withur We Details

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Author : Matthew Bruce Alexander

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From Reader Review Withur We for online ebook

D.J. Knedgen says

I recently purchased passage to distant galaxies, seven hundred years into the future. My host on the voyage was Science Fiction author, Matthew Bruce Alexander. His time-travel vehicle? Withur We.

If you're looking for a quick read, Withur We is not for you. Science Fiction is, by its very nature, necessarily lengthy. (Therefore, don't fret the occasional typo). Detailed pictures must be painted, with words, describing places and things that don't (yet) exist. Alexander is a verbal artist with the soul of a poet.

Reading the following examples one has no trouble picturing what he's trying to convey. ...“eyes were shot with blood”; “...like a cloud that recalls a castle”; “...filling in the quiet spaces like mortar between bricks”; and my favorite: “Almost immediately, a line of naked prisoners jogged out of the exit portal and down the ramp. It looked as if the ship were leaking some mottled liquid forming an ever expanding puddle over the ground. Eventually, the drainage stopped, the portal doors closed as the exit ramps were retracted and the ship fell upward.” I would deem an imagination hopeless if it failed to respond to such imagery.

Though equally masterful, descriptions of parallaxes, light years, and the physics of black holes (to name just a few), bent my mind in directions it's not accustomed to going, and for good reason. I'm the kind of gal who, when asking for the time, doesn't care to know how the watch was built or when asking for directions cares not about latitude and longitude. But undeterred, with the hope of high adventure ahead, I bravely ventured on through the technical jargon that Sci-Fi devotees will definitely appreciate. I wasn't disappointed.

Through the eyes of protagonist, Alistair Ashley 3nn, I've experienced the deteriorating future of a largely apathetic populace fearing retribution from a corrupt, cronyism government. Seven centuries into the future, progress has been so thwarted that basic needs are perceived as a luxury. The Libertarian philosophy woven throughout the novel was greatly appreciated and most evident as Alistair Ashley, a convicted rebellion upstart on his home planet of Aldra, is sentenced to life on the prison planet, Srillium. His struggles to bring Libertarian-style law and order to the dog-eat-dog prison planet are met with both success and failure. Beyond this you'll get no spoilers from me.

Suffice it to say that at the heart of Withur We is a story of human strengths and weaknesses, hope and despair, loyalty and betrayal, love and hate, anger and grief, and disappointment and joy. Ultimately, it is a story of mankind's inherent instinct to survive as a free man.

William says

Matthew Alexander's W?thûr W? is an outstanding piece of work, skillfully written and showing a concern for prose and characterization rare for a book in this genre. Better yet, while it is, at a certain level, an overtly political book, it consistently acknowledges real world complexities and manages to avoid didacticism. I never got the feel of being lectured but simply of being invited to consider possibilities. This takes a real gift.

I don't think there's any way to summarize the book adequately. It begins with the return to his home world of a young marine who was sent to fight in a ruinous and apparently pointless war on another planet. Once

back, he realizes that the war is only one element in a general slide toward tyranny, and he decides to turn his talents against the government that trained him. This is simply the takeoff point for the novel, though. It is an epic work, not simply in length but in scope. And it needs to be, given the themes with which the author deals. Happily, the author has an energetic, stimulating style that draws the reader easily through the book.

While it's evident that the author has anarcho-capitalist sympathies, he is acutely aware of the practical difficulties that might be involved in trying substitute voluntary, private arrangements for their governmental equivalents. In one section of the book, the protagonist has some temporary success along these lines--this is undermined by old enmities and issues that are ultimately the aftereffects of government policies. Elsewhere, a victorious revolution becomes corrupt in its very inception, and it's not clear that this could have been avoided or that anyone is particularly culpable.

Interestingly, this tendency toward corruption in human institutions is part of a more general theme of impermanence. The cosmic background of the political plot is one in which intelligent species are infrequent, fragile phenomena doomed to eventual extinction. All the actions in the novel are, by the end, thrown into this perspective. Yet, I don't get the feeling that this is meant to lead us necessarily to pessimistic or apolitical conclusions. The emphasis on transience does, however, present the reader with a more nuanced view of political success and failure than one is typically given.

"Libertarian science fiction" seems to have become a recognized genre. If Mr. Alexander's book is any indication, it is a genre that is developing in sophistication and maturity.

Arlena says

Author: Matthew Bruce Alexander

Published By: Createspace

Age Recommended: Adult

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Rating: 4

Review:

"Withur We" by Matthew Bruce Alexander was a long, long read but it was full of many struggles for Alistair Ashley III in this good 'science fiction' read. I found this read to be divided in several different sections...part one dealing with this Marine who has returned home to Aldura, but finding his world had changed for the worst...finding the 'government was micromanaging not only the services that they delivered but the personal lives of its citizen these services were meant to be served.' Being upset by this due to what had happened to his father, this 'Ex-Maine', along with some other citizens to fought the government. Now the bureaucrats (government) are after them. Part 2, we find Alistair is now in prison beyond civilization where he leads another revolution to to expose this technology race that is so superior that has been monitoring the population of the barren prison planet. We find in this prison there were not laws. It was every man for himself and hardly no women were there. In Part 3, we find Alistair has escaped from prison and after returning home he now finds that really their had been no changes in this government process. Leaving you to wonder too, was it worth it all? Now, having said that I would definitely say to you to pick up "Withur We" and see for yourself how this author gives the reader the where, when, what and how of it all for in this good read. You will have questions that will really make you think with all of the corruption that is even around us today. You will see several forms that can lead to 'socialism, capitalism, anarchy and

libertarianism,' Where is the freedom...liberty and justice for all? This story presents a well written novel with a plot with well developed characters. Yes, it was a long read but a page turner definitely keeping you wanting to know what was coming next. "Withur We" will give you something to think about long after you put it down.

J.P. Medved says

Matthew Alexander's freshman effort, science fiction novel *Withur We*, is a powerful, and surprisingly nuanced story that manages to be great fun while at the same time illustrating the superiority of Austrian economics and allowing the reader to explore a working anarchocapitalist society.

The lengthy novel (696 pages in the PDF version) tells the story of Alistair Ashley 3nn, a young ex-marine from the planet Aldra, who returns to his hometown greatly changed by his experience in a galactic war to subdue the laissez faire society of Kaldis. Alistair, never one to support the big government designs of the two competing political parties on his home world (the bumbling Voluntarists and the brutal Realists) returns from the open libraries of Kaldis with a decidedly anarchist bent.

When the Realist party begins seizing power and setting Aldra on the road to a tyrannical dictatorship, Alistair joins a growing rebellion and helps touch off a planet-wide civil war.

Alexander combines an eminently readable writing style with exposition, for instance, on planetary and astral science, that adds to and fits within the narrative rather than taking the reader from it. Included also is a fair dosage of Austrian economics and anarchocapitalist theory, presented in such a way that the reader is able to grasp key concepts intuitively.

For example, in one scene Alistair, in an attempt to jump-start his anarchist society, seeks to convince the chief of a primitive tribe on the prison planet of Srillium to accept his private arbitration services.

"Shaking his head, and looking the chief in the eye, Alistair said, "I am not joining a tribe. I am remaining a free man with no tribe. I am running a business. You are from Earth?"

The chief nodded. "Laos."

"When you wished to buy a meal on Earth, you went to someone who made one and you gave him money for it. He did not have to join your nation or your tribe or anything at all, you just made an exchange. He gave you food; you gave him money. I am offering something similar. I offer protection and arbitration services. I am not joining the tribe, I am offering services." "

Particularly enjoyable are the nuanced nature of Alexander's characters. Alistair isn't some morally perfect superman, he has doubts and failures (quite a lot of them, actually), and the bad guys seem to be acting out of genuine conviction, not some innate evilness (save one). This is a book that presents the author's views without beating you over the head with them, and for this reason (not to mention the clear writing and rip-roaring sci-fi plot) it's an incredibly easy novel to recommend.

Where the the book stumbles a little bit is the very beginning and the very end. It takes some persistence to get through the first couple of chapters, after which the story really picks up speed and leads to a middle

portion that was so engrossing it had me staying up late at night to read. Unfortunately Withur We again loses steam towards the end and culminates in a slightly pessimistic, slightly hopeful, but ultimately unsatisfying ending.

It seems to be a novel calling out for a sequel, and I definitely hope Alexander writes one.

Richard H. says

This book could use another edit to bring it into greater balance, but overall I loved it. First the cons... There's a tendency of the characters to lapse into political speeches, which is mildly annoying but it doesn't occur that often here, as compared to say an Ayn Rand novel. The first two parts are very long compared to the third, which makes it feel unbalanced, and leaves you wishing there was more to the end. It feels like it was wrapped up too fast compared to the first two parts. For the pros... As a self published book there are shockingly few editorial errors. Some of the prose is very, very well written. The characters are all well drawn, and the author isn't afraid to let them go their own ways, making the story seem more real rather than being populated by archetypes. All in all, it's a great read, and I'd say the best part overall is that it's hard to find anarcho capitalist fiction like this; well written with a realistic outlook on just how far people are from holding such ideals, or living up to them, however you want to put it. If you're of that inclination yourself, as I am, you'll find yourself identifying with the protagonists and you'll scoot along just fine with the reading. There's a good bit of action in the book as well.

I'm hoping the author has a sequel in mind, this is definitely a world I will revisit with a reread in some time, and I would definitely shell out some money for a new story in this world.

Theresa says

At first this book was a little rough for me to get into- worried that I was not going to understand what I was reading and simply end up confused throughout the entire book, but once I stopped focusing on certain words- the story started to unravel with ease. This is not my typical genre, but Withur We managed to surprise me~ hold my interest and leave me with new thoughts to process. Some small issues with editing but nothing too bad as to disrupt this fantastic story. Though this book is forever long :) It was worth the time investment- Full of action, adventure, and detail I found this book to be well paced, unique, and an enjoyable world to enter. I don't think of myself as a strong political person- which is a big aspect of this book- the ups and downs of the main character's (Allistair) story and creativeness of this book was enough to make it through this massive book. The characters were well rounded- with good dialog- There were times after reading a paragraph that I would stop to absorb what I just read- The Author does an outstanding job with some of his choice of words and descriptions that I can not exactly explain.... for now I will go with Simple- but Captivating* This was a unique experience for me from an Author. Overall- I was pleased and had an enjoyable experience with Withur We- I'm glad to have been given the chance to read and review this book. I would read more from this Author in this style or any other- Recommended* Even if you think this is out of your comfort zone! Thank You! Reesa*** <http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blog...>

Linda says

Alistair Ashley, a seasoned combat ex-marine returned to his home world from war a world light years away, but once he saw the injustice going on in Aldura he could hardly hold his tongue! When his father's bar is taken from him, and he had to wait another year for a hip operation while the wealthy enjoyed all that could be had, he could stand no more and goes on a one man wrecking machine to fight the fat bureaucrats, but just as he attempts to bomb their building while using a stealth body suit that he learned how to use in the service, he found more dissidents were en massing for their own blow! He joined up with a group of men that were fed up as well and after a time, they were all caught or killed and sent a barren planet where there were no laws and every man was for himself and there few women! Now everyone expected him to lead and he had trouble convincing them that they were men to do their own will, but he never expected to confront an ancient secret that could reveal humanity's future.....

Fred Hughes says

This book was received free from the author for review purposes.

This book is a wonderful blend of high adventure, politics gone astray and the personal struggles of Alistair Ashley 3nn. Alistair is a highly trained Marine who although he has killed in the service, is more inclined to not kill to achieve an end.

The book unfolds in three parts forming a chronological story arc.

In part one, which comprises the first 42 chapters of the book, we find Alistair returning to his home world after serving 4 cycles (equivalent to 4 years) off world enforcing peace on Kaldis. While there he did have to kill while doing his duty but the official record of kills is far higher than what really happened. Despite the training, both psychological and physical delivered to produce a killing machine, he was able to resist and maintain his ideals.

His home world had changed for the worst during his absence. Government is micromanaging not only the services that they deliver but the personal lives of the citizens these services are meant to serve.

Alistair is having none of it and is soon, along with some other like minded citizens, in full rebellion against the government. Soon the authorities are after him and his friends. The author builds a tension between Alistair who has an idealistic concept of the rebellion and his counter parts, who have a totally opposite concept.

In part two, consisting of chapters 43 to 84 we find Alistair have been caught and imprisoned on his home world. He is then transported to a prisoner planet far away from home and as it turns out far away from what could be described as civilization. Alistair blossoms on this world as his skills are highly prized and he soon leads a revolution to depose the higher technology race that is monitoring the prisoner population. Lots of action.

In part 3 , consisting of chapters 85 to 92, we find Alistair escaping from the prison planet and returning home. There he finds that the rebellion was successful but only to the extent that one of their leaders has replaced the previously leader of the government. So what was really accomplished ?

Alistair, as a character, is a great study about how the outer appearance of a person may not really tell you what they are like inside.

So if you like action, politics, high ideals and smooth and well developed story arc, this is a book for you.

Although the page length is only 692 pages, based on the font size the author has managed to fit over a 1000 pages of action; so it is a bargain as well.

RECOMMENDED

John says

Withur We, the debut novel by Matthew Alexander, is quite daunting at a first glance. This massive tome sports nearly 700 pages in its PDF form, which is something that, along with many other books of this vicinity, almost always seems to bring the promise of sluggish, abstruse reading. Not this one. Mr. Alexander delivers this sprawling sci-fi epic with lusciously styled, easy-going prose that drools off of each page like literary honey. This great aspect of the novel, so rarely found within the genre it occupies, only serves to compliment the highly engaging plot that left me turning page after page.

I won't go into any details about Alistair's adventures, mainly because the basic overview of this tome has already been described by the other reviewers, both here and on Amazon, with perfect adequacy. I will say though, as a warning to strict optimists, that the ending to the book exhibits a poetic lugubriousness that does little to fulfill one's desire for cheer (this is not a "happily-ever-after" kind of story, folks). My own thoughts regarding the adventure's close are the same as they are with the rest of the work -- I thought it was appropriate and exceptionally crafted. However, as I said, if you hate leaving a book with a desire to take a hot shower with your head held low, this ride might not be for you. Still, I implore you to embark on the odyssey, if only to explore the slew of ideas that Mr. Alexander presents without arrogant didacticism (a talent in of itself).

My final thoughts? Withur We is an exceptional debut from an author whose future works I will no doubt read with enthusiasm. Enjoy!

Lisa says

I received this book as a Goodreads giveaway a few months ago. I will admit, the presentation of this book is daunting. The small print coupled with the tight margins made me wait to finally read this books.

When I started the book, I regretted waiting so long to pick it up. It started as a work of science fiction with strong political and economic undertones and I was very interested. But, quickly it turned in to a preachy, speech-ridden lecture about the benefits of a free-market economy to counter the bloated, top-heavy almost fascist government. In the middle of a rebellion, where people just want to get to safety, Alistair stops to lecture his family about the pros of his economic view.

When Alistair is finally given an opportunity to put his economic theory in practice, he does so by being the

biggest and strongest. He bullies those around him in to accepting this methods, and anyone who questions is shamed. Those who strongly oppose him are destroyed, and for someone who preaches private property rights, he has no issue stealing from others whose views differ from his. When his system begins to fail, instead of accepting that perhaps his system is flawed, he blames outside forces and runs away.

The way this is written will not convert anyone to libertarianism, but is written to those who already believe in the system and will agree with Alistair that the system is perfect, it's the people and outside influences that cause it to not work.

I would have liked to have seen Alistair grow as a character, but he doesn't. And added to that, his misogyny is atrocious and something I, as a reader, could not get past. Women are not characters in this book, they are incapable of having independent thought, and those who do are shamed and bullied back in to their place. They rely on men for everything, including housing and thoughts. To illustrate, Alistair and Giselle find themselves attracted to each other. Alistair is attracted to Giselle in spite of the fact that she does not have beauty products, has not shaved her legs or underarms, and he can somehow see through her animal skins that she has not shaved the rest of her pubic hair. She is attracted to him for his intelligence. And yes, at one point the author dresser her up as a warrior, but she is really only along for the ride to take Alistair's virginity, she does not really participate in the action. Similarly, when Alistair's sister is promoted, instead of sharing her happiness, Alistair needs to argue with her about how her science and history of science is wrong.

And the racism. For the second part of the book, everyone is described based on their ethnicity. People are described as Mediterranean, East African, Negro and Oriental. First, it is just rude and awful to describe anyone in terms that they themselves find offensive. Generally, people are offended by the terms Negro and Oriental. Second, saying someone is Mediterranean or Argentinian is not a description, there is too much variation within populations to think that tells anything beyond a bare shell of a stereotype. Much much more care was needed in the description of people.

This book had potential, and I feel like it should have been concluded in the first part. The second part was poorly edited and poorly written, racist, misogynistic, and a story of a bully. The third part read as if the author wrote himself in to such a spot he could not get out of it and had to find some way to end the book. It was tacked on and rather than added anything to the book, was just a cop-out to end the book.

Perhaps readers of libertarian fiction will enjoy this, but as someone who is less extreme in their views, I feel this book had potential as a story and as an illustration of libertarianism, but very quickly got lost in the speeches and completely feel apart in the second part with the bullying, misogyny and racism. Significantly better editing would make this a better book.

Jim says

This is a libertarian sci-fi fantasy of sorts. I enjoyed it, with some caveats.

It's 685 pages of fairly small print in a quality paperback kind of packaging. It's preachy in parts, but as a member of the choir, it went down easily enough for me -- the author apparently is from the Rothbardian school, where the protagonist has little regard for the 'State', etc. The plot moves along well, and characters are well developed.

The book has 3 main parts. The first on the protagonist's home planet (not Earth); the second part on a prison planet; and the 3rd fairly brief 3rd part back on the protagonist's home planet.

The final part seemed a bit forced, almost like the author didn't quite know how to end the book, so let's throw this part in here. I suppose there could be a sequel, in that there's not complete closure on the story line.

Overall, a good page turner, with action, ideas, and characters not made out of cardboard

Bob Olsen says

This is a big book with a lot of big ideas, a sprawling space opera and first contact story with a Rothbardian, anarcho-capitalist hero. The author is a better story-teller than most authors with an ideological axe to grind. The epic story touches on a variety of socio-political and scientific topics, including Austrian economics, theoretical astrophysics, evolution, and libertarian political theory. I was pleasantly surprised by this first-time author.

Hope says

First Impression: This author's other book, *The Preferred Observer*, was a fast-paced favorite. Hopefully more of the same here!

Characters: I don't like Alistair. I tried, I really did...but between his incessant blushing(!?) and his soap box rants it felt like the whole book was a venue to vent anger and frustration. The military, the government, and society in general are assailed while the main character becomes a poster child on the importance of therapy.

World Building: One thing Alexander constantly does well is set a scene. Readers will be transported - space adventure awaits in the future where new technologies and scientific discoveries abound.

Writing Style: The Shakespeare of Sci-Fi, Alexander opens your mind while drawing enough of home to keep perspective.

What I Enjoyed: The author's writing style and world building skills are impeccable, as always. I enjoyed going back to an earlier work, as it gave me a comparison of progress and craftsmanship over time.

Deal Benders: This book could have been great with some editing; I would have chopped it to half by print. Everything from using different descriptors for character behavior to paring down long speeches would make this diatribe easier to digest. The length along with Alistair's rants are distracting and ruin the story. I wanted to put him in timeout to finish his tantrums about how life isn't fair so the rest of us could go on reading.

Overall Rating: 2-2.5 stars. It was ok, with some good science ficiton bits. With the right editor it has potential.

Sean Keegan says

Goodreads Giveaway Winner

I'm not going to lie, this book is dense. It is close to 700 pages and has very small print. That being said, Matthew Alexander has a true talent for writing. When writing a science fiction piece, one has two ways to introduce the reader to the carefully crafted world: an easy way and a hard way. The easy way is to have a character play dumb and have everything explained to him; but the hard way is to slowly acclimate the reader to the the atmosphere through a carefully crafted narrative. The author fortunately uses the latter, and I must say that he uses it magnificently. Whatever he may lack in quantity, he more than makes up for in quality, creating two worlds that are not only realistic, but also detailed down to the smallest specimen. Furthermore, the character development that the author uses throughout the book is simply magnificent. My opinions of Alistair, as well as most of the other main characters, were almost constantly changing depending on how he acted in each situation. To say that they were characters is imply an understatement; by the end of the book, they all were actual people in the purest sense of the word. I simply cannot praise this book enough.

However, there were still some parts that were extremely dry. At some points it was less of a science fiction novel and more of a lecture on economics. This made it hard to read at some times and unfortunately in one of the main reasons that I cannot give it the five stars. In all I give it four stars: one for the magnificently crafted settings, two for the great character development, and one for the compelling plot. Truly great book and extremely thought-provoking.

Felix Bearden says

“Withur We” is an excellent presentation of the libertarian philosophy encapsulated in a science fiction action story. The hero, a very capable warrior, succeeds in answering many of the arguments against permitting a completely free society where there is no government to impose the will of the majority, the plutocracy, or the dictator on the citizens of a society. He is successful, at least for a time, in demonstrating how it will work.

Unfortunately, then, as now, governments are almost universally accepted as a necessary element in a society. The author gives examples of governments both of well meaning leaders and those only seeking power over their domain and how they grow into behemoths that control more and more of the citizens' lives taking more and more of their freedoms in the name of the “Common Good”.

The philosophical discussions are mixed in with the adventures of the hero leading revolutions in several worlds against such behemoths using first very primitive weapons then hovercrafts and later space ships. Friends are made, and lost. Many associates use his principles against him and betray his efforts to improve their condition.

The only disappointment to me is his treatment of religion and religious organizations which have really contributed to society's well being. Even though he recognizes the right to contribute to these organizations without the promise of a return it is obvious that he considers them more as cults than contributors to the society.

If I weren't a libertarian, I would want to make “Withur We” required reading :-)

