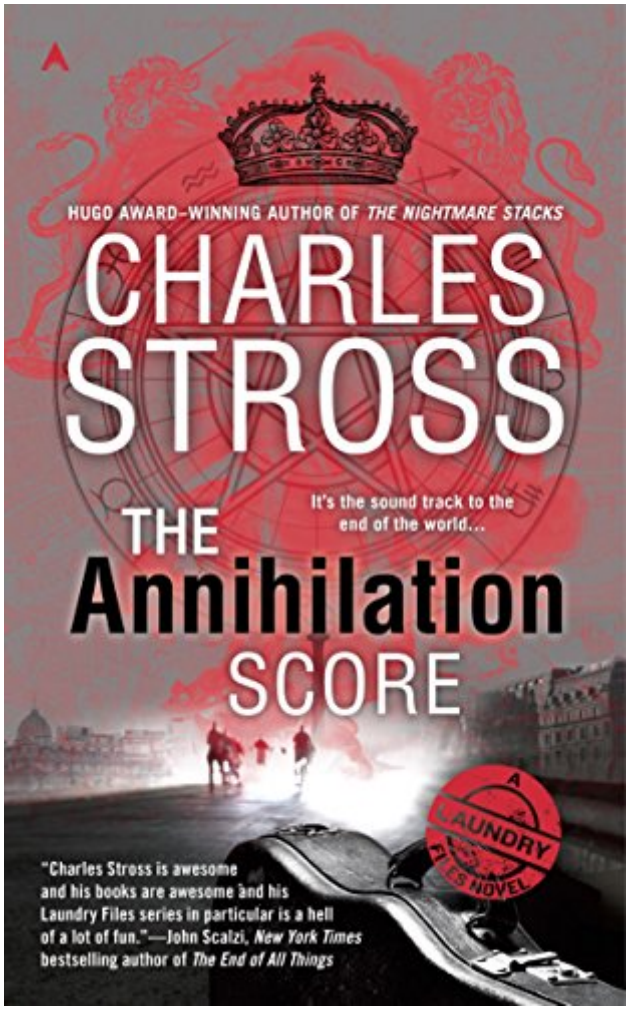
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The Annihilation Score (A Laundry Files Novel)



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Synopsis

Hugo Award-winning author Charles Stross presents the next case in The Laundry Files, Ã¢â ¬Å“a weirdly alluring blend of super-spy thriller, deadpan comic fantasy, and Lovecraftian horrorÃ¢â ¬Â• (Kirkus Reviews).Ã Â Dominique OÃ¢â ¬â„¢BrienÃ¢â ¬â •her friends call her MoÃ¢â ¬â •lives a curious double life with her husband, Bob Howard. To the average civilian, theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢re boring middle-aged civil servants. But within the labyrinthian secret circles of Her MajestyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s government, theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢re operatives working for the nationÃ¢â ¬â„¢s occult security service known as the Laundry, charged with defending Britain against dark supernatural forces threatening humanity.MoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s latest assignment is assisting the police in containing an unusual outbreak: ordinary citizens suddenly imbued with extraordinary abilities of the super-powered kind. Unfortunately these people prefer playing super-pranks instead of super-heroics. The Mayor of London being levitated by a dumpy man in Trafalgar Square would normally be a source of shared amusement for Mo and Bob, but theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢re currently separated because somethingÃ¢â ¬â„¢s come between themÃ¢â ¬â •something evil.Ã Â Ã Â An antique violin, an Erich Zann original, made of human white bone, was designed to produce music capable of slaughtering demons. Mo is the custodian of this unholy instrument. It invades her dreams and yearns for the blood of her colleaguesÃ¢â ¬â •and her husband. And despite MoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s proficiency as a world class violinist, it cannot be controlledÃ¢â ¬Â¦

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Customer Reviews

I've generally enjoyed The Laundry Files.But not this one. It is mundane to the point of boredom, and I am not sure if it is the plot or the protagonist but something does not work. Probably both, because normally the first-person POV is Bob, and the sly, off kilter humor works as it has a distinctly masculine tone. Here the POV is from his wife but her voice is both breathless in a Mills and Boon heroine way, and yet still very similar to Bob. So Mo did not come across as her own person for me. And then there is the plot, which focuses on martial disharmony for the first section and it's a bit tedious, to be honest. If I want to read about that I'll tuck into my wife's many novels of that theme. What I expect from The Laundry is neuromancer derring-do with a side salad of overwhelming odds, boatloads of "will he or won't he" situations, seasoned with the need to work in the shadows and a "by the skin of his teeth and smarts of his brain" good over evil ending.This kind of has that, but it is slow getting started and never felt cohesive or sophisticated. Which for the price is very disappointing. Stross let me down with this instalment and while paperbacks are way less convenient than Kindle, I think I'll pick up his next novel in the marked down bin because until (if?) the value curve heads north again.

Well, it's a Laundry File novel, so it gets 3 stars to start with; unfortunately, it stops here, because it is the least good of this otherwise wonderful series. The author seems determined to present a view of "the old married couple" (they're not that old!) overburdened by their responsibilities to humankind, but does so rather clumsily. Both Bob and Mo sound just exhausted and so does the novel -- it lacks drive, pizzazz, and, especially, a sense of humor, something that's been a great asset of the series so far. The story is well constructed and interesting -- no disappointment here, really, and the inexorable approach to CASE NIGHTMARE continues apace -- but I thought we were going to CASE NIGHTMARE GREEN (or RAINBOW), and this is CASE NIGHTMARE GREY. I get that Bob and Mo are victims of their knowledge and deeds and intolerably burdened by their responsibilities (esp. Mo, as always the more responsible and more forward-looking of the two), but that was true in the previous novels and did not prevent them from carrying on with some verve and panache and to show their love for each other. Now, however, these two need treatment for

depression, and, after reading the book, I feel like I could use some anti-depressants too...

The book is definitely a departure from the previous Laundry Files and not just because of the change of viewpoint. Part of the reason that I like the series is the amount of geek culture that Bob injects from his viewpoint. That type of humor and viewpoint isn't appropriate coming from Mo, so it makes sense, but it's a loss.That being said, it's not a bad story. It's just not as good as, say, the Fuller Memorandum The first few Laundry Files were relatively self contained stories with CASE NIGHTMARE GREEN being part of the backdrop. Now it looks like Stross is going full on in moving the story arc forward. So I suspect that this book is setup for the future, and I suspect I'll probably view it in a better light after those volumes come back.That being said, one book from Mo's viewpoint is enough. Future books need to go back Bob being the narrator. Without him, the series just loses too much of it's appeal.

Wow, what a disappointment. Bob is off screen through most of this book, it's all about Mo. And Mo turns out to be a whiny, self-absorbed mess who doesn't really love her long-suffering spouse and seems quite eager to ditch him for a younger, more handsome model. Poor Bob. The book is dense with bureaucratic detail and I found myself having to page through quite a bit of it. There are flashes of the brilliance that made the previous Laundry novels so enjoyable, but I can't really recommend this one. A book without sympathetic characters is like an atonal music score. It's just noise.

I love the Laundry series and eagerly awaited this novel's release. Sadly, this one is a great disappointment, probably the worst book Charles has ever written.In a nutshell, there is no reason to read this book.Mo's POV-- should have been great. But...we gain zero insight into her character. If anything, she is even more cardboard and boring than ever.We hear that Bob is off doing genuinely interesting things...which Mr. Stross apparently couldn't be bothered to write, while the story focuses on achingly dull things Mo is doing.Other problems:- No new mythos.- Very little humor.- Boring and scarce action scenes.- Recycled old characters, with very few new characters.- Superheroes instead of monsters.- Pages and pages of repetitive filler.Spoilers:Mo becomes an executive, and from the start is an expert at it and succeeds at every aspect of it with no drama or challenges despite having absolutely zero background in management and administration.Mo faces zero challenges.- Interpersonal issues are swept under the rug and create no drama.- Bureaucratic challenges are instantly overcome as Mo apparently knows how to do everything right (even though she has zero background in any of this).- Every supernatural challenge is instantly resolved by

Lecter (the violin) with no thought, planning, challenge, sacrifice or consequence to the characters.Bob and Mo’s relationship is artificially disrupted and kept out of the story almost completely so we see zero interesting developments here.The "superheroes" that appear are unoriginal and not one has a memorable character, power or purpose.TerribleTerribleTerrible

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