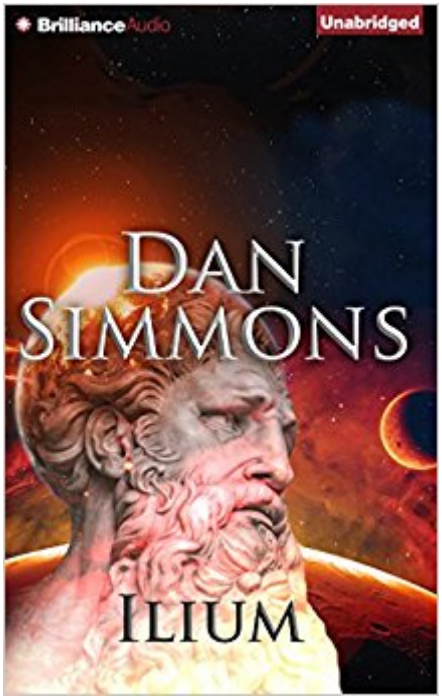
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Ilium



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Synopsis

From the towering heights of Olympos Mons on Mars, the mighty Zeus and his immortal family of gods, goddesses, and demigods look down upon a momentous battle, observingÃ¢â ¬â •and often influencingÃ¢â ¬â •the legendary exploits of Paris, Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, and the clashing armies of Greece and Troy.Thomas Hockenberry, former 21st-century professor and Iliad scholar, watches as well. It is Hockenberry's duty to observe and report on the Trojan War's progress to the so-called deities who saw fit to return him from the dead. But the muse he serves has a new assignment for the wary scholic, one dictated by Aphrodite herself.With the help of 40th-century technology, Hockenberry is to infiltrate Olympos, spy on its divine inhabitantsÃ¢â ¬Â¦and ultimately destroy Aphrodite's sister and rival, the goddess Pallas Athena. On an Earth profoundly changed since the departure of the Post-Humans centuries earlier, the great events on the bloody plains of Ilium serve as mere entertainment.Its scenes of unrivaled heroics and unequaled carnage add excitement to human lives devoid of courage, strife, labor, and purpose. But this eloi-like existence is not enough for Harman, a man in the last year of his last 20. That rarest of post-postmodern menÃ¢â ¬â •an "adventurer"Ã¢â ¬â •he intends to explore far beyond the boundaries of his world before his allotted time expires, in search of a lost past, a devastating truth, and an escape from his own inevitable "final fax." Meanwhile, from the radiation-swept reaches of Jovian space, four sentient machines race to investigateÃ¢â ¬â •and, perhaps, terminateÃ¢â ¬â •the potentially catastrophic emissions of unexplained quantum-flux emanating from a mountaintop miles above the terraformed surface of Mars.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition (August 12, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1480591726

ISBN-13: 978-1480591721

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 2.2 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 309 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,459,441 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 inÃ Â Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > (S) > Simmons, Dan #2180 inÃ Â Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction #2570 inÃ Â Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy >

Fantasy

Customer Reviews

Genre-hopping Dan Simmons returns to science fiction with the vast and intricate masterpiece Ilium. Within, Simmons weaves three astounding story lines into one Earth-, Mars-, and Jupiter-shattering cliffhanger that will leave readers aching for the sequel. On Earth, a post-technological group of humans, pampered by servant machines and easy travel via "faxing," begins to question its beginnings. Meanwhile, a team of sentient and Shakespeare-quoting robots from Jupiter's lunar system embark on a mission to Mars to investigate an increase in dangerous quantum fluctuations. On the Red Planet, they'll find a race of metahumans living out existence as the pantheon of classic Greek gods. These "gods" have recreated the Trojan War with reconstituted Greeks and Trojans and staffed it with scholars from throughout Earth's history who observe the events and report on the accuracy of Homer's Iliad. One of these scholars, Thomas Hockenberry, finds himself tangled in the midst of interplay between the gods and their playthings and sends the war reeling in a direction the blind poet could have never imagined. Simmons creates an exciting and thrilling tale set in the thick of the Trojan War as seen through Hockenberry's 20th-century eyes. At the same time, Simmons's robots study Shakespeare and Proust and the origin-seeking Earthlings find themselves caught in a murderous retelling of The Tempest. Reading this highly literate novel does take more than a passing familiarity with at least The Iliad but readers who can dive into these heady waters and swim with the current will be amply rewarded. --Jeremy Pugh --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hugo and Stoker winner Simmons (Hyperion) makes a spectacular return to large-scale space opera in this elegant monster of a novel. Many centuries in the future, Earth's small, more or less human population lives an enjoyable, if drone-like existence. Elsewhere, on some alternate Earth, or perhaps it's the distant past, the battle for Troy is in its ninth year. Oddly, its combatants, Hector, Achilles and the rest, seem to be following a script, speaking their lines exactly as Homer reported them in The Iliad. The Gods, who live on Olympus Mons on the planet Mars, may be post-humans, or aliens, or, well, Gods; it isn't entirely clear. Thomas Hockenberry, a late-20th-century professor of the classics from De Pauw University in Indiana, has, along with other scholars from his era, apparently been resurrected by the Gods. His job is to take notes on the war and compare its progress to Homer's tale, noting even the smallest deviations. Meanwhile, the "moravecs," a civilization of diverse, partially organic AIs clustered on the moons of Jupiter, have been disturbed

by the quantum activity they've registered from the inner solar system and have sent an expedition to Mars to investigate. It will come as no surprise to the author's fans that the expedition's members include specialists in Shakespeare and Proust. Beautifully written, chock full of literary references, grand scenery and fascinating characters, this book represents Simmons at his best.Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have read a lot of Dan Simmons other works, in other genres, and decided to try his science fiction in Illium. I was not disappointed. Though told from different characters points of view, it all came together so well. I love that his characters are multi-faceted, relatable, and believable. I started out disliking Damean immensely, and ended up admiring his bravery and his ability to grow as a person. I thought of Hockenberry as an arrogant scholar initially, but was pleased with his growth as well. I didn't know what to make of Mahnmut, the little moravec, but by the end of the novel, was in admiration of his loyalty and bravery. I can't wait to read Olympos! I am eager to see what happens to all of my favorite characters!

After two pages of Ilium, I literally could not stop reading. The three separate plotlines were each intriguing on their own. let's see. a crazily advanced society that roleplays Greek gods, Zeus included, resurrects dead 20th century scholars and gives them the necessary gear to play eye witnesses to the great battle of Troy? check. A similarly advanced society of sentient robots who discuss Shakespeare and Proust while they do their own Curiosity Rover roleplaying out on the distant reaches of the galaxy? check. a nihilistic breed of humans that discover their zero effort lives hide a sinister truth? check. I mean, what can you ask more from a book? Dan Simmons' imagination knows no bounds and the ride he offers in Ilium is not something one can refuse. And with the credit he got from me with Hyperion and The Rise of Hyperion, I felt like this could only get better.And indeed, it did get better.Until it started to not get better.and then it got worse.By the end of the book, I was skimming the pages and just wanted to get it over with, losing any hope of even a semblance of resolution, because I already knew that I'd need to read through the sequel, Olympos, to get it. And the more I read, the more it became like Endymion and its sequel, and less like Hyperion. While Hyperion introduced us to the amazing world of farcasters, cruciforms and the legendary shrike, with brilliant storytelling and captivating character building, Endymion devolved the whole lot into an incoherent soup of new age bulls***, super killer androids, and two main characters that I just kept wishing would either die or shut the hell up. similarly, by the end of Ilium, I cared little if any of the characters (except the little moravec Mahnmut) live or die and was angry enough with

the way Simmons kept pulling new plot threads into and from nothingness, that I knew I wouldn't go on to read Olympos. I just wanted to put Ilium behind me. I think **spoiler** I finally lost my patience when Daeman, Harman and Savi took the elevator ride to space.**end spoiler** it was too dumb a plot device to ignore.So why 3 stars? well, because the first 2/3s of the book are worth it. Much like TV's Lost, Ilium draws so compelling a tale from the get go that even the faux-conclusions and glaring plot holes later on should not keep you from taking the ride. as long as you're aware that you will probably want to jump off it at some point.

I'm not sure I've ever read a science fiction book that included Homer and Proust and CS Lewis. That was quite a ride. I'm going to have to read it again slowly because there is a lot there. Great characters, great plot, lots to chew on. Worth the time to read

This review is for both Ilium and Olympos (book 2 in the series):There are plenty of reviews which give the overview of the book so I'm not going to give you the 10,000ft view. But I wanted to touch on how well executed I thought it all was and how it gave me interest in reading more Shakespeare, Proust and even the Illiad- none of which I've read since high school & college. Any work that draws you in and makes you ask bigger questions is something special- and that's exactly what Simmons has accomplished.That said, this is a deep and complex work- if you're looking for a fun and quick read which doesn't make you think, then find something else. The ending seems a bit controversial, but I think that's standard fare for a work like this. There is enough open to interpretation that reasonable people can disagree which I think is wonderful. Either way, I still found the ending satisfying and thought it worked well. At least I can say I've read far far worse endings by good authors lately (Stephenson's Seveneves comes to mind).There is one section of the book though I will point out that I was disappointed about- the Islamophobia expressed in the use of the sub. Perhaps this is more of a function of when I read the series (late 2015), but considering when the books were written I don't think it's a stretch. The good news is that it's not nearly as bad as the repetitive beating you get about things in Flashback and so I was able to focus on the story as a whole and not get constantly reminded by this.I wouldn't quite rate this series as high as the Hyperion series, but that's an extremely high bar to set.

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Ilium

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