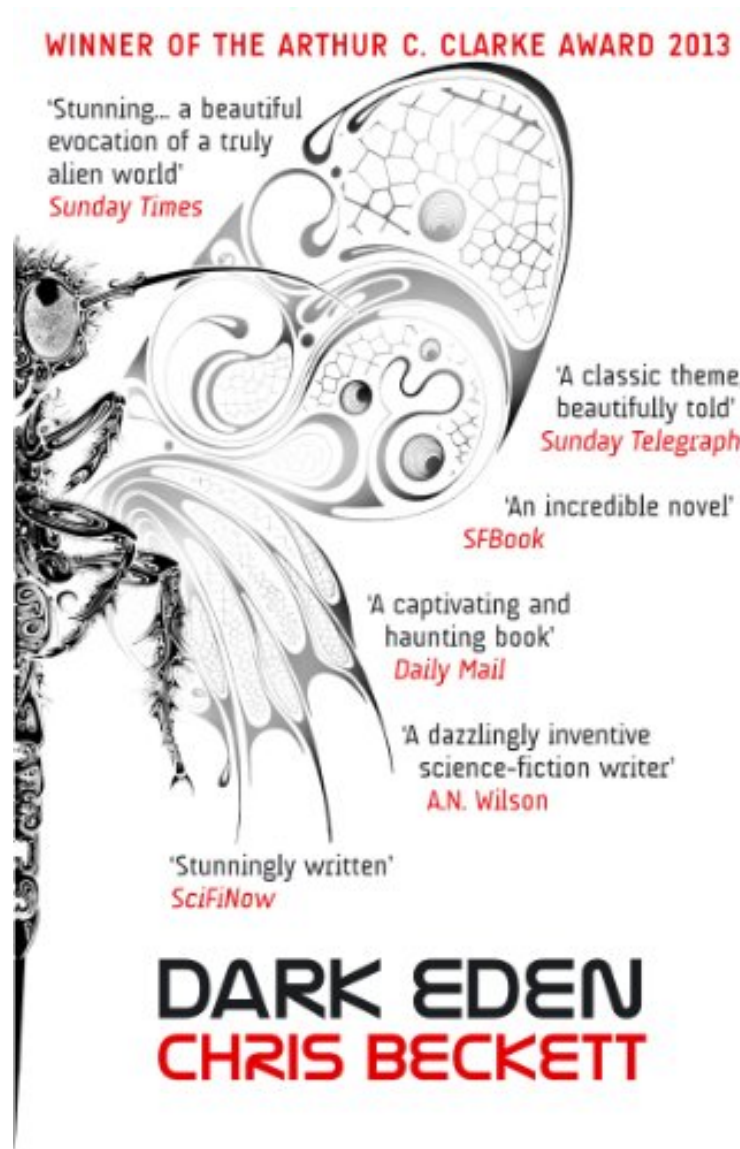


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## Dark Eden

Von Chris Beckett

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**Von Chris Beckett : Dark Eden** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dark Eden:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Bizarre but beautifulVon WortmagieThe story slingshots the reader onto a different planet, a planet where the trees are geothermic and humming, where animals have two hearts and dark green blood in their veins. A planet permanently living in the dark Eden.There we meet John Redlantern, a 15 year old human teenager who desperately longs for

change. But change is not appreciated in his family with its 532 members. He and his relatives are waiting to be picked up and be brought to Earth since 163 years. That is why nobody ever tried to discover the bizarre but beautiful planet in this long long time. Patiently they hold out near the circle of stones with which their ancestors (Angela and Tommy) marked their arrival with a spaceship. Everybody is convinced that they shouldn't veer away too far from the colony around the circle of stones because otherwise, they can't be found by Earth. Everybody is contented, though food sources are getting short, the family is growing bigger and bigger due to incest and free love and the living space is shrinking. Everybody, except John. He begins to revolt because he is restless and worried about his family. He completely turns life as it is known to the human inhabitants of Eden upside down; so much that a group of teenagers separates and tries to explore the undiscovered areas of the planet to find their luck and a new home. Driven by their desire for improvement of their environment they get confronted with stubbornness, anger and ignorance. They have to learn that breaking with traditions is not easy and what it means when your own family becomes the enemy. On their journey they explore completely new sides of their homeland and uncover the great secret about the past and their ancestors. Dark Eden is a prototypical science fiction and dystopia roman. Everything seems alien and hostile for humans on the one side but on the other side also fascinating and beautiful. The world characterized by Chris Beckett resembles a toxic plant: admirable to look at but you should avoid close contact. The people living there because of unfortunate circumstances show up like children. Almost every knowledge that was brought along from Earth by Angela and Tommy is forgotten or lost. They don't know how to sew warm clothing, the bulk is neither able to read nor to write and nobody is certain how to count years at all 163 years past the landing. The family is formed by incest, thus everybody is more or less near related to each other. Needless to say this had impact over the generations, more and more children are born with bad cleft upper lips or so-called clawfeet. Though it is known that one should not sleep with his or her brother, sister or even mother, nobody knows why, not to mention anybody would recognize the correlation between deformation and sexual behavior. I have to admit that I was shocked by this peculiarity at the beginning, the family shows up like a commune in which basically everybody can sleep (unprotected) with everybody. Sexual acts simply belong to the daily routine, there is nothing special about it and it also does not connect two people in a unique way. It only fulfills two functions: reproduction and stress relaxation. However, the inhabitants of Eden are as human as possible. Beckett brilliantly carved out the typical human nature to fear everything new and to categorically refuse it. The aversion to explore the own planet; the hatred John Redlantern and his group are faced with are described so far-reaching and manifold that in this concern, the story could have played on Earth as well. Overall, I think the characters are very subtle and extensive constructed. The reader experiences the main part of the book from the perspective of John Redlantern, because he is and stays protagonist despite many minor characters. However, Beckett often turns the perspective and allows other characters to tell a part of the story (partly parallel). I really liked this because on the one side it was a possibility to get to know the protagonist from different angles and thus to get a pretty considerable impression of him and on the other side it delivered excellent insight into the mindset of the people in Eden. The protagonist John is a complicated character. Actually, I am still not sure if he really is an object of affection or not. Though he tries to improve the life for everybody, I nevertheless often had the feeling that he is driven by egoistic motives. His restlessness seems to be frequently tied to a need for the achievement of something special and great as well as for additionally taking center stage. If he loses this central role or if somebody else adopts this part, he immediately feels uncomfortable and considers how to use this circumstance for his advantage and to put himself forward once again. Furthermore, John is an extremely foresighted young man, sometimes even TOO foresighted and calculating for his denoted age of 15 years. However, the uncertainty concerning the counting of years is helpful here because it is also possible that he is already about 18 years old. The reader never can be sure nor can the people in Eden. Therefore, this was not a hindrance for me. Consistent with this is his manipulative nature, one of his most dominant traits. Along the whole book I had the feeling that he has difficulties with interpersonal relationships unless he wants to achieve something with them. He always seems to know how to influence his conversational partner to push them into the one or other direction. But as soon as emotions are concerned or just FEELING life, he totally fails. He never can let go, has to consider every single detail. Furthermore, John is very brave, has a quick, intelligent mind and functions pretty successful as an innovator in light of the described circumstances. Nonetheless, it is his faults in character that make him real. John is not a picture-book hero. Chris Beckett gave him a complex character with egoistic traits, thus, a thoroughly human and comprehensible behavior. It is relatively irrelevant if the reader likes him or not, he carries the story that centers much bigger topics than just this young man. Additionally, Beckett broke open his roman in a refreshing way by the usage of different perspectives, as already mentioned. The reader never knows who will be the main character of the next chapter. This creates suspense and a certain disengagement from John which was very pleasant because of his sometimes dislikeable manner. Some characters get several chapters to tell the story from their point of view, others just one. The biggest part besides John plays Tina Spiketree, a young woman in John's age, who finally follows him on his journey through Eden. She is intelligent and speaks tartly; she is connected to John by a pretty complicated relationship which does not have a happy end either. This is not her fault, it is up to John and his difficult interpersonal behavior. For the reader, Tina is the major and most reliable factor to understand how the protagonist acts on the other characters. For me, an absolute highlight of this book

was the diction. The people in Eden tend to repeat adjectives several times if they want to express how much they were annoyed, pleased or astonished. At the beginning, this seemed alien to me, it reminded me of the communication between children, but during the book I got used to it and learned to appreciate it. I doing so, the author allowed his characters a very special charm. Moreover, Beckett uses some words which definitely originally come from Earth but were changed and adulterated by the people on Eden. For example, electricity became lecky-trickity and television became telly vision. From a linguistic point of view, this constitutes a plausible development because after all, the only persons who could have reminded these words are dead for decades. I was smirking about this detail several times and I liked the loosening effect. In conclusion, the book tells a pretty calm story that does not need big moments of suspense. The attraction completely emanates from the group around John Redlantern, I wished so hard that they find a safe place to live in. Of course, I was also driven by curiosity, I wanted to know what they will discover about the ancestors of the family. The central point definitely are interpersonal relationships in all their facets. Chris Beckett proved a lot of sensitiveness and love for the detail in constructing the characters, thus, all of them seem convincing and real. This book is literature for those readers who are critical as far as science fiction is concerned because they have problems in imagining aliens from outer space. Dark Eden does neither need freaky and definitely non-human enemies, nor an especially extensive and complicated social system to persuade. Thoroughly human conflicts, fears and emotions in a fascinating and alien nature are totally enough to tell a captivating story. I would recommend it. 1 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Not mind blowing but a good read Von Jrgen Konetschnig The first person style fits the well written story. No mind blowing twists and turns but definitely a good read. 1 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Awesomely imagined, brilliantly written Von Devereux C. Josephs A habitable planet without a sun: Dark Eden may well be the most original world ever imagined in SF - I certainly have a hard time thinking of any other world that comes close to being so alien. The fact that the society he imagines is palpably human makes this stand out all the more. Beckett tells his story from multiple first-person perspectives, each one clearly distinct in terms of both their viewpoints and use of language. The author has undertaken something more than ordinarily difficult, and has succeeded decisively.

Kurzbeschreibung Winner of the Arthur C. Clarke Award 2013 A marooned outpost of humanity struggles to survive on a startlingly alien world: science fiction as it ought to be from British science fiction's great white hope. You live in Eden. You are a member of the Family, one of 532 descendants of Angela and Tommy. You shelter beneath the light and warmth of the Forest's lantern trees, hunting woollybuck and harvesting tree candy. Beyond the forest lie the treeless mountains of the Snowy Dark and a cold so bitter and a night so profound that no man has ever crossed it. The Oldest among you recount legends of a world where light came from the sky, where men and women made boats that could cross between worlds. One day, the Oldest say, they will come back for you. You live in Eden. You are a member of the Family, one of 532 descendants of two marooned explorers. You huddle, slowly starving, beneath the light and warmth of geothermal trees, confined to one barely habitable valley of a startlingly alien, sunless world. After 163 years and six generations of incestuous inbreeding, the Family is riddled with deformity and feeble-mindedness. Your culture is a infantile stew of half-remembered fact and devolved ritual that stifles innovation and punishes independent thought. You are John Redlantern. You will break the laws of Eden, shatter the Family and change history. You will be the first to abandon hope, the first to abandon the old ways, the first to kill another, the first to venture in to the Dark, and the first to discover the truth about Eden. Pressestimmen A classic theme, beautifully told \* Sunday Telegraph \* This is a world I'm desperate to return to -- Alison Flood \* Guardian \* There's no justice if Dark Eden, with its beautiful, terrifying planet, slowly revealed, fails to bring Beckett awards \* Sunday Times \* A captivating and haunting book \* Daily Mail \* A dazzlingly inventive science-fiction writer -- A. N. Wilson Dark Eden is stunningly written \* SciFiNow \* Dark Eden is an incredible novel \* SFBooks \* Beckett should be on the radar of anyone who professes concern for science fiction as a literary form -- Alastair Reynolds Kurzbeschreibung Winner of the Arthur C. Clarke Award 2013 A marooned outpost of humanity struggles to survive on a startlingly alien world: science fiction as it ought to be from British science fiction's great white hope. You live in Eden. You are a member of the Family, one of 532 descendants of Angela and Tommy. You shelter beneath the light and warmth of the Forest's lantern trees, hunting woollybuck and harvesting tree candy. Beyond the forest lie the treeless mountains of the Snowy Dark and a cold so bitter and a night so profound that no man has ever crossed it. The Oldest among you recount legends of a world where light came from the sky, where men and women made boats that could cross between worlds. One day, the Oldest say, they will come back for you. You live in Eden. You are a member of the Family, one of 532 descendants of two marooned explorers. You huddle, slowly starving, beneath the light and warmth of geothermal trees, confined to one barely habitable valley of a startlingly alien, sunless world. After 163 years and six generations of incestuous inbreeding, the Family is riddled with deformity and feeble-mindedness. Your culture is a infantile stew of half-remembered fact and devolved ritual that stifles innovation and punishes independent thought. You are John Redlantern. You will break the laws of Eden, shatter the Family and change history. You will be

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