



The Diamond Age: Or, a Young Lady's Illustrated Primer (Bantam Spectra Book)

By Neal Stephenson

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In **Snow Crash**, Neal Stephenson took science fiction to dazzling new levels. Now, in **The Diamond Age**, he delivers another stunning tale. Set in twenty-first century Shanghai, it is the story of what happens when a state-of-the-art interactive device falls in the hands of a street urchin named Nell. Her life—and the entire future of humanity—is about to be decoded and reprogrammed...

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

John Percival Hackworth is a nanotech engineer on the rise when he steals a copy of "A Young Lady's Illustrated Primer" for his daughter Fiona. The primer is actually a super computer built with nanotechnology that was designed to educate Lord Finkle-McGraw's daughter and to teach her how to think for herself in the stifling neo-Victorian society. But Hackworth loses the primer before he can give it to Fiona, and now the "book" has fallen into the hands of young Nell, an underprivileged girl whose life is about to change.

From Publishers Weekly

Stephenson's fourth solo novel, set primarily in a far-future Shanghai at a time when nations have been superseded by enclaves of common cultures ("claves"), abundantly justifies the hype that surrounded *Snow Crash*, his first foray into science fiction. Here, the author avoids the major structural problem of that book—a long lump of philosophical digression—by melding myriad perspectives and cogitations into his tale, which is simultaneously SF, fantasy and a masterful political thriller. Treating nanotechnology as he did virtual reality in *Snow Crash*—as a jumping-off point—Stephenson presents several engaging characters. John Percival Hackworth is an engineer living in a neo-Victorianclave, who is commissioned by one of the world's most powerful men to create a Primer that might enable the man's granddaughter to be educated in ways superior to the "straight and narrow." When Hackworth is mugged, an illegal copy of the Primer falls into the hands of a working-class girl named Nell, and a most deadly game's afoot. Stephenson weaves several plot threads at once, as the paths of Nell, Hackworth and other significant characters—notably Nell's brother Harv, Hackworth's daughter Fiona and an actress named Miranda—converge and diverge across continents and complications, most brought about by Hackworth's actions and Nell's development. Building steadily to a wholly earned and intriguing climax, this long novel, which presents its sometimes difficult technical concepts in accessible ways, should appeal to readers other than habitual SF users. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

Diamond Age, a Hugo Award-winning romp into a future nanotechnological revolution, doesn't lend itself to concise description. For what it's worth, it explores what happens when an incredibly powerful interactive device falls into the hands of a street urchin, who uses it to reprogram the future of humanity. Got that? Stephenson's books rank among the most popular sf novels of recent years but require such close attention that they pose special challenges for audiobook fans. Jennifer Wiltsie's narration here is uniformly strong and well fitted to the material, but this may not be the right kind of book for the average person. Recommended for libraries that count many young and hardcore sf readers among their audiobook patrons. Originally published in 1992, *Snow Crash* is a popular sf novel in a genre that some wags have dubbed "cyberpunk." Listening to it is like taking an out-of-control roller coaster ride on a double helix, weaving in and out of Stephenson's fully imagined computer-generated "Metaverse" and a near-future real world comprised of bizarre microstates and a vast Mafia-controlled pizza delivery system. The central character, aptly named Hiro Protagonist, is at once a computer hacker, pizza "deliverator," and samurai swordsman. The story moves at such breakneck speed that many listeners may need to replay the first reel simply to figure out what is going on; however, the highly charged reading by actor Jonathan Davis another Frank Muller in the making helps hold everything together. Recommended for libraries catering to forward-looking sf readers.

Kent Rasmussen, Thousand Oaks, CA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christopher Henricks:

Nowadays reading books become more than want or need but also be a life style. This reading practice give you lot of advantages. Associate programs you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want really feel happy read one using theme for entertaining including comic or novel. The The Diamond Age: Or, a Young Lady's Illustrated Primer (Bantam Spectra Book) is kind of reserve which is giving the reader unforeseen experience.

Bruce Parisien:

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