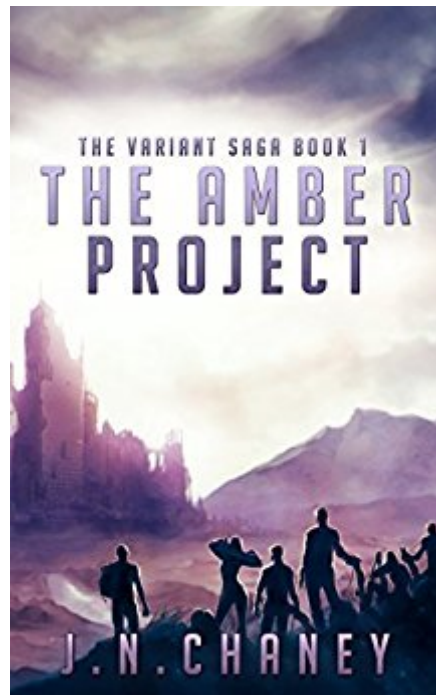


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The Amber Project: A Dystopian Sci-fi Novel (The Variant Saga Book 1)



Synopsis

200 years after the world ends, their future begins. In 2157, a mysterious gas known as Variant spreads across the globe, killing or mutating most organic life. The surviving humans take refuge in an underground city, determined to return home. But after generations of failures and botched attempts, hope is beginning to dwindle. That is, until a young scientist makes a unique discovery--and everything changes. Suddenly, there's reason to hope again, and it rests within a group of genetically engineered children that are both human and Variant. Terry is one of these children, modified and trained to endure the harsh conditions of a planet he cannot begin to understand. After years of preparation, Terry thinks he knows what to expect. But the reality is far stranger than anything he can imagine--and what he will become is far more dangerous. Read the series one reviewer Donald G. Simpson says: "This is one of the best put together science fiction books I have read in years. The character development is strong from start to finish. There are no loose ends or rabbit trails ... everything ties together. The only regret I had in reading this book was when I looked and saw there were only eight pages left...I can't wait to see if there is a follow up to this great start. You will not believe it is this author's first book!" The Variant Saga includes: The Amber Project The Variant Saga Book 1 Transient Echoes The Variant Saga Book 2 Hope Everlasting The Variant Saga Book 3 The Vernal Memory The Variant Saga Book 4 Other Books By JN Chaney: Their Solitary Way Short Story Collections: The Other Side of Nowhere

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Customer Reviews

This book was wild. I read tons of Young Adult dystopian stuff, but I found this to be a bit more mature. It's not afraid to tackle actual social issues like class-based societies, equal rights, and political espionage while still dealing with the primary story involving the kids. There's basically two stories happening here. One involves the teens, while the other involves the adults. The primary plot is, of course, about those kids, and it's a wild adventurous ride with its own challenges to overcome. But the second story with the adults is what I found to be the most fascinating, because it dealt with the previously mentioned issues. At its core, this story is asking a very interesting question: how far would you go to save humanity? For some of the people, there's no limit, but some disagree and claim we shouldn't sacrifice our humanity while trying to save it. It's an issue reflective of the real world, and it's fascinating. I also found the world building and societal structure to be interesting. In this world, most women are Mothers. That's a job, by the way. They produce and raise children. Once those kids are a certain age, they're sent to the Academy, and the Mothers don't see their kids again for about 10 years. Then they go out and start a new "contract." In a world like this, genetic diversity is key, so a Mother has to have a good set of genes in order to get more contracts. The more unique her genetics are, the more children she's allowed to have. That brings us to the protagonist of the adult story, Mara Echols, who also happens to be Terry's (the main character's) Mother. But don't get me wrong, Terry is great, too. In fact, his story is the driving force of this novel. We get to follow him on a wild adventure into an untouched wasteland. The ride is incredible and the kids are all very unique. All that being said, it'll be interesting to see where the series goes. The ending leaves it so that the writer could take the plot in several directions. Oh, and like some of the other reviews have pointed out, the audio logs were a lot of fun. My favorites were the memoirs from S. E. Pepper. You never

see her in the actual narrative, but she leaves such an impact that it's hard not to love her. If you like YA dystopian stuff, this book is the ticket. It exceeded my expectations, especially because this is Chaney's first book. Here's hoping he keeps the quality up.

I was given a copy of this book for free in exchange for an honest review. Terry, Mia, John, Sarah, Alex, Cole...experimental embryos implanted in women called mothers who raised these genetically altered children to the age of seven and then deposited them into a military school run by the government of the now underground city. A toxic gas called Variant, was unleashed into the atmosphere several hundreds years prior, killing everyone within seconds. The altered embryos were an experiment to create soldiers to withstand this gas by exposing them to the gas via a sealed chamber in increasing amounts. The story follows political corruption at the highest ranks, while at the same time, Alex and Cole figured out how to escape to the world above to be free. The variant gas began to change the children, making them stronger, faster healing, able to withstand the ravages of the variant soaked, destroyed planet that was once earth. The story continues with the best of the kids sent out to find Alex and Cole. What they found was a nearly dead Alex and no Cole. This is where the book begins to suck you in and feel every emotion, pain, hurt, everything these kids deal with till the last page! I felt emotionally worn out by the end! Reading this was well worth my time and I look forward to reading the next book in the series. Terry, by some stroke of luck, survived after he chose to stay behind and push the button on the machine that started the gas release in the first place! Hmmmm, I thought he was dead for sure!

The first thing that struck me about this story was that it was so well-written. This fact alone made the book a pleasure to read but my delight with this tale did not end there. The setting was described so vividly while the description of the characters was much more subtle. At first, I had a hard time connecting with the characters as they seemed a little sterile and unemotional. As I continued reading though, I began to believe that this was a deliberate ploy on the author's part to really bring the reader into the harsh realities of this post-apocalyptic Earth. The scientific aspect was fascinating but not too difficult for a young adult reader to follow, and in fact the story itself is interspersed with several audio journal entries from characters both past and present which tie in very well as the story unfolds. Terry Echols has reached the age of seven and must now start school. Unbeknownst to him until after his mother has dropped him off, he will be living at the school and unable to go home to his family until his eighteenth birthday. Scared and lonely, he also feels a

great deal of guilt over the fact that he'd promised his little sister that he'd be home that same day. As the months and years pass he does make friends though, and these other children, all born on the same day, soon learn of their true origins and purpose. All the products of genetically modified embryos, they are designed to survive in the drastically altered atmosphere that now exists on the Earth's surface. As they are subjected to intense training and experimentation, not all of these students will survive. When the class has reached the age of fifteen years, two students escape the underground city and make their way to the surface despite the dangers that abound there. The adults that oversee the experiment and the school send a team of students to bring them back, the highest ranking students that have the best chance of survival. And now the action really begins... Meanwhile, while all of this has been going on, several people are working behind the scenes to put an end to this inhumane treatment of these children, including a high-ranking member of the military, one of the teachers at the school and Terry Echols' mother. For the first time in over two centuries the surviving members of the human race are no longer facing a stagnant future and eventual extinction but are foraging into unknown territory... Very exciting! By the time I got to the last few chapters, I was completely engrossed and totally invested in the futures of all of these characters that I had come to know and love! I read *The Amber Project* a while ago and have just now been able to write my review (real life chaos and all that), but know that I immediately read the next installment in this series, *Transient Echoes* and am just about to start *Hope Everlasting*! A highly recommended read for adults and young adults alike!

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