



SHORT READS FOR PEOPLE WITH NO TIME

PRINCESS BY MAYA PRASAD

“‘Princess’... offers a thoughtful,
(near?) futuristic take on an
eternally pressing thematic question:
What makes us human and why?”

—Cynthia Leitich Smith, New York Times
bestselling and award-winning author

READ "PRINCESS"

foreshadowya.com/articles/15-princess

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"Maya Prasad is a South Asian American writer, a Caltech graduate, and a former Silicon Valley software engineer. She now resides in the Pacific Northwest, where she enjoys hiking, canoeing, and raising her budding bookworm daughter. A recipient of the 2017 We Need Diverse Books mentorship, she writes stories featuring unwieldy technologies, Indian culture, and subversive STEM girls.

Visit her website mayaprasad.com or find her on Instagram and Twitter @msmayaprasad."

– bio from author.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



What were your first impressions of Dwaraka? How do Leela and her mother react differently when they arrive? How does Dwaraka compare to the conditions of the Beltway?

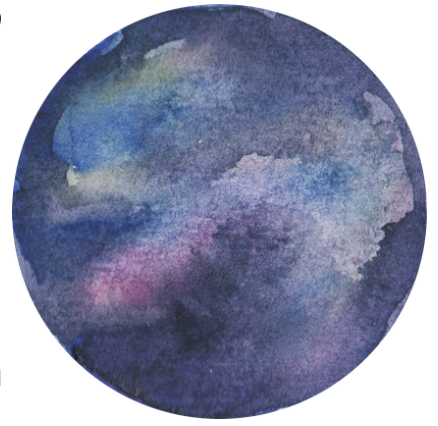
Leela's grandmother says, "Deva was once a human, that the Grid was created by people. Therefore, AI artwork does come from us, essentially." Consider this statement and how it relates to the entire Grid. Does Leela's grandmother place too much humanity in an AI system which controls so much?

Would you connect to the Grid, giving you unlimited access to information and new skills and abilities, even if it meant you had less control over your life?

Do you think Leela would make the same choice to connect to the Grid if she didn't need to have an operation? Do you think Leela's mother would have ever taken her to Dwaraka if she didn't need an operation?

Leela's mother was to be Deva's bride, Deva's princess. Does everyone consider Deva to be their king, their ruler? Does Deva itself?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Leela's painting is technically perfect and yet lacks "a spark of mystery". What does this tell you about integrating with the Grid?

Leela is an ideal candidate to merge with Deva because she comes from outside the Grid. Refer back to question one, thinking about the difference in living conditions between the Beltway and Dwaraka. Are the citizens of Dwaraka justified or should they consider another way to maintain their civilization? Do you think the citizens are aware of when and how Deva selects people?

Leela says, "There are so many choices, and I want to experience them all. Why do I feel as if there's not enough time?" If Leela was your friend, what advice would you give her?

Author, Maya Prasad says, "Today AI is on the rise and algorithms determine more than we want to admit. Whether you believe Amazon's Alexa is just a handy music-player or a creepy harbinger of doom, tech inevitably changes us in unforeseen ways." How does technology impact you, both positively and negatively?

WRITE IT DOWN! WRITING PROMPTS

Short Short Story (100 Words or less)

Write a short short story using this line from "Princess": "But my dreams are no longer my own."

Short Story

"We're influenced by the Grid, and the Grid is influenced by us. How do we create something new in the loop?"

Option 1: Compose a short story that involves a loop. Consider how your story might look structurally.

Option 2: Tell the story of another person who lives within the universe of "Princess". This person can be connected to the Grid or not.

FOR VISUAL ARTISTS

At the beginning of "Princess", Leela paints as she quickly travels through space. She is "driven by movement and energy and light".

Create a sketch, painting, photo or video that captures movement and energy and light.

MORE READS

Binti Trilogy

by Nnedi Okorafor

Cerulean

by Amy Ewing

Aurora Rising

by Amie Kaufman

Star Wars: Black Spire

by Delilah S. Dawson

Black Panther:

The Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda

by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Raybearer

by Jordan Ifueko

Star Daughter

by Shveta Thakrar

Heart of Iron

by Ashley Poston

Cinder

by Marissa Meyer

Honor Among Thieves

by Rachel Caine

and Ann Aguirre



HAVE COMMENTS OR WANT TO SUGGEST A SHORT STORY?

Email us!
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