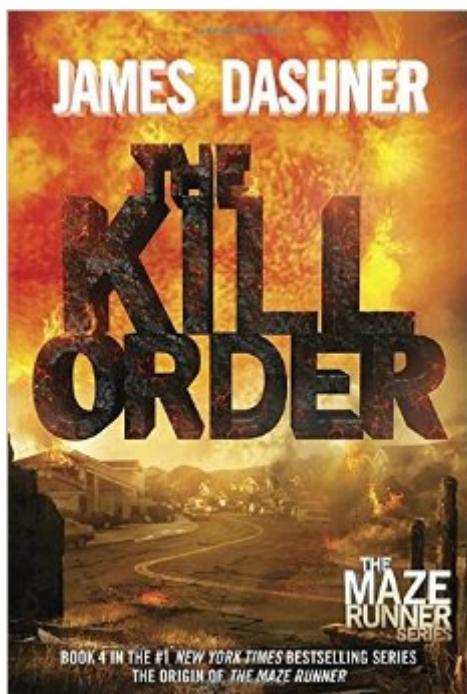


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The Kill Order (Maze Runner, Book Four; Origin) (The Maze Runner Series)



Synopsis

Read the fourth book in the #1 New York Times bestselling Maze Runner series, perfect for fans of The Hunger Games and Divergent. The first and second books, The Maze Runner and The Scorch Trials, are now major motion pictures featuring the star of MTV's Teen Wolf, Dylan O'Brien; Kaya Scodelario; Aml Ameen; Will Poulter; and Thomas Brodie-Sangster! Also look for James Dashner's newest novels, The Eye of Minds and The Rule of Thoughts, the first two books in the Mortality Doctrine series.

They thought the end came in a flash. Before WICKED was formed, before the Glade was built, before Thomas entered the Maze, sun flares hit the earth, killing most of the population. The worst is yet to come. Mark and Trina were there when it happened. They survived. But now a virus is spreading. A virus that fills humans with murderous rage. There is no cure. No escape. They're convinced that there's a way to save those who are left if they can stay alive. Because in this new, devastated world, every life has a price. And to some you're worth more dead than alive. The end is only the beginning.

Praise for the Maze Runner series:

A #1 New York Times Bestselling Series A USA Today Bestseller A Kirkus Reviews Best Teen Book of the Year An ALA-YASLA Best Fiction for Young Adults Book An ALA-YALSA Quick Pick [A] mysterious survival saga that passionate fans describe as a fusion of Lord of the Flies, The Hunger Games, and Lost." EW.com "Wonderful action writing" fast-paced but smart and well observed." Newsday "[A] nail-biting must-read." Seventeen.com "Breathless, cinematic action." Publishers Weekly "Heart pounding to the very last moment." Kirkus Reviews "Exclamation-worthy." Romantic Times [STAR] "James Dashner's illuminating prequel [The Kill Order] will thrill fans of this Maze Runner [series] and prove just as exciting for readers new to the series." Shelf Awareness, Starred "Take a deep breath before you start any James Dashner book." -Deseret News

From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

First Impressions: I loved The Maze Runner series so much that I wanted to really love this book. I have a fascination with wanting to know what happens before I find myself in a story, and I love that Dashner has created a world that existed before the first pages of The Maze Runner were penned. I wanted to know more about the sickness infecting the world, the darkness that had enveloped a crazed planet. Well written as always, the opening pages of this book seemed like they were going to answer a lot of my questions. But, it didn't. I will go into that more later.

First 50 Pages: Besides the brief prologue, there is not too much that is familiar about The Kill Order. You are introduced to a new group of characters fighting a completely different battle. What this book does well, and instantly, is set up the post solar flare world. Everything changes on earth when a solar flare hits and nearly destroys everything. What is left are small settlements and resilient people. That is, until the ships come from the sky and reign a new kind of terror on the flare survivors. Instead of being their salvation, the giant ships sends Mark, Alec, Trina and Lana on a new, horrifying journey.

Characters & Plot: At first, I was a little disappointed that more of the story was not going to be dedicated to the characters I had met in the Maze Runner series. I wanted to know more of their story, for sure. But, Dashner created a whole group of characters that are tough, hardened and yet somehow still vulnerable. Mark, the main character, goes through every emotion possible in the pages of this story. He is hopeful, playful, angry, lost, scared and brave all at once. Alec is a strong support, leader and guide as they try and find their friends and, in the process, discover the dark truth of the disease that is wiping out people and making them go mad. The story is dark, violent and more than a little disturbing. I found myself repulsed and disgusted on more than one occasion, that's for sure. There is a lot of exposition in this one, and a lot of major battles with people who do not really understand what has happened to them. Overall, the plot is well done from beginning to

end, but I was shocked at just how dark and violent it really was!Final Thoughts: This was not the book I expected it to be. I guess I don't really know what I was expecting. I think I was thinking this would be more of an immediate prequel to the Maze Runner series, but instead it takes a pretty big step back in time and talks a lot more about the origins of the disease flare and the solar flare that nearly destroyed the world. The Kill Order is a really good book, and fits the world of the rest of the series well. I do wonder, however, how new readers to the series will take to this book, especially if they read this as the first book in the series instead of a new part of the story after reading the rest of the books. I would recommend it, although not while eating because it's definitely violent!

Having just put down The Death Cure, I turned quickly to The Kill Order with the anticipation of getting some answers making my knee shake with excitement. The first pages sent a thrill to me as I saw those few minutes before Thomas was sent up into The Glade ... but then the story took a journey to a place 13 years before. This new story with new people (Alec, Mark, Trina, and others) was something very familiar to me. Flashing back and forth from this new present to their past, James Dashner does what he does best: writes a racing, thrilling story and slowly placates his reader with tiny bits of information as he does so. And it was easy to like both Mark and Alec, so I gave in to enjoy the ride. While it was frustrating to not get the history and understand more of certain elements of The Maze Runner trilogy (sorry if that's a spoiler folks - but I know a lot of people out there were very frustrated about knowing things), it was helpful to understand what Dashner did disclose and it pieced together a lot of pieces for me that were left undone by the ending of The Death Cure. Am I completely satisfied with what was given to me? No. And I honestly don't know if there will ever be answers given to us or if Dashner will continue to string us along. But I did enjoy a riveting, full-blown prequel that set up a world that was a place of complete confusion to me.

(I read this book for free from the library.)Full disclosure: I'm not really a fan of prequels. It's very tricky to create suspense and peril in a story the reader already knows. Some prequels have been very good but most are not. This book falls into the "not good" category. I read the other three books in this series with increasing distaste. The first one was just good, not great, but I felt like the series went downhill with each step. It became more and more violent and gory while never providing any explanations about what was going on. It's hard to enjoy long stories about kids being killed with no justifications. This book took that feeling to an extreme. I read this book because I hoped it would (FINALLY) provide an explanation of the events in the other three books. The mystery in those

books revolved around Thomas' memories being erased. This book is set before that happened, surely it will explain everything, right? In the other three books, there are many hints that Thomas and Theresa helped design the maze and the trials, that they were willing participants and that they were even in charge at one point. Since this is a prequel, surely we'll get to see all that, right? No. This book starts in a small settlement in the mountains. Thomas and Theresa are nowhere to be seen. Solar flares have fried most of the planet's surface and the survivors are huddled into camps, scratching out a meager existence. Suddenly a flying ship comes by and shoots everyone with darts, injecting them with a deadly virus. The two main characters manage to fight back and take down the ship. Neither of them were hit with darts, but the virus is highly contagious. The chances of them being uninfected are basically zero (and they know it). Just like the other three books, what follows is a survival story. Hiking through the woods, killing people, running through a town, killing people, storming an underground bunker, killing people. Lots and lots of killing. Lots and lots of gory details. Many long-winded descriptions of fist fights and brutal beatings. Through the whole thing, I just didn't care about any of the characters. They're definitely infected and they know it, so they're definitely going to die. The only mystery is whether they'll die from being eaten by zombies or whether they'll become zombies. I just couldn't care less. What I really wanted to know, as I did all through the previous three books, was WHY all this was happening. Who were the guys shooting the virus-laden darts? Who told them to do it? Why were they doing it? Why? Why? Why? As before, no explanations are given. What about all the stuff with the maze? Nothing. Where are Thomas and Theresa? We never see them except in the prologue and epilogue, so there's no real connection to the other books. Without those two chapters, this book would be a completely separate story from the Maze Runner series. Just another post-apocalypse zombie story. If you like zombies, there are better books out there than this one. If you like solar flares, check out "Sunstorm" by Arthur C. Clarke. That's all this book has and it's not worth your time.

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