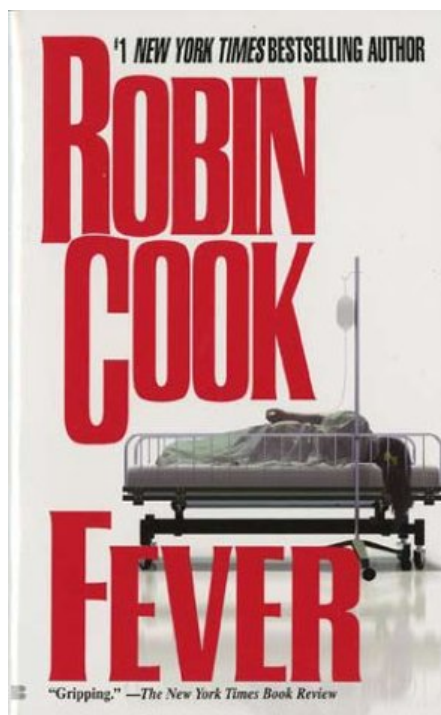




Fever

Robin Cook

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Fever

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Charles Martel is a brilliant cancer researcher who discovers that his own daughter is the victim of leukemia. The cause: a chemical plant conspiracy that not only promises to kill her, but will destroy him as a doctor and a man if he tries to fight it...

Fever Details

Date : Published January 1st 2000 by G.P. Putnam's Sons (first published 1982)

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Author : Robin Cook

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Genre : Fiction, Thriller, Mystery, Medical, Suspense

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From Reader Review Fever for online ebook

Shruti says

FEVER was my first Robin Cook.

Needless to say, I enjoyed it thoroughly.

Cancer is the bane of human society today, and even at this moment innumerable scientists are breaking their heads over it, trying to find a cure for the millions that suffer. FEVER is the story of a determined scientist, racing towards a cure for leukemia for his daughter, before it's too late.

The emotional turmoil and confusion that Dr. Charles Martel goes through is so well-described that I literally felt his exasperation, anger and sorrow. I was hooked into this book from start to finish.

The only qualm I had with FEVER was the apparent lack of character development of the supporting characters. This book kind of played out like a movie, rather than a novel, where we see everything from Charles' point of view. I would be fine with that if the author hadn't randomly jumped in with the support characters' POVs, especially Chuck's or Jean Paul's. This lead me to believe that there was more to their stories, and that they had a significant role to play in the plot.

However, their narratives came only once or twice in the beginning, and then were promptly forgotten. I think it would've been better if the author hadn't narrated from their views at all, and had just taken the MC's POVs.

That said, FEVER was hugely entertaining. My final rating would be 3.5.

Chris says

Typical Robin Cook novel c. 1982, an easy read. Dr. Charles Martel is a cancer researcher interested in the potential for immunotherapy as a treatment. His first wife died of cancer. He is a focused but high maintenance employee of the Weinburger Institute. Married with 3 children living in a small town in New Hampshire. Everything begins to go awry for Charles when almost simultaneously he is told to stop his research to work on a project that has been derailed by shoddy research, a project he doesn't believe in, and his youngest child, Michelle is diagnosed with an aggressive & difficult to treat leukemia. He is at odds with her physicians about appropriate treatment. He subsequently discovers benzene in the water near his home, a toxic chemical that can cause blood disorders and tracks it down to a Recycling plant. A recycling plant that is the biggest employer for his small town, and it's own by a parent company that also owns the Weinberger Institute. Soon he appears to be spinning out of control. Fighting to save Michelle, his job & reputation, his marriage, his home, shut down the recycling plant, and literally his life.

Some of the storyline is predictable, but not enough to keep me from wanting to know how it all turns out. There are many irons in the fire! The "standoff" at his house had the most tension written in, and the best literary visuals were the prologue & the epilogue.

Johnny says

The premise of the book is not bad. Charles acts more like a schoolboy throwing a temper tantrum than a professional research scientist. Cathryn, Charles ignorant wife, is a character that doesn't deserve to have been born on paper. The daughter, Michelle, is written better. She has the normal fears of a small child and they are incorporated well into the story.

September says

This was a very frustrating read for me. Initially, the story was stale, old, been there - read that, but I kept reminding myself that this book was written in the early 80s. Maybe, the premise was somewhat newish, at the time. (Child comes down with leukemia presumably due to a factory dumping toxic waste into the local river.)

Another frustrating aspect was Charles' ever growing anger. Maybe not being a parent, I can't fully grasp the extent of his emotions. It just got to be annoying. I wanted to tell him to 'let it go, move on.' That said, I don't think the ending would've played out the same way without him having taken that angry emotional journey.

I'd say the last 1/4 to 1/5 of the book veered slightly off the expected story line, finally offering a bit of a refreshing and enticing read.

Sarah says

It got really thrilling towards the end of the book, I couldn't put it down. I really liked the story line. I wasn't too fond of the wife's character and the doctors from the hospital really angered me, but I suppose that's what made the book come to life. I definately want to read another on of Cook's novels.

~~Poulomi Sylphrena Tonk\$~~ says

4 scientific, relatable, thrilling stars!

Fever by Robin Cook is a masterpiece. There's not an element of doubt about that. He is a superb writer and I am immensely awed by his work.

I would give special points to that prologue. That was so vivid and classic in description. It created sort of an animated visual in my mind about how Benzene silently but cruelly caused all that genetic mutation, the root cause of leukaemia.

The story centres around a cancer researcher, Charles Martel whose own child, Michelle develops leukaemia and his attempts to cure his child as well as demolish the cause of her cancer, Benzene, which was being dumped into the river by a reputed recycling factory. Charles is a temperamental man, and though many would term his rage as unreasonable, I don't blame him one tiny bit. He had to witness the miserable way his first wife succumbed to the clutches of this thing called Cancer, following which his interest in the subject piped up. And when he again had to face the same situation with Michelle, he was jolted from his position. The helplessness of watching her suffer just like his wife did was severely traumatic to someone like Charles

who liked being "a man in action", as Dr. Wiley said.

With Chuck though, I felt he was unfair. That's a common scenario in households with one or both of the parents as doctors. They are so overwhelmed by Medical Science that they easily undermine all other interests that the children might have a heart for.

However my only fuss with this book was that I felt it got a bit repetitive at places. Charles's frequent mood swings made it sound monotonous at one stage. At first you are interested in knowing where his anger might lead him to, but subsequently it loses its charm and you get bored.

The end was a justified, appreciable one. The administration bows down to Charles, and that made me real happy because unjust and immoral people must be shown where they belong. Take that, "Dr." Ibanez and "Dr." Morrison. Unethical bastards!

I also loved Chuck and even Jean Paul in the last part when they decided to side with their family, no matter how bitter their relations were with their father.

Overall, a satisfying and thrilling read. The writer was remarkable with the plot and the pace of the story. The character development was a bit uneven. He predominantly focussed on Charles's frustration and resentment all the way throughout the story, except for the penultimate part, where his helplessness and uncertainty surface out, while trying to cure Michelle of her cancer.

Also being a medico, this book was highly enthralling as it presented a practical example of stuff that we learn in our academic books, and so the terminologies didn't bother me that much. Leukaemia is something I came across quite recently, so I could well relate to it; this book helped me in getting the symptoms imprinted onto my skull for ever.

4 stars for me. Recommended to all who love thrillers as well as sci-fi.

Raj says

Fever is the story of a determined scientist, racing towards a cure for leukemia for his daughter, before it's too late. So I started reading Fever slowly. I became so involved in this story and I felt so touched to see Dr Charles Martel's struggles to save his daughter's life. This book is so real that you completely become involved with the characters and don't doubt for a moment that it has all really happened.

Poulomi Choudhury says

While i was reading it, i was in 2nd year of undergraduate of medical science mbbs, and i had this pathology as a subject, so what mundane things i read in book was given more vividly in the novel. Must read if you are a medico and so relatable. The ending is kinda too far fetched but yeah still it is good. I could write my answers in pathology which i had not revised. Don't be intimidated that you are just going to read another text book, it is so not that. I'll give it a 3.5

Lynn Kay Vogt says

An incredible book! Robin Cook at his best, writes about a researcher trying to find a cure for cancer when his own daughter is struck with the disease. This book is so real that you completely become involved with the characters and don't doubt for a moment that it has all really happened. I read it in a day, absolutely could not put it down.

Poonam says

Someone suggested me to read Robin Cook's books. So I got two books Fever and Outbreak. I choose to read Fever first. To be honest, medical stories are not my type. So I was skeptical to read as I heard that it was a very good book.

So I started reading Fever slowly and quickly I became so involved in this story and I felt so touched to see Dr Charles Martel's struggles to save his daughter's life .

It was a thrilling and emotional ride to know what happens now and then. It was hard for me to put the book down for a while as I was so eager to know the end.

Fever really gave me a lot of insight about Leukemia and the medical world too.
So yeah, now looking forward to reading OUTBREAK too.

Lisa says

Aagghh ok! All of his books that I have read are of MEN who are SOOOOOOOO smart and the women are like delicate flowers whom, after the men, fall apart, find the strength to go on... Blah, blah, blah.. This is why I haven't read any of his stuff since highschool... Note to self!

Roberta says

Once again, a single man against the world.

A little girl is sick with leukemia. The father, a doctor, disagree with the hospital protocol. He has the skills and the means to know what's good for his daughter, but his temper carries him away. So he fights back the establishment and, obviously, wins. Because the average Americans is able to hold back a whole army.

The medical part of the story is quite interesting and I wish to know how much of this cure is science and how much is sci-fi. The enviromental part of the story and the relationshio with the not-from-the-high-street lawyer could have been longer, it looks to me like a missed opportunity.

Sophie says

The characters in Fever ruined this book. Fever had an interesting premise that tied in medical and

environmental issues, but all the characters were selfish and impulsive (maybe Cook was going for “realistic”? I don’t even know), and I felt like a helpless bystander who couldn’t do anything to rectify the many things that went wrong. It also didn’t help that Cook exposed the characters’ every single thought, since that just made me hate them even more. And even though the ending made me like the characters a teeny weeny bit more, it also felt rushed and unrealistic.

Introduction

Forty-five-year-old Charles Martel changed careers from a doctor to a cancer researcher at the Weinburger Research Institute after his first wife died of lymphoma. Now his twelve-year-old daughter, Michelle, is suddenly down with a fever; when she gets diagnosed with leukemia, Charles fears that the same tragedy will happen again. By chance, he discovers that large amounts of benzene from Recycle, Ltd. has been leaking into the pond near his house, and he suspects that this was the main cause of Michelle’s leukemia. As Charles tries to bring charges against the company and hasten his research in hopes of finding a cure for Michelle, his increasing aloofness and random bouts of rage cause his relationship with his new wife, Cathryn, and his two other children to fall apart. Worse yet, he’s forced to take over running research trials for a new cancer drug, Cancerian, due to the previous head researcher fabricating research data. Time’s running out for Michelle – how far is Charles willing to go to save his daughter?

Discussion

There’s a problem when none of the characters in a book are likeable. First, Charles is the worst protagonist ever. He doesn’t understand why his eldest son isn’t doing well in college and why he doesn’t want to become a researcher just like him; he’s rude to his lab staff and to his supervisors, and basically to everyone he meets; he doesn’t properly communicate with Cathryn during this whole mess; and his personality and his actions are just really, really awful. Cathryn is a weak character who seems helpless and easily manipulated, and I had moments when I even hated Michelle because she keeps incorrectly assuming that Charles is mad at her. And everyone outside of the family is evil, conniving, mean, or just plain unlikeable. It’s like someone gathered all the antagonists from every single book and stuck them in this one! Ugh.

Part of what makes the characters unlikeable is due to Cook’s writing style, which feels apathetic and dry most of the time. Even when a character is outraged or emotional, the scene feels lifeless and forced because there’s no subtlety to it. For example, Cathryn, at one point, feels a “stabbing pain of guilt” that is nowhere near as stabbingly painful as it could’ve been if it were shown using actions or gestures.

In addition, everyone’s thoughts and feelings are broadcasted, so we are unfortunately subjected to hearing about how Cathryn’s stepson is infatuated with her, how Charles’ lab assistant lusts after him, and how Michelle’s doctors think Charles is crazy. No one thinks nice thoughts, and it feels like everyone’s being self-destructive.

The plot itself is also extremely bleak and unrealistic; although Cook combines some interesting issues such as environmental toxicants, disease risk, and a lot of other sciencey things, some situations felt exaggerated and melodramatic. Throughout the story and even up to the ending, I kept thinking, “Do you really expect me to believe that?”

Conclusion

So my first Robin Cook book didn’t go as well as I expected. Fever is a deadly combination of bad characters and bad plot. Even though the premise was interesting and the issues raised in this book are very real, this story completely self-destructed.

Paper Breathers (Book Reviews & Discussions)

Nai | Libros con(té) says

Lo peor que tiene la enfermedad es la incertidumbre. Los seres humanos son capaces de adaptarse a cualquier cosa, siempre que haya alguna certeza, pero se enloquecen cuando dan tumbos sin saber nada.

4,5/5 estrellas

Reseña en mi blog ----> Libros con(té)

Leído para la consigna *Medical thriller* del Thriller Challenge 2017

Rabbit {Paint me like one of your 19th century gothic heroines!} says

DNF on page 41. The more I read of this author's work, the more I realize I severely dislike his writing.
