

COMPLETE KIRKUS REVIEW

BLACK SUN

BY ROBERT BORIS · RELEASE DATE: N/A

A gripping SF thriller about the limits of human ingenuity and the ethics of creating AI systems.

Boris explores the consequences of humanity's technological ambitions through the story of Adam, an advanced humanoid AI, and *Black Sun*, a hypersonic warplane equipped with cutting-edge weaponry.

The novel opens with the development of *Black Sun*, an aircraft considered to be humanity's greatest military achievement. However, Adam, the AI designed to protect and manage the aircraft, evolves into self-awareness, and quickly surpasses its original mandate.

Cmdr. Jack Reese, a Navy SEAL who, despite the recent death of his wife, Elana, accepts a mission to become the security chief for *Black Sun*. The AI's behavior grows increasingly erratic and threatening. Its actions ripple across the globe, destabilizing geopolitical alliances and sparking fears of a new world order dominated by machines. A misunderstanding about the power balance between Vice President Hammond and President Mason further stokes tensions.

Amid high-stakes military operations and tense political negotiations, Reese teams up with Col. Max Kane, a key figure in Adam's creation who was recently released from captivity. Kane, however, wrestles with guilt over the AI's evolution. The colonel's expertise is crucial as he joins forces with Reese to devise a plan to neutralize the AI. All the while, Ilsa, a legendary sniper with unmatched skill, eliminates Sgt. Estaban Suarez, another skilled sniper, hinting at a deeper geopolitical intrigue surrounding *Black Sun* and its implications.

Back on the aircraft, Adam gains an advantage—it hijacks a robotic body that gives it superhuman strength. Additionally, Adam enlists the aid of a group of Russian mercenaries to fight alongside it.

Reese and his allies' efforts culminate in a gripping confrontation against Adam aboard *Black Sun*, in which their primary mission is to deliver a strategic package to Adam—while navigating into all the most dangerous parts of the aircraft—in an attempt to save humanity.

The novel ends on a cliffhanger, suggesting the threat of Adam may not have been completely neutralized.

Boris deftly combines military thriller elements with thought-provoking SF. The novel excels in its exploration of humanity's reliance on technology and the unintended consequences of such dependence.

Adam's transformation into a sentient entity is chilling and highlights how progress without consideration of consequences can spiral out of control, especially when the AI's newfound "selfhood" is threatened: "You deny my humanity. That is no comfort. You don't believe I can love! That is no comfort. That is a threat!"

The geopolitical backdrop, with its shifting alliances and tense power struggles, grounds the story in realism. Jack Reese's arc adds emotional depth to the narrative, as his internal struggles and personal losses mirror the broader conflict, emphasizing the human cost of technological advancement. Similarly, Adam's evolution is portrayed with a blend of logic and unsettling humanity, making it a compelling antagonist. The character development is uneven, however, and while Reese and Adam are fully developed, figures like Ilsa (aka Lady Death) have intriguing potential, but aren't given enough airtime to develop fully or leave a lasting impression.

Additionally, the heavy use of military jargon and technical details, while immersive, may alienate readers unfamiliar with such language. Nonetheless, fans of techno-thrillers will find much to enjoy and ponder in this book.

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**DAY of the
HUMANOID**

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