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With a perfect blend of Sci-Fi, mystery, and thriller, its unique method of crashing a near-future Earth society had me hooked from start to finish.

The Babel Apocalypse by author Vyvyan Evans is one of the most creative Sci-Fi or speculative fiction novels I've encountered recently. The author uses a unique method to crash society in this vision of the future by destroying humanity's abilities to communicate with each other and with all the voice-reliant tech that makes the world work. I enjoyed Evans's world-building immensely. The story does not launch from a society that mirrors our current picture but one that has experienced profound political and geo-political boundary changes. The alliances in this world are unexplored, and a fully developed history of how it came to be what it is remains untold. However, the reader can get a good sense that society has evolved to a different form of cooperative government, with the same players from today still playing fast and loose and in seclusion (i.e., Russia, China).

Emyr Morgan is a relatable sleuth in that as he follows the clues, he makes mistakes interpreting what they mean, and he's not ambiguous about his opinion of some of his counterparts in other agencies. He's even carrying a grudge against one for sucker-punching him after a marksmanship competition. He's a flawed man, a loner who has overcome a tough childhood by being smart and focused, eventually becoming the commander of his department at Europol. Betrayed by anyone he's ever loved, Emyr keeps his relationships at arm's length; falling in love is not on his agenda. I felt his relationship with Lotte was an outlier for this character. Not only had it been going on a good length of time, but I felt this man would keep work and pleasure strictly separate. I liked his immediate attraction to Ebba Black and had high hopes for that pairing. The author has some great touches where the thoroughly modern hero does not understand how objects from our time operate. I loved his fascination with opening doors manually and physically manipulating light switches.

We don't know as much about Professor Ebba Black as Emyr, but she is one cool customer. She's a bit of a throwback in her use of obsolete technology and her refusal to succumb to the undoubted attraction of language streaming technology. Still, she is a master of the state of technology in her world. She's all about planning for her safety and staying off the grid, out of sight of her enemies. I enjoyed her banter with Emyr and even with Torin during their clashes. This is one of those books that hit the ground running and never let up. The author has a smooth writing style, and his main character's narrative is engaging. The settings are intriguing and described so you feel you are on location along with the Emyr. There were red herrings to dispel and clever twists and turns that kept me completely involved in the mystery. I never saw that ending coming! Thank goodness that this is the first book in the series because I want more.

With a perfect blend of Sci-Fi, mystery, and thriller, I recommend *THE BABEL APOCALYPSE* to readers who enjoy speculative fiction or dystopian tales with a touch of romance.

I voluntarily reviewed this after receiving an Advanced Review Copy from *Reedsy Discovery*.

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