



The Hidden World: Book One

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Nate Williams is found wandering alone in the woods at the age of six. Raised by a wealthy and loving family, he suffers a heart attack at the age of seventeen, triggering profound changes that allow him to unlock his full mental potential and transform into a wolf. Nate is sent to Noble College, where changing into an animal is normal and students are taught to do extraordinary things, such as alter the weather and change wood into diamond.

When a series of murders around the country threaten the secrecy of the Hidden World, Nate realizes there is more going on at Noble than meets the eye. He and his friends take it upon themselves to figure out what is going on and bring the killers to justice.

The Hidden World: Book One Details

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Author : Schuyler J. Ebersol

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From Reader Review The Hidden World: Book One for online ebook

Ben Anderson says

So after being pointed in the direction of this novel by someone telling me it had made them refuse to read the works of another ‘teenage white boy’ I was intrigued and decided to head over to Amazon for a look at the sample.

One of the first things that caught my eyes was the authors obvious love of the word ‘the’. The title of the prologue, and the start of paragraph one, two, four, five, six, seven and eight all begin with ‘the’. There are two paragraphs in his prologue that do not start with ‘the’...

Anyway, that can be forgiven; he was young when this was published and even if his vocabulary is seemingly lacking that does not mean the story is doomed.

I hit my first snag pretty much instantly in chapter one; why does miss perfect the glamorous-actress-mother apologise for not making breakfast, surely a family with as much wealth as these people have would have a cook?

And then we come to the dooming paragraph; the ‘Nate Williams was shockingly extraordinary, in addition to having a financially privileged life and striking good looks. He struggled with the problems and revelled in the joys that one would expect of someone his age’. Okay so initially if you are going to say ‘in addition’ then that full stop should be a comma; so there is a grammatical error. In addition to the grammatical error there is the pure sickening effect of this sentence; firstly an author has a thousand ways to convey the characters looks without being so sycophantic about it, secondly we really don’t need to hear how he is extraordinary but ‘struggles with the problems..bla..bla...bla. Again try showing us this rather than telling us.

I struggle to see the time period we are when we get to the line ‘very few people knew of it, and those who did didn’t talk about it much (talking about Desmond’s adoption of Nate). Desmond was the most powerful man in the city, and therefore, no one objected’ Now within a few lines a fridge is mentioned so I am pretty sure the author intends this book to be set in a more or less present time. Social media...the news...paparazzi. I don’t believe the author is yet aware of these phenomena, otherwise he would know that the more rich and powerful someone is there more likely people are to talk about his adopting a strange child he has found in the woods.

I had a nagging idea that the character of Nate was just a ‘this is what I want to be’ character made by the author to live his dreams through. And that was pretty much assured when it turns out the author and Nate have the same dog...when did imagining new things for books die?

‘He kept the details of his plans for Xander West to himself’ so now Nate is a good looking, piano playing hard man on a mission? Either this is who the author wants to be or someone has a serious crush on his main character.

‘Desmond’s city’ people don’t really own cities you know... It reads like a poorly orchestrated way of making sure the author can have what ever buildings and geography in his initial location.

‘...lost in its beauty. It reminded him of Sophia’s hair’. Wow. No stop. We had enough of the incest crap with

the whole City of Bones rubbish. Seriously it is just creepy.

‘there were stories that once boys turned a specific age they would die and come back to life’ I am English and thus know little about what they teach in history classes in the US but I could not ever see a history teacher spewing such crap. ‘Upon seeing moonlight they would become wolves’ I am now starting to hate this author. Well done. This is like JK opening with ‘Harry knew there was a school for wizards, but ah well, he doubted he would ever end up there...’ SUSPENSE! Come on...

BONUS ROUND - HARRY POTTER RIP OFF.

Nate lives with foster parents - Harry does
Nate wears old jeans and t-shirt - Harry does
Nate has strange, oft mentioned eyes - Harry does
Nate can mysteriously play the piano - Harry can mysteriously play quidditch
Friend threesome - Friend threesome
One of three friends bookish - One of three friends bookish

Obvious ones not from the sample

Magic school - nothing more needs saying...

Ethan says

I received a copy of this book through a Goodreads giveaway.

At a certain point you have to say that yes, it's fairly impressive that a teenager can put a coherent story down on paper. And yes, the story is fairly engaging. However, it also reminds me why agents and publishers tend to be wary of young writers - they just haven't lived that much. The limited frame of reference allows a limited range of stories, one that is often determined by the popular stories they have read.

I expect great things from Schuyler in the future. He is confident and capable. However, he needs to look less to Harry Potter and more into his own life.

Tamara! aka AmyG.Dala says

Now this was a wild YA ride, with plenty of supernatural action and a nifty twist on the whole shifter world. I enjoyed Nate, he wasn't whiny and while he was rather full of himself, he also had the brains to see how he appeared to others and tried to work on his behavior. Main characters were a good mix of friends with some petty squabbles that would be expected of their ages, as well as learning about who they really are and how their world really works. Good fun from start to finish, and I think the YA crowd will enjoy this adventure.

Angie Rhodes says

This was FANTASTIC,! I love Twilight, (have them all,)Harry Potter, (have them too), There are soo many vampire books out, I wanted something like Harry! and Schuyler,delivered, Think Hogwarts for Shifters,, with a great cast of characters, from the really cool Nate,, to his funny friends Bako, and John,, This is a must read for everyone who loves magic, shifters, and excitement, , I was very privileged to get a signed copy, and can only say,, I didn't want it to end, , Can't wait for the next one,,

Jason says

I was very optimistic going into this book. I enjoy fantasy and was looking to be able to start down another path that would lead to exciting journeys. I will say that this isn't a terrible book; it just isn't for me.

First off, I found it hard to relate to the main character. I don't blame this on the author as he wrote the book to the audience of his choosing, but that is one of the reasons I gave this book a low rating. I also disliked how the main character's social status was constantly being thrown in the face of the reader. It was very unappealing.

The author is young, and I say that as a double-edged sword. Most older readers will probably be able to tell that the writer isn't a seasoned veteran, but that is where the other side of the blade comes in. The writing isn't bad, and you can definitely find yourself falling into the story.

I believe this is the first novel by a young writer. I can see him only getting better. I do look forward to reading his future books, although I might not have liked this particular one. There were many strong points in the book, many plot twists to try and keep you on your toes, and many opportunities to see the characters grow in their own right. I look forward to the future of this young writer.

Terrell Sanzone says

I received this book for free from Goodreads First Reads in exchange for an honest review.

Keeping in mind that the author was young when this book was written as I read this book, I must say that I was impressed by the story. There are a few things I would have worded differently but his ideas come across easily and I found the book to be enjoyable.

Amber Frechette says

Wonderful coming of age tale with unexpected twists and turns around every corner! The story itself sets up nicely for a continuing series without any major cliffhangers. My only regret is not reading it as soon as I got it!

Nydia Burdick says

This is the authors first book so let me preface my comments that indeed he wrote a book and I have not. So the good news is--WOW excellent story, but the writing needs work. It's all told in the third person in a stilted way. For instance at one point two of the characters knocked out a bad guy. This was expressed as "The man was unconscious." How much better would it have been to have the action -Followed by an action? Bo leaped and the impact sent the villian to the ground head first. I did get used to the style and it is a good story. I hope the authors builds his skills and one day does a rewrite. Looking forward to the second book. Of course it's a trilogy!!

Taffey Champion says

Now THIS, is one of THE most fascinating and exhilarating novels I have ever had the pleasure of reading. A tried-and-true page turner throughout; I kid you NOT. I had the most difficult time putting it down, even when any responsibilities and commitments required my undivided attention.

The story of the protagonist, Nate Williams, discovering his phenomenal powers and abilities; anywhere from transforming into a wolf, to performing extraordinary feats such as altering weather and changing wood into diamond, is absolutely stupendous. Even the clever inference of Nate Williams being referred to as a "superhero" was quite a nice surprise. In my opinion, an extraordinary read from the mind of one so young, not to mention, so very talented.

I do not hesitate to say that Mr. Schuyler J. Ebersol can always ask me for a future Review...provided of course, that he can continue writing brilliant Action Adventure novels such as this.

Pam says

I received my copy of this book thanks to a Goodreads Giveaway. I enjoyed the way Ebersol wove reality and fantasy in to this book to create some magic. However; I there were several spots where I wondered why the narrator told me something. I also wondered why details about somethings were saved for much later in the book (i.e. the rules for Jenka and how combat classes worked). Definitely a book to read for those who love the Harry Potter or Percy Jackson books.

Sharon Clore says

Intriguing

I heard about this book on the local 29 news and was in awe that a 19 would have a book published. The novel was excellent and spell bounding. I can see it being a mini series for the teen population. I can't wait to read more about Nate Williams. Hurry and get the second book published.

Pam says

4 stars

Our job is to remove the letters “I” and “m”, from the word impossible.

The Hidden World was a beautifully described story of a young man’s journey to find out where he came from, who he is and who he is meant to be.

Nate Williams was found alone in the woods at the age of six but was luckily raised by a loving family, has everything he has ever wanted and needed and always had a way to turn any situation around for his benefit. At seventeen he suffered from a heart attack that changed his life forever, after all it isn’t every day you change into the big bad wolf allowing you to open your eyes to a world full of possibilities.

“In a way we are our own unknown race. We are not segregated or mistreated because we exist under the radar, and it’s best to keep it that way.”

Noble College is a place where the Naturals go to learn how to use, control and expand their powers. An elite group of seventeen year olds, who can change form, control the weather and their surroundings, just to name a few. Nate was able to bring his two best friends and together they explore the halls of Noble and learn what they can in this unconventional school. There are different decorative themes throughout Noble; the astronomy hallways, an earthy floor, the weather hallway, stairs of the great tree and the forest floor. The classes they offer are unlike any other class they have ever taken; mind, horticulture, combat, transformation, astronomy, animal language and weather.

Although the walls, ceilings, and floors of the dorm changed daily, the outside seemed to stay the same. It was a twist of steel and glass and gave no hint that the floors inside might be made of diamond.

As Nate and his friends learn about this new world, and try to live a normal teenage life at Noble, there are murders and mystery floating over their heads that threaten their secret as well as their safety.

The Hidden World is a magical story that was enjoyable and very pleasing to the imagination; I love the build up of new worlds and experiences, making you a part of it along the way. I would hate for people to generalize this with Harry Potter, because they won’t truly appreciate it for what it is, there are some general similarities but none that you would mistake one for the other. This is a young-adult fantasy novel that focuses on friendship, and the endless possibilities of the world out there.

ARC kindly provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

***Quotes above are taken from the ARC version of the book and may differ upon publication.

Shali says

I received this book for free from Goodreads First Reads in exchange for an honest review.

I didn't actually read this book, I lent it to **my younger brother**, thinking he might enjoy it. **He said to give it 3.5 stars, and that the storyline was iffy and there were a few typos. (Apparently it wasn't horrible, so there's that- although he did warn me against reading it myself.) I do think that he liked it, though.**

Madeline says

Francoise Sagan was seventeen when she wrote *Bonjour Tristesse*. SE Hinton wrote *The Outsiders* when she was sixteen. At fourteen, Anne Frank's writing demonstrated an emotional sensitivity and clarity that most adult authors struggle to achieve. So, to dismiss a book simply because it was written by a teenager is unfair - it's been proven over and over that teenagers are capable of great writing.

On the other hand...Christopher Paolini wrote a poorly-conceived *Star Wars* ripoff that succeed mainly due to his parents' connections in the publishing world and the (admittedly strong) blockbuster marketability of his series. We can't all be Francoise Sagan, and unfortunately, Schuyler J. Ebersol belongs in the Paolini camp.

I don't know, guys - maybe we should stop letting teenage white boys publish novels. It hasn't worked out too well so far.

I was given a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. I probably should have known what I was getting myself into right off the bat, because the book was pitched as a novel "for the Harry Potter generation" (which seems a bit premature, really, considering that the Harry Potter books ended like five years ago, so it's not like we're getting all nostalgic for it) and Ebersol explained his reasons for wanting to write *The Hidden World* thusly: "As a young adult male I wrote what I wanted to read." (Mr. Ebersol, please explain to me in 500 words or less how you, as a young white male, are underrepresented in literature while I sit in the corner and serenade you with my tiny violin)

Anyway, our Not-Harry-Potter hero is Nate Williams. When he was six years old, he was found wandering the woods after his family was mysteriously murdered, and he was adopted by a family that apparently owns half of the United States. So right off the bat, we're veering far away from the source material: where Harry spent his childhood being bullied by his classmates and treated like dirt by his adopted family, Nate Williams grows up with a billionaire father, a movie star mother, and generally the most perfect life you could possibly imagine. It's sort of like Ebersol read *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* and thought, "This is cool and everything, but what if Dudley Dursley got the Hogwarts letter instead?"

When Nate is seventeen, he has a massive heart attack and is in a coma for a week. When he comes out of the coma (with no apparent brain damage, yay!) he finds that he can transform into a wolf when he sees

moonlight. As one does. In a scene ripped directly from the *X-Men* movies, Not-Dumbledore shows up at the Williams' house and tells Nate that he is, in fact, even MORE special than previously assumed and gets to go to Not-Hogwarts with all the other shifter kids and learn magic and generally be awesome, and I cannot even begin to explain how much this disappointed me, because by this point in the book I hated Nate Williams. He was a privileged little shit who was perfect at everything he did, worshipped by everyone he knew, given everything he wanted - and then someone shows up and grants him *even more privilege*. Think I'm exaggerating how much of a Gary Sue Nate is? Here, let Ebersol introduce his protagonist who, I will remind you, we are supposed to like:

"Nate Williams was shockingly extraordinary, in addition to having a financially privileged life and striking looks. He struggled with the problems and reveled in the joys that one would expect of someone his age. He had his faults, like anyone else, though it was difficult to see them under the mask of his popularity and confidence."

It was at this point that I started to wonder if Ebersol was trolling me, because no one in their right mind could think that an introduction like that would make readers sympathize with the protagonist. It's not possible, right guys? Right?

OH! And when Nate gets the invitation to go to Not-Hogwarts (it's called Noble College but that's a dumb name so I'm going to keep calling it Not-Hogwarts) Nate is initially hesitant, saying he doesn't want to leave his school and his friends. I was excited, because maybe Nate would finally have to experience some hardship by being thrown into an unfamiliar environment by himself. But nope! Turns out that Not-Hogwarts has this great rule where every student who gets accepted to this secret, ultra-exclusive magic school is allowed to bring two friends along, who will also be enrolled in the school and taught how to transform into animals!

What. The actual. Fuck. In what world does that make any sense? First - no, that is not how colleges work. You don't get to bring a buddy along to ease the transition. This is not summer camp. Second - hang on, so normals can be taught how to be shifters too? *Then why are there so few shifters?* There's some minor ass-covering later, when Not-Dumbledore explains that Nate's two friends (who, by the way, completely discard their future plans and their families in order to follow their once and future king Nate to Not-Hogwarts, because God forbid something not work out perfectly for Nate fucking Williams) always had the potential to be shifters, which is why they were allowed to come. But that's pretty fucking convenient that Nate is buddies with the two dudes who are also secretly future shifters. And what about everyone else who brings two friends along? And third, with each student bringing two friends along to Not-Hogwarts, wouldn't the Artificials outnumber the Naturals? What would that mean for the student body of Not-Hogwarts? But I'm not supposed to be thinking about that, because Ebersol certainly didn't.

So Nate and his loyal sidekicks skip off to Not-Hogwarts, which was apparently designed by Willy Wonka after an acid trip - the walls and floors of the dorms are made out of a different material every day, and the hallway to the Astronomy classroom is a mini solar system that the students have to walk through every day. They start learning magic, and by magic, I mean they start learning how to do literally everything. In Ebersol's world, these people (who I had foolishly assumed could only transform into animals) can control the weather, communicate with animals, cure any illness, transform materials, and control other people's minds (the horrifying consequences of giving teenagers the ability to control others' actions and thoughts is never addressed by Ebersol, and it's treated as a cute joke that students can take over other students' minds and make them fall down). There's never a really concrete explanation of *how* they're able to do these things, and I don't mean how they can do magic in the first place - I mean the actual mechanics of how the students do all of this awesome stuff is never explained or shown. They don't use wands, they don't learn any

incantations, there doesn't seem to be any special hand gestures involved - stuff just happens.

The plot resembles *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, because of course the guy who killed Nate's parents escapes from prison and starts murdering people, but he's never much of a threat, because none of his murder victims are established characters, and also the guy (Gray) is forgotten for the majority of the book so we can watch Nate being perfect some more. Gray, unfortunately, is one of those villains who is only villainous because the characters keep assuring us he's super evil, so we never actually have to see him doing evil stuff. Nate's final confrontation with the villain, where we finally learn the Deep Dark Secrets of Nate's past (which are neither deep nor dark, nor very secret because they can be easily guessed by anyone who's read a book before) carries so little weight that it's not even worth discussing. There were so many missed opportunities, though. Ebersol establishes early on that Gray has lots of people working for him, who help him carry out murders across the country. Following the laws of novel writing, this means that one or more of the characters will be revealed as Gray's associates. (view spoiler)

The pacing is terrible - there are numerous pointless diversions, including several trips to Not-Hogsmeade and a lot of Not-Quidditch games (it's called Jeka, is a combination of soccer, football, and rugby, and weirdly involves no magic whatsoever) that take up entire chapters and can be skipped entirely, because nothing important ever happens in them. The characters are one-dimensional at best, and there are too many useless subplots that go nowhere. There's an extended subplot involving Nate and his friends' romantic lives, and it mostly serves to prove that Schuyler Ebersol believes that female characters should exist only in relation to the male characters - every single girl in this book functions only as the mother, sister, or girlfriend of a male character, and it's fucking irritating. The girlfriends are particularly frustrating, because they are virtually interchangeable (seriously - Nate and his friends acquire and swap girlfriends with the ease and emotional detachment of someone picking out a pair of shoes). Also all the female characters are treated with a sort of good-natured condescension and "Women be shopping!"-style humor, as in this sentence: "Emma and Sophia left to dress, taking their time as all girls do." and this one: "He listened to Baako and John arguing about the last hand and to the three girls talking about which actor was the hottest." It's Misogyny Lite, and it's infuriating.

The writing is bad. It's not average. It's *bad*. The dialogue reads like lines from a bad video game ("Everyone here knows of the Williams, and I have been to other parts of the world where your name is known as well.") and the descriptions are weirdly formal and blowhard-y, like they should be spoken by the narrator of an overly-serious documentary ("The landscape had been shaped by time: the greatest sculptor of all.") With time and practice, Ebersol will get better at writing, and eventually be average. But Jesus, this shit is painful.

But what disappoints me most is the missed opportunity this book presents. Simply put, Nate is the villain of the story, and Ebersol is too enamored of his protagonist to see it. Nate, it is established throughout the story, is an arrogant, spoiled little shit. A character even *calls him out* on his arrogance, but instead of using this as an opportunity for reflection, Ebersol just has another character reassure his protagonist in this cringe-inducing exchange:

""You don't think I'm arrogant and self-centered, do you?"

'No, of course not. Jasmine didn't mean it.'

'But I kind of think I am.'

'Well, then that's who you are, and no one would like you any different than who you are.'"

It's *all* like that. Characters are just lining up to suck Nate's dick. Here's another conversation, this time between Nate and Not-Dumbledore:

"Don't let things that have already happened bother you, because there's nothing you can do about them.'
'Damn good reasoning. We don't have teachers as smart as you.'

bangs head on desk repeatedly, laughter turns to tears

I'm now going to discuss the ending, and its wasted potential, so don't click if you are planning to read this and want everything to be a surprise for some reason. (view spoiler)

This is not a book for the Harry Potter generation. This is a fairy tale for the 1%, a story of a dude born into unimaginable privilege who then acquires *even more privilege* by virtue of his genetics, where the supporting characters constantly validate the protagonist's belief that he is the greatest person to ever walk the earth. Fuck this book, and fuck every entitled rich white boy who got the world handed to him on a silver platter and then demanded more. I'm going to go re-read *Bonjour Tristesse* and pretend the world isn't horrible now, but I'll give the last word of this review to a friend of mine, who summed up my feelings on *The Hidden World* quite succinctly: "No more books by spoiled rich white boys at least until they get some fucking life experience."
