

What is this novel about?

This novel tells the story of Snowman, a man living in a post-apocalyptic world (the year is around 2050), whose loneliness seems to have driven him practically mad (he hears voices, often talks to himself and has hallucinations). He lives near a group of genetically modified humans, the Crakers. Throughout the story, Snowman's flashbacks teach us that he was once a boy named Jimmy who grew up in a world dominated by multinational corporations that built privileged walled compounds to isolate and protect their employees and their families from a degenerating outside society. The flashbacks tell us about the difficult childhood of Jimmy: parents who argue often, a depressed and eco-terrorist mother (she participated in resistance movements, riots against Cafésympa, a coffee company having a significant impact on the health of the planet), a father who does not know how to take care of his child and who cheats on his wife. Jimmy's family moves to the HelthWyzer compound, where his father works as a genetic engineer. We learn about the existence of genetically modified animals like pigeons (organ producer), rakunks, snats or wolvogs. He met his future best (and only) friend, Crake (whose real name is Glenn) at SenteGenic high school. This one was quite the opposite of Jimmy: intelligent, with a promising future, he ended up becoming someone in high places and became a great scientist.

Jimmy's adolescence and adult life is also told: the fact that he lacked parental love and attention during his childhood makes him an attention-seeking teenager who has had many sexual relationships. While he has found a stable job, he gradually loses interest in life and falls into depression. Fortunately, Crake reappears at this difficult moment and offers him a new job at RejoovenEsense. From the moment he accepted his best friend's proposition, Jimmy's life changed: he worked as a copywriter, met Oryx Beïsa, Crake's partner, with whom he fell madly in love (who has been a victim of human trafficking and sexual abuse) and discovered for the first time the existence of Crakers (project of immortality, eliminate war, rape, religious worship, lose human greed). The outbreak of this disaster began with the creation of a super-pill, Blyss-Pluss. Supposed to be a medicine to improve health and happiness (during sexual intercourse), its purpose is sterilization in order to counter overpopulation. This pill carries a destructive virus that is spreading around the world: Juve (Jetspeed Ultra Virus Extraordinary). After the apocalypse, Jimmy ends up alone and frees the Crakers (he takes care of them). He decides to leave his past behind and rename himself Snowman

Oryx and Crake

Oryx and Crake is a dystopian science fiction novel by Margaret ATWOOD, a Canadian writer born in 1939, published in 2003.

Why it is a dystopia ?

Oryx and Crake is a dystopian novel because it introduces readers in a post-apocalyptic scenario in which the planet Earth is on the edge of destruction (violent storms, the sun that can leather you alive, parasites, microbes and genetically modified animals that have become very dangerous), and human beings have been almost completely eradicated and substituted for a new, genetically-engineered, race.

Why did I choose this novel ?

If I chose to talk about this work rather than another, it is because I found it fascinating and intriguing: the further we get into this story, the more we want to learn about the past of the different characters and what triggered such a catastrophe. Furthermore, this dystopia reflects a realistic image of a near future, given the current situation of our planet: overpopulation, global warming, extinction of certain species, pollution, segregation between the rich (living in compounds) and the poor people (living in plebzones, poor neighborhoods), pornography, genetic manipulation and biotechnology.

