



Lyon's Legacy

Sandra Ulbrich Almazan

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Sometimes being a geneticist isn't enough to understand your family.... Joanna Lyon is the great-granddaughter of the legendary TwenCen musician Sean Lyon. Joanna may have inherited some of her ancestor's musical talent, but her parents' bitter divorce and her Uncle Jack's attempts to remake her into another Sean have left her hostile toward her family and music. Her passion is for science, but since she has no access to the family funds, she struggles to earn enough credits for graduate school. Then her uncle sets up a business deal with her employer to make Joanna go on a mission for him: travel via the spaceship Sagan to an alternate TwenCen universe where Sean is still alive. Joanna must collect a DNA sample from Sean so her uncle can create a clone of him. She refuses at first, but finally agrees to go. Secretly, however, Joanna believes her uncle will exploit the clone, and she plans to sabotage the project to stop him. But when she falls in love with one of the scientists in the Sagan's genetics lab, clashes with other time travelers who fear she'll change how history develops on the alternative TwenCen Earth, and receives devastating personal news, Joanna will find herself pushed to her limit even before she comes face-to-face with her hated ancestor. Their encounter will leave her changed forever. Will she still be able to thwart her uncle's plan, and what will she have to sacrifice to do so? Approximately 36,000 words.

Lyon's Legacy Details

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From Reader Review Lyon's Legacy for online ebook

Andrew Leon says

To be honest, this book didn't work for me right from the start. And the sad thing there is that I really wanted it to. I just couldn't get past the premise. The idea here is that sometime late this century there will be born the great-granddaughter of a 1960s pop star. And that's okay except that, evidently, this guy was such a huge star that people still recognize her (all of the family) when she's walking down the street and come up to her all starstruck about her great-grandfather. But, see, we barely care about the kids of famous people, now, unless they become some kind of star in their own right. This book expects me to believe that at some point in the future we suddenly have some kind of holy reverence for the descendants of dead 60s and 70s music stars. You know, in the same way that we have reverence for the descendants of all those great stars of the early 20th century. You know, like... Oh, wait, we don't even remember the stars of 100 years ago, let alone their children.

So, yeah, the idea that anyone would expect Joanna Lyon to follow in the footsteps of her great-grandfather just didn't make any sense. I couldn't suspend my disbelief for that. Maybe that's my issue and no fault of the book.

Then, there was the issue of first person. I've mentioned before that I'm no real fan of 1st person writing (despite my love of The Dresden Files), and this book pushed all of my buttons on the reasons why I don't like 1st person. It (first person) offers way too many shortcuts, and Almazan took them all, frequently telling us how other characters feel and what they think without actually showing us the interactions to back those things up. But, at least, she didn't have Joanna stand in front of a mirror and describe herself to us, because that is the worst.

There was also the issue of the love story, which is of the insta-love variety, and another of things that push my dislike buttons. It's too frequent that we have a female protagonist telling us how she just can't find the right guy and she doesn't know how to act around guys and, besides, guys aren't that important, anyway, and BOOM! there's the perfect guy and she loves him and he loves her and there's never any question about what's going to develop. Then, once the characters have sex, the deal is sealed. That's it for life. Does that even happen in real life? Ever? And it's not that I expect a fantasy (in the sense that all writing is fantasy) to necessarily be true to life, but there could be some complexity to it other than the neurosis of the protagonist.

All in all, the book didn't feel fleshed out. There are too many gaps, too many things not followed through to their logical conclusion, too many things left unexplained.. Then, to top it all off, the book just stops. It's like Almazan got tired of writing and cut it off without any kind of resolution. Reading it on the Kindle made it even worse, because I was only at the 85% mark when Lyon's Legacy stopped. The rest of the book is promo stuff for her other works.

As I've said in other reviews, maybe these issues are with me. The book has generally very positive reviews, so, maybe, I'm just too much of a hardass. Either way, the book didn't work for me.

Richard Bunning says

This short book of 36,000 words is a trifle too short to fully expand and explore all the elements of the plot in

the detail I would have liked. Almazan's writing is certainly entertaining and has a lively spark of originality about it.

This book will suit those who wish to read stories about strong female fantasy/SF characters that maintain their individuality and femininity. Joanna Lyon is a research scientist. How refreshingly normal that is. She is a truly normal female with all that that entails, rather than some sort of super-heroic titan that wields a sword better than mere men; so often the fare of modern SF and fantasy.

The action is set on an Earth and a parallel Earth that is possibly identical. This second place is on a timeline that is running slow by a century or so. This parallel existence is an interesting concept as it allows Joanna to go backwards in time to before her own birth, without actually using a time machine. The possibility that the "wormhole" took her back to earlier in her reality, which is certainly a common enough SF scenario isn't contemplated. Almazan's plot-line is far more mathematically plausible. To paraphrase, "time may change thee, but thy can't change time". Well, at least not in one's own past. I actually felt that neither Earth was quite the one I am in, as music had a stronger role in social development in Joanna's than I have observed. Bear to mind, though, that I sit in an atmosphere of words rather than music.

I am a fan of speculative fiction. This story very much fills that bill. Almazan also uses this work as an opportunity to explore scientific issues that are starting to emerge as concerns for all our futures. This book, good read though it is could have been so much more. So many issues of both social and scientific natures are only so lightly brushed. I know this author has a great deal more to say. I hope she does. Perhaps she had been put off by the modern fashion for minimalist and short content; a trend which seems to suggest that humans have suddenly evolved backwards in their attempts to sustain thought. The short sound bite has its place, but that can be achieved sufficiently by the use of short climactic chapters, rather than by producing books that try to get by using far too few words.

Yes, of course a strength of this book is the lack of waffle. You must realise I like waffles, and just wanted a bigger one with even more Almazan chocolate.

Lance Greenfield says

Although this is billed as a time travel story, it is overlayed with a heavy smattering of science fiction, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

The heroine lives sometime in the not too distant future. She is pressed into travelling through space and time, via a "wormhole," to visit her great grandfather in a late twentieth century parallel universe, referred to as TwenCen. Her mission is to obtain a sample of his DNA, so that he can be cloned. The transferred unrivalled musical talent of the clone can then be exploited to make a fortune for a twenty-first century entertainment company.

Joanna is very reluctant to embark on the mission, but she is forced into a corner by her controlling, obsessed Uncle Jack, to whom she amusingly refers as Uncle Jackass.

Don't worry, I am not giving anything away with the revelation of this plan, as this is all part of the scene-setting in the first few pages of this book.

The adventure which ensues is very entertaining. There are enough twists and turns towards the end to temper some of the predictability. I felt comfortable with both of those aspects.

The author admits, in her notes and acknowledgements, that several re-writes were required, but they have paid off. The story is a good one, and it is well presented. Highly recommended.

Patrick says

I wish this had been longer to give the story more time to grow. It just seemed things happened too fast. I really would have liked more interaction between Joanna and Sean. Maybe that will happen in the sequel, which I'd be interested to read.

Michael Offutt says

I thoroughly enjoyed Sandra's book. I'm a fan of hard science fiction, and this is the genre in which this tale belongs. The author is clearly versed in many aspects of science, including quantum mechanics and genetics, and spun an interesting almost "Back to the Future"-ish kind of story.

Instead of time travel, the main character goes to an alternate universe on board a ship called "The Sagan" (I really liked this name). In the alternate universe in the time when "The Four Seasons" were climbing up the charts, we meet Sean Lyon. Sean is an extremely talented musician, a young man, and someone whom his great granddaughter has been sequestered to obtain DNA from so that they can clone him. Even though she's committed his whole life to memory, there's no replacing the human connection she garners from just a few days spent in his company. And upon returning to the Sagan and her own dimension, she decides to be the mother of the cloned baby. This had me shaking my head wondering how awkward that is.

If you enjoy hard science fiction, I encourage you to buy this book. It's a great quick read with solid emotional content and an incredibly intelligent and independent female voice.

S.B.K. Burns says

What a delightful trip! A Spunky Heroine with Lots of Attitude

Almazan's quirky voice creates a layered world of music, biotech, smart-ads, wormholes, and parallel universes with the finesse of a supreme world-builder.

She's as original as are her three-dimensional characters—I guess fourth-dimensional in Joanna's case.

Joanna, a biotech worker, is coerced by an evil uncle to travel through a wormhole from her future back to an alternate 1950s to steal some DNA from dear old great-granddad, an Elvis-like superstar—in order to clone him.

Of the fifties, Joanna says: "Never mind the ozone layer; the hairspray was thick enough to create holes in my lungs."

Another example of Almazan's quirky voice: Trying to wear heels, out of fashion in her future, Joanna falls in the cafeteria with the following results:

“What food I wasn’t wearing was completely inedible, and George’s flower was floating in the soup. The front of my dress was sopping wet, a carrot had wormed its way into my bra, and ranch-flavored lettuce was clinging to my face.”

Upon meeting her great-grandfather, he tells her that some things, like dreams, transcend history. If Almazan is dreaming of being a best-selling writer, I believe that is a dream that will transcend any history as well.

Tony Laplume says

In the strange world of indy fiction, there're two kinds of interaction: Support and, well, jealousy. The first is unquestioning and, frankly, not very critical. If you've ever read the reviews for indy fiction, you can assume the most glowing ones were from this camp.

The other kind is why I read *Lyon's Legacy*. Before I go much further, I need to explain something. As part of the indy fiction scene, I've read a small amount of it. I say small because most of it doesn't seem to be very good. Indy fiction isn't like indy film. When you think of indy film, you probably think of the '90s, when those were some of the best, most-honored movies being made. Aside from popular successes like *Fifty Shades of Grey*, most readers probably don't even know indy fiction exists. For the vast majority of these books, the audience is almost exclusively people very close to the writer's circle of acquaintances.

Every now and then, you find an indy writer who breaks the mold. Ulrich Almazan can be clumsy at times within the pages of *Legacy*, but this is easily head-and-shoulders above the indy fiction I'm used to reading. The major criticism I've read about *Legacy* centered its disdain on a general disagreement with the book's central premise. If there are any such problems, it's that Ulrich Almazan takes a number of shortcuts in the narrative to produce the desired results.

The story itself is compelling, and on the whole competently told, which is to say at the very least represents real talent. In our own times we've elevated the cult of celebrity to ridiculous levels. History already tells us that if a parent wants their kid to be famous, they will stop at nothing, including their kid's own reluctance. I will refrain from examples. That's what this story is about, with a few twists, the main character trying desperately to find their own way.

I would compare *Legacy* to Jack Finney's *Time and Again*. Generally, I prefer Ulrich Almazan's story, although its novella length leaves the real payoff to the existence of sequel material (if you get caught up in things other than emotional arcs).

Most indy writers are desperate for you to not even think of them as indy fiction, but the results usually speak for themselves. *Legacy* is an exception. It's definitely worth your time.

Patty says

looks and sounds awesome!!!

Nikki Abernathy-Francis Whiteley says

I thought some of the original ideas and the "science" behind the fiction were interesting. I think that with science fiction, if you have not studied physics and are expecting your readers to suspend belief for the sake of fantasy then you need to make the reader fall in love with your characters--my opinion of course. That didn't happen here. The characters were flat and uninteresting, the plot moved too swiftly and the overall effect resulted in an underdeveloped novel. I thought it had potential when I read the summary for it and was thrilled when I won it but that was the climax of the experience that ended by the time I got to the second chapter .The dialogue and interactions between characters felt forced and often contrived. I am not a big fan of science fiction that ignores the value of character development. I did not care about any of the characters in this novella and opportunities to develop the story line or the complexity of characters were ignored. Maybe that is what was intended for this type of novella, it just wasn't my preference.

Scott says

Lyon's Legacy by Sandar Ulbrich Almazan follows the life of Joanna Lyon. As the great granddaughter of the most influential musician ever her life has been strongly directed towards music. Unfortunately she is not interested in pursuing that life and at times almost hates her ancestor for forcing her into a life of semi-celebrity just because of who her family is.

Joanna just wants to be a scientist and work peacefully in a lab. Her uncle has other plans for her however, as well as controlling the majority of the family money that she should be entitled to. He makes a deal that if she travels through a wormhole to get DNA from her great grandfather he will give her the money she needs to go to school and remove himself from her life forever. Things never really seem to go as planned...

While being a relatively short read Lyon's Legacy was extremely entertaining. Sandra is a big fan of science herself and it shows through in her writing. The society that Joanna lives in confused me a bit as music seemed to play an immense role, but that could have just been the way it affected her due to her family. Well written characters drive the story and Joanna's turmoil over her choices is palpable. I'm not sure I have read anything quite like this, but I am eager to see more from the author.

A very well done novella debut from Sandra Ulbrich Almazan brings another indie author to keep an eye on into the picture.

Review copy provided by the author.

Hope says

I received a copy from the author in exchange for an honest review.

First Impression: The cover makes this look like a story about a musician – although there are musicians in the story, that's not actually what's inside. Synopsis of time travel and meeting your ancestors? Interesting concept, carry on.

Characters: Joanna Lyon is the great-granddaughter of famous and long-dead musician Sean Lyon. Right

away she is angry and detached from her heritage, but finds her roots and a softer side as the story progresses. An aspiring geneticist and reluctant musician, Joanna must literally confront her past in order to have a future. She is the only developing character this novella - with a supporting, if stationary cast of family and friends.

World Building: Earth is still home in the near future, and the wormhole allows time travel to a parallel Earth back in the 1960's. There have been advances in technology and medicine, but not enough to really focus on.

Writing Style: Lyon's Legacy is more of a plot-driven write than anything. I appreciate the author's attempt at explaining every twist, but at times I felt a bit coached.

What I Liked: At 132 pages, it was easy to digest this story in a few short sittings. With a busy life, I sometimes like to find works to read in snippets. This is a perfect read for lunchtime at the office or when waiting in line somewhere – not overly complex, yet thoroughly enjoyable.

I also appreciated the science and plausibility created by author Almazan. The suspended belief was at just the right level for this type of reading.

Deal Benders: There's a relationship between two characters that I didn't quite 'feel'. It seemed they fell in love too fast over some laughs...and because they slept together...? I think this part of the story needs some work – something more to tie the characters to each other than what transpired.

Overall Rating: 3 stars puts this at I liked it, and I will read the second one. Hopefully some of the kinks are worked out, because this has potential to be a decent sci-fi series.

For Fans Of: Time travel adventure.

Dixie says

Great plot line a little slow at first but all in all I really liked it. Cant wait for the second book to see what happens next. The only thing I didnt like was it never said the actual year but gave a general idea of when this was set.

Rusty says

A great story, well told. At the end of the day that's all I can ask for in anything I read, and in this case, that's exactly what I got. Kudos to the author for a marvelous book.

Our story's heroine is Jo Lyon, the great-grand daughter of one of the greatest Rock stars of all time. The family has been shoehorning every child into a career in music for generations, and all is not well.

Because Jo wants to be a scientist.

With her Uncle, the master of the Lyon empire, pulling the strings of her life to block her at every turn, she's

eventually forced to take on an unthinkable mission for her uncle or lose any chance at a normal life.

Because there is a wormhole in space that leads directly back to an earth in the distant past, where a young John Lyon – the greatest rock star to ever live – is still a young man, with all his fame and fortune ahead of him.

Jo's uncle wants a clone of the family's patriarch so he can be reborn in their world, and the legend can live again.

Here is the thing I had with this story, yes, it's about wormhole hopping and cloning and all that. But really, it's a story about Jo and her coming to grips with who she is as a person, and who she is becoming.

That's what had me here. The characterization of Jo was very strong, and I cared about what happened to her. In fact, if I had a complaint about the story, it's that I really wanted her to end up with more time in the alt 1961 and with her unknowing great-grandfather. That portion of the story was incredibly vivid and well done. I wanted much more of that.

But as it stands, I still got to read a great tale. I'm thankful that I did. Great job.

Michael says

It left nothing behind

Nicole says

Lyon's Legacy is a novella written by Sandra Ulbrich Almazan about a woman named Joanna Lyon who goes back in time to steal DNA from her ancestor Sean Lyon, a (fictional) famous rock musician. Joanna's uncle, and heir to the family fortune, bribes her into signing up for the mission to travel to an alternate Earth which happens to be about a century behind the timeline of Joanna's own world. During the mission, Joanna must deal with her own feelings of inadequacy and her resentment towards her famous ancestor whose existence has shaped her life.

The portion of the book Joanna spends in 1950's suburban America interacting with her ancestor was well done and entertaining. Unfortunately, the majority of the book took place in Joanna's own time and these portions of the book I found much less interesting. Joanna's conflict with her ancestor Sean, a teenager who is completely oblivious to her mixed feelings towards him, was funny and moving. The plot lines deriving from Joanna's own time, her conflict with her uncle and a romance while in-route to the alternate Earth, felt forced and predictable.

The author appears to know a thing or two about biology and was able to write a relatively convincing lab tech as the main protagonist. Some of the scenes with Joanna working in the lab seemed to be written down to me, like they were written to appeal to what non-scientists think a scientist should be doing. The biology of the book seemed reasonable for a near future society, but the developments in physics lost me a little bit. Sure, any time travel book is going to need to employ some hand-waving in the physics department, but I

think the level of science should match up and the relatively minor advances in biology were contrasted with major advances in applied physics. It made the world building feel a little off.

Overall, this was a short read and some parts flew by, while some parts were painfully slow. Not bad, but not my favorite November read either.
