

The Bookish* Newsletter!

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Check out updates on my good reads progress, upcoming titles, lists, and reviews.

[ARC Review] 🎬📺 Head Cleaner

Eric LaRocca [HORROR, QUEER, GOTHIC]

THANK YOU to NetGalley and Datura Books for a copy of this title. Published January 27th.

"Turns out you can't live on popcorn and coffee".

This book hit me with an unexpected wave of nostalgia, instantly taking me back to the days of Blockbuster Video and the wonderfully nerdy employees who somehow knew every movie ever made. The kind of people who could decode, "You know... the guy... in the thing... with the thing?" without blinking.

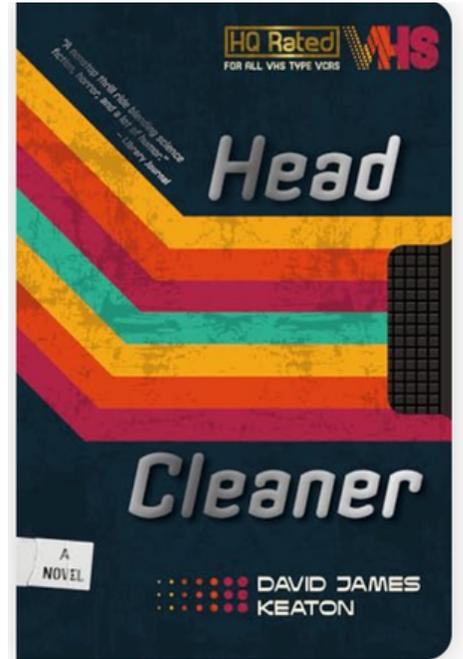
Head Cleaner centers on the last Blockbuster in the U.S. and follows two employees tasked with retrieving an outrageously overdue VCR—one so late it's become internet-famous. What they discover instead is a bizarre twist: the VCR has the power to change the endings of blockbuster films.

The premise is clever and steeped in nostalgia, and while there's clearly a deeper message at play, it never fully came into focus for me. Still, it's strange, inventive, and worth a look if you're fond of video store memories and offbeat storytelling.

The implications of this story go beyond pop culture—rewriting classic films also means rewriting history, a heavy concept in its own right.

Things took a strange turn for me when the trio began receiving tapes that depicted their own deaths, followed by increasingly frantic attempts to escape their fate. Add in mysterious figures (or possibly just a van) tracking them down to reclaim the VCR and tapes, and the story starts to spiral.

I rated this 3.0 ★. It reads well overall and has a strong premise, but the ending landed on a strange, slightly unsatisfying note.



3.0 ★★★★★



More Updates & Reading Progress!

Upcoming Horror

WAYWARD SOULS

Susan J. Morris (March 17st, 2026)

FANTASY, GOTHIC, FICTION



The delightfully dark sequel to the gothic supernatural mystery **Strange Beasts**.



Six days before Samhain—the night when the veil between worlds is thinnest—Samantha Harker, daughter of Dracula’s killer, and Dr. Helena Moriarty, daughter of the famed criminal mastermind, are thrown into their next the mysterious disappearance of two Society field agents in Ireland. Only this time, the Royal Society is sending Jakob Van Helsing to keep an eye on them.

Sam and Hel may have solved the Paris case, but that doesn’t mean the Society trusts them. Sam has the power to slip into the minds of monsters, and Van Helsing has sworn to kill her at the first sign of corruption. And if Hel can’t prove her father’s existence, she’ll soon go down for his crimes.

✦ Currently Reading ✦

Dearest, Jacquie Walters

February Downloads

I tried to make this my no purchase month but I can’t help myself but I did restrain from all the things.

The Godsend, Bernard Taylor

Schrader’s Chord: A Novel, Scott Leeds

Wish List

Turn Off The Light, Jacquie Walters

Pretty Dead Things, Kelsey Cox

Five, Ilona Bannister

Freyja, Margrét Ann Thors

Cronus, P. Djèlí Clark

The Death Row Club, V.A. Vazquez

COMPLETED TILES FOR FEBRUARY

Wretch or the Unbecoming of the Porcelain

Khaw, Eric LaRocca

Book Sources

BookTrib [<https://booktrib.com/>]

Good Reads [<https://www.goodreads.com/>]

Book Riot [<https://bookriot.com/>]

NPR [<https://www.npr.org/books/>]

Literary Hub [<https://lithub.com/>]

Booktrovert [<https://booktrovert.com/>]

Fable [<https://fable.co/>]

March Reading Challenge!

“A title that starts with the word murder.”

If you’d like me to add a new feature, send me a note  at

lifebywyetha@gmail.com. Subscribe to get the latest edition in your inbox!

