



Flux

Jinwoo Chong

Melville House (Mar 21, 2023)

Hardcover \$26.99 (352pp)

978-1-68589-034-6

A man struggles with past trauma and an uncertain future in Jinwoo Chong's novel *Flux*.

A few days before Christmas, Brandon is laid off, falls down an elevator shaft, and blows it with both his boyfriend and a new girl he likes. In the midst of this bleak midwinter, a ray of hope emerges: an offer of employment from a new company, Flux, that promises to deliver renewable energy for all. But the job is not what it seems, and Brandon soon finds himself doubting his memories and his sanity.

The nonlinear narrative soon turns into a twisting labyrinth that folds in on itself and never quite straightens out again. Brandon, who goes by several names throughout his life, has suffered many losses, all of which occurred around Christmas. Along with more material losses, he grapples with his fading sense of identity: though he's half Korean, he feels his connection to that side of his family slipping away as the years go by. Even his love for *Raider*, a hard-boiled 1980s detective show, does not offer the comfort that it did before its star was accused of domestic abuse.

As Brandon gets closer to the truth about his new job, he also realizes that his life has been a series of events gone wrong—"what ifs" that could have been his had the world been just a shade different, just a degree more merciful. With the truth about Flux exposed, he decides whether his life as it stands is worth saving, or if he is willing to risk everything on a desperate gamble to remake the world as he believes it always should have been.

Flux is a novel about who gets to decide what is reality and what is not.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (March / April 2023)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.