

“Preston’s narrative is perhaps needlessly haunted by the question ‘Why?’” said Jeremy Treglow in *Literary Review*. Seeking psychological reasons for Juan Carlos’ self-indulgence, he writes of the “strain of having to please two antagonistic masters” – his father and General Franco – and describes a horrifying accident in his late teens, when he fatally shot his “intellectually more able” younger brother while playing a game with an ornamental pistol. Yet the references to his “damaged psyche” don’t seem altogether convincing. “You don’t need to have read ‘Don Quixote’ or ‘King Lear’ to know that some men just go nuts.”

Stephen Marche applauds Doctorow's incisive critique of Silicon Valley and artificial intelligence, particularly his concept of humans becoming assistants to machines. Though he believes the book oversimplifies some aspects of AI, he considers it an important reflection on technology's impact and its uncertain future.