



READING GUIDE

March, 2025

Beautiful Shining People

Michael Grothaus

In short

A captivating, masterful novel with an extraordinary mystery at its heart.

Synopsis

It's our world, but decades into the future...

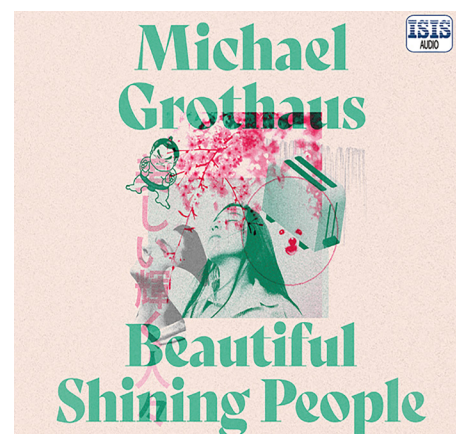
An ordinary world, where cars drive themselves, drones glide across the sky, and robots work in burger shops. All conflicts are safely oceans away. People get up, work, and have dinner. Everything is as it should be...

Except for 17-year-old John, a tech prodigy from a damaged family, who hides a deeply personal secret. But everything starts to change when he enters a tiny café on a cold Tokyo night. A café run by a disgraced sumo wrestler, where a peculiar dog with a spherical head lives, alongside its owner, enigmatic waitress Neotnia...

But Neotnia hides a secret of her own - a secret that will turn John's unhappy life upside down. A secret that reveals that this world is anything but ordinary - and it's about to change forever...

Discussion points for *Beautiful Shining People*

1. How do John and Neotnia's backgrounds shape their identities and their relationship?
How does the futuristic Tokyo setting enhance the story? What elements of the world
2. Grothaus created stood out to you, and how do they reflect contemporary issues?
3. Discuss the role of technology in the novel. How does it impact the characters' lives and relationships?
4. Did you enjoy the ending?



Next, you should listen to...

The Space Between Us by Doug Johnstone

Ripe by Sarah Rose Etter

The Forcing by Paul E. Hardisty