



Fallen Spirits

by Diane Hatz

Whole Healthy Group

book review by Joslyn Vann

"Men had invented materialism to control others and make an elite few rich and powerful."

Twenty years after escaping the corrupt entertainment industry and the abusive executives of Acht Records, Alex Scott once again finds herself in New York City devastated by career upheaval. This time, her professional failure is compounded by heartache over a romantic breakup, friendship betrayal, and the loss of her dreams. Jackson Thomas Wilson, a.k.a. JT, is a multibillionaire who amassed his fortune by stealing corporate ideas and piggybacking off of others' inventions. In his never-ending quest for more power, JT seeks to expand beyond the wealth generated by his online shipping and retail empire. Employing a team of scientists, JT embarks on a mission to separate humanity from its spirituality to increase consumerism, but his greed could potentially wreak havoc on a cosmic scale. After a chance encounter with a stranger, Alex finds herself caught up in JT's diabolical schemes and embroiled in a web of danger that draws her deeper into despair.

This second installment of *The Mind Monsters Series* completely deviates from the humorously satirical otherworldliness of the first volume, *Rock Gods & Messy Monsters*. Hatz delivers a significantly more realistic and serious tale while continuing to provide a stinging critique of capitalism, corruption, abuse of power, and misogyny in the corporate world. The sequel also characterizes the protagonist with greater depth and development. The main character's spiraling journey through depression, alcoholism, and self-loathing powerfully portrays the impact of physical

and emotional abuse. The author demonstrates how childhood victimization can establish patterns of behavior that adversely affect victims' adult relationships and self-images. Sensitive readers may be disturbed by scenes depicting sexual harassment and violence, but the author's intended message is clearly one of female empowerment, solidarity, healing, and redemption. Ending with a compelling cliffhanger, this book is the perfect setup for the next book in the series.

Hatz's *Rock Gods & Messy Monsters* won the 2024 Eric Hoffer Book Award **Sci-Fi/Fantasy First Runner-Up**.