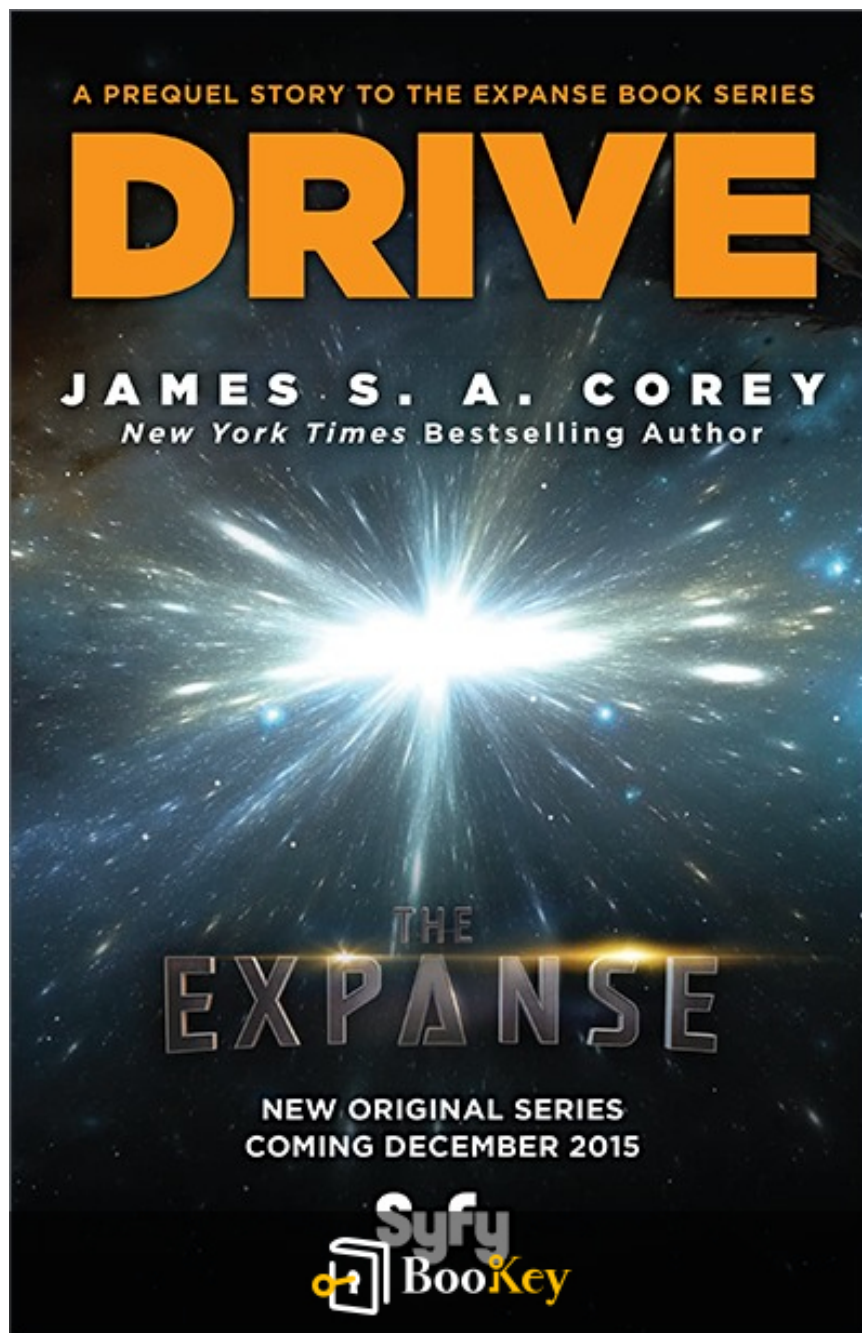


Drive PDF (Limited Copy)

James S.A. Corey



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Drive Summary

"Unraveling the Power of Human Ingenuity in Space."

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About the book

In the breathtaking short story "Drive" by James S.A. Corey, readers are catapulted into a universe teeming with interstellar possibility, where the boundaries between human ingenuity and cosmic destiny blur in spectacular fashion. As the prelude to the much-acclaimed "Expanse" series, "Drive" journeys through the exhilarating genesis of the Epstein Drive—an innovation that heralds humanity's leap into the stars. A tapestry woven with ambition, discovery, and sacrifice, this tale reveals the riveting moments of breakthrough, painting poignant portraits of those who dare to challenge the cosmos. For newcomers and seasoned fans alike, James S.A. Corey crafts not merely a story, but an invitation to ponder the boundless potential of human aspiration and the infinite expanse awaiting beyond our earthly confines. Dive into "Drive," and experience firsthand the genesis of a future—born from one man's dream—that reshaped the destiny of humanity.

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About the author

James S.A. Corey is the collaborative pen name used by authors Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck, who are renowned for their contribution to the science fiction genre, most notably through their expansive and intricate series, "The Expanse." The pen name pays homage to two pivotal figures in their lives, combining the names of Franck's daughter and Abraham's grandfather. Born from their rich imagination and forged from intricate world-building skills, "The Expanse" has seamlessly woven elements of political intrigue, human drama, and interstellar adventure, earning critical acclaim and establishing a devoted fan base. Both authors bring their unique talents to the table; Abraham is celebrated for his nuanced storytelling and character development, while Franck provides a finely detailed universe and vibrant plotlines. Together, they have not only achieved literary success but have also brilliantly expanded their compelling narratives into a successful television adaptation, further solidifying their status as luminaries in contemporary science fiction.

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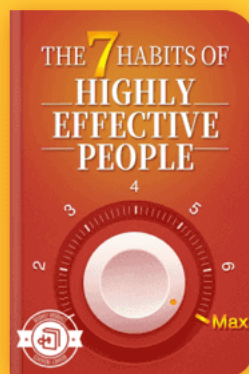
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Chapter 1 Summary: 1

In the intense opening of the story, Solomon, the protagonist, finds himself in a high-stakes situation aboard his spacecraft. The narrative begins with Solomon being flung back into the captain's chair due to severe acceleration forces. His body is pressed firmly against the chair, struggling with the overwhelming g-forces, illustrating a physical assault as his mind races to make sense of the situation. Human evolution didn't prepare him for this kind of extreme acceleration, activating a primal fear response that interprets the scenario as a dangerous fall or a vivid nightmare.

The yacht he's commanding—a model not noteworthy for its aesthetics but known for functionality—indifferently relays the alarming information that they are accelerating at an unimaginable rate, eventually surpassing seven gravities. In the brief window when Solomon can access the exterior camera feed, Phobos, one of Mars' moons, flashes past, making way for the endless tapestry of stars, highlighting the yacht's tremendous velocity.

As the realization of the predicament sets in, Solomon's feelings are a mixture of exhilaration and anxiety. The yacht's interior is noticeably simple, with a touchscreen control panel that's become slightly worn with age. This aging technology signals the out-of-spec conditions causing the systems like the water recycler to falter. Solomon hypothesizes about the recycler's failure, attributing it to the stress of the acceleration along the ship's axis,



specifically anticipating an issue with the reservoir back-flow valve.

While he contemplates repairs, Solomon is confronted by his physical limitations, struggling to reach the control panel under the relentless seven g's. He muses about calculating his current velocity and the duration of the burn using basic mathematics, although this provides little immediate reassurance.

Just as he makes a concerted effort to operate the controls, he experiences a sharp pain in his elbow—an ominous sign of the damage high g-forces can inflict. Solomon humorously acknowledges this mishap as potentially embarrassing, realizing the dire situation he could face if unable to stop the drive on his own. Without intervention, he might need a rescue mission that would require a spacecraft capable of sustained acceleration over a long duration to reach his high-speed trajectory.

Solomon's attention returns to the fuel supply readout, displayed in green against black on the panel. However, his attempts to focus are compromised by the acceleration's distortion of his vision, likened to astigmatism. Observing the fuel gauge, he is perplexed by the slow depletion rate despite the ongoing burn. From ten minutes in, the fuel remaining ticks down at an almost imperceptible rate, suggesting the burn could last over thirty-seven hours, propelling him to significant fractions of light speed.



As Solomon comes to terms with the seriousness of his situation, his initial enthusiasm gives way to a creeping nervousness about the prolonged acceleration and the uncertain outcome of his impromptu voyage into space.

Aspect	Description
Setting & Situation	Solomon aboard a spacecraft experiencing severe acceleration, surpassing seven gravities.
Character State	Solomon faces physical distress under high g-forces; experiences mixture of excitement and anxiety.
Spacecraft Description	Yacht known for functionality, with a simple interior and outdated technology.
Issues on Board	Systems like water recycler faltering due to stress; possible failure of reservoir back-flow valve.
Physical Challenges	Solomon struggles to operate controls due to g-forces, suffers elbow pain.
Velocity & Duration	Considers calculating velocity and burn duration; fuel depletion suggests over 37 hours burn at high speeds.
Emotional Journey	Initial thrill transitions to nervousness regarding unsustainable acceleration and uncertain outcomes.
Potential Outcomes	Faced with needing a potential rescue mission if unable to control the ship.



Chapter 2 Summary: 2

Chapter 2 sets the stage on Mars, particularly at the bustling hub of research and innovation that is the Dhanbad Nova Research Center. The narrative pulls us into the lives of its inhabitants, primarily Solomon Epstein, amid the backdrop of an underground Martian city thriving with scientific advancement and cultural evolution.

Three generations after humanity's initial colonization of Mars, the city now harbors a vibrant social scene, boasting five bars despite being underground due to Mars' lack of a magnetosphere. Solomon regularly gathers here with colleagues: Tori, Raj, Voltaire (real name Edith), Julio, Carl, and Malik, all contributing to advancements in fields like water reclamation and anti-cancer therapies.

A newcomer at the bar catches Solomon's eye—a woman with sharp features and dark hair. Her presence is noticed amidst a familiar gathering of regulars. Solomon, typically skeptical of love at first sight, finds himself suddenly self-conscious.

The group's conversation centers around Mars' burgeoning independence compared to Earth, echoing sentiments from history about distant colonies seeking autonomy. Tori passionately argues that Mars' technological and environmental advancements position it to declare political independence



from Earth—a poignant reflection on Mars as a new frontier reminiscent of early America. Malik, Voltaire, and Solomon engage in a thoughtful discourse on the implications of such a stance, with Solomon drawing historical parallels to illustrate the potential pitfalls of Mars' technologically advanced but numerically inferior position, akin to Germany's during WWII.

As discussions sway from politics to engineering debates, the camaraderie and intellectual ebullience of the group shine through. Solomon, meanwhile, finds himself intrigued by the newcomer, contemplating her place within the research community.

The evening unfurls with patrons drifting away until Solomon and a few stragglers remain. The newcomer, who introduces herself as Caitlin Esquibel, approaches Solomon afterward. Their conversation reveals she is new to Mars, working in resource management for the Kwikowski Mutual Interest Group. From Luna, Caitlin's insights and questions on the Mars-Earth dynamic display her keen intellect, creating an immediate rapport with Solomon.

Despite his reservations and self-awareness, Solomon is captivated by Caitlin's charm. Their interaction ends ambiguously yet promisingly as she declines his invitation to join him but does so with warmth and humor, hinting at a possible future connection.



This chapter subtly weaves themes of isolation, ambition, and the search for identity within a nascent Martian society, interlacing human stories with the grand narrative of space colonization.

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Chapter 3 Summary: 3

In this gripping chapter, we follow the intense struggle of a protagonist trapped in a perilous situation caused by the relentless acceleration of a high-speed spacecraft. The narrative opens with the protagonist grappling with the physical horrors of extreme acceleration, known as "delta vee," which represents a change in velocity. Although traveling at high speed isn't directly harmful, the continuous acceleration strains his body significantly.

Despite having powerful engines capable of sustaining immense forces, the real challenge lies in maintaining a long-duration burn while managing the efficiency of propellant usage. Human bodies can withstand brief accelerations at over twenty g's, but enduring such sustained forces is a different ordeal entirely. While there are safety measures and emergency shutoffs designed to prevent mishaps, ironically, everything is functioning perfectly, yet this precise operation is what's endangering him.

Desperately, he yearns to hit the manual override—a big red panic button on the control panel—but the overpowering acceleration pins him to his seat, rendering him immobile. His plight intensifies as he struggles to maintain consciousness, gasping for air and attempting to force blood circulation by tensing his limbs. Darkness encroaches upon his vision—time is running out.



A glimmer of hope emerges when he remembers the hand terminal in his pocket. If retrieved, he might signal for help from Caitlin, possibly shutting down the uncontrollably efficient engines remotely. Each movement feels excruciating, with the weight of the hand terminal acting like a knife jabbing into his hip. Yet, determined and focused, he channels the friction and pain into progress, slowing inching his hand toward the pocket.

Every advancement, small yet monumental, brings a fleeting sense of triumph. The realization dawns—a poetic resonance of power and efficiency, the two key concepts dictating his plight and potential salvation. The chapter closes with the protagonist on the brink of retrieving the hand terminal, his fingertips making contact with the hardened plastic. It's a race against time and the limitations of the human body as he fights for survival and a chance at rescue.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embrace Small Victories on Your Path to Achieving Greater Goals

Critical Interpretation: In the intense crucible of extreme circumstances, you are reminded that every tiny gain matters on your journey to success. As you navigate the chaos and despair, let each small step forward, no matter how painful or challenging, become a beacon of hope against overwhelming odds. These minute triumphs accumulate, creating a momentum that pushes boundaries and inches closer to salvation, catalyzing a transformation born from perseverance and resilience. This pivotal lesson urges you to find strength in the incremental progress of life's struggles, channeling adversity into a powerful narrative of achievement, just as the protagonist's desperate efforts edge him nearer to survival.

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Chapter 4: 4

In the story, Solomon and Caitlin's complex relationship unfolds against a backdrop of impending conflict between Mars and Earth. Three years after their initial meeting, Caitlin unexpectedly visits Solomon in tears, signaling a shift in their dynamic. Known for her emotionally guarded and often crude demeanor, Caitlin's vulnerability surprises Solomon, who tries to offer comfort. Their relationship began as a casual companionship, growing into a deeper connection over time, though never defined by explicit promises of exclusivity.

Amidst their personal drama, political tensions escalate as the United Nations (UN) announces military actions against Martian secessionists, citing the breakaway province rule. This rule, a political tool Earth uses for resource acquisition, raises the fear of a harsh military crackdown on Mars. Caitlin, feeling threatened, turns to Solomon for solace, grappling with the implications of the UN's actions, which stem from Earth's resource scarcity, particularly lithium and molybdenum. Solomon attempts to reassure her by rationalizing the situation as a bluff, driven by economic motives rather than actual intent to harm.

The gravity of the situation leads Solomon to propose marriage to Caitlin, a spontaneous decision driven by the impending threat of war. Despite her skepticism about making permanent decisions amid uncertain times, Caitlin



agrees. They marry in a modest ceremony, finding fleeting happiness in their union amid the chaos.

At a pivotal moment, news arrives that the UN fleet has reversed course, de-escalating the immediate threat. The couple watches in relief as the UN

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Chapter 5 Summary: 5

In Chapter 5, we find ourselves in the intense and dire situation of a protagonist who is experiencing severe physical distress aboard a spaceship. The text opens with him struggling to manipulate a hand terminal from his pocket. The heavy burden of thrust gravity makes movement difficult, threatening to render him unconscious. He knows the gravity is causing his blood to pool dangerously in his body, though his limited medical knowledge cannot precisely gauge the implications.

Despite the discomfort and the suspicion that he's suffering a serious medical episode, the protagonist focuses on the task at hand—communicating with Caitlin. Caitlin, a relevant figure in his life, is likely starting dinner and following news about a crisis in the shipyards. He knows that if he can establish a connection with his terminal, she will receive his call, but he fears she may dismiss an accidental dial. Thus, he needs to alert her through noise due to his inability to speak clearly.

As he recalls countless instances of effortlessly thumbing in connection requests, the gravity's impact on him makes everything feel different, and his usual muscle memory fails. The ship proves to be well-constructed when a shudder only results in an amber notification, suggesting that a crisis shutdown isn't necessary. Yet, he remains focused on operating his terminal amidst the draining pain and burgeoning headache.



In contemplating the efficient design of the ship's drive, he muses about the dramatic improvements in space travel. The ability to sustain constant thrust throughout a journey, albeit at a reduced gravity, promises faster travel and mitigates the complications of long-term weightlessness.

Suddenly, as the situated terminal shifts painfully within him, he loses grip, the device dropping from his weakened hand. His left arm, trapped beside his ear, refuses to respond to his attempts to move. The realization dawns heavily upon him—he might be experiencing a stroke. The chapter ends on this chilling note, emphasizing the precariousness of space travel where a simple medical emergency is compounded by the harsh realities of space and gravity.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: The crucial balance between human endurance and technological advancement

Critical Interpretation: In the midst of extreme physical distress, you find inspiration in the protagonist's determination to keep moving forward, demonstrating an unwavering focus and resilience. Despite the oppressive conditions of thrust gravity aboard the spaceship, he continues to fight against his own body's limitations, underscoring how essential it is for you to harness human willpower and ingenuity when faced with challenges. This chapter teaches you that no matter how advanced technology becomes, it is still your determination and perseverance that will ultimately help you overcome adversities. By drawing on your inner strength and leveraging the tools available to you, you can navigate even the most daunting situations, reminding yourself that every challenge holds an opportunity for growth and learning.



Chapter 6 Summary: 6

In Chapter 6, Solomon's journey into uncharted territories of ambition, marriage, and innovation unfolds. An engineer with a penchant for boundary-pushing ideas, Solomon had been married to Caitlin for six years when he decided to invest in a personal project. He used his savings from performance and efficiency bonuses to buy a yacht, an endeavor that was less about lavishness and more about experimentation.

The yacht, though not grand by Martian standards, was of immense value to Solomon, serving as his test vehicle. Its historical significance was tied to its original owner, a deceased Luna-based executive, which enabled Solomon to purchase it at a reduced price. For most on Mars, the yacht was an impractical status symbol, as there weren't many destinations to navigate between. However, for Solomon, the yacht was a platform for testing engine designs—specifically one he was intimately familiar with and had contributed to during its creation.

Yet, this indulgence came with tension at home. Caitlin, his wife, was taken aback by the purchase, expressing both concern and a wish to be included in the excitement of Solomon's impulsive ventures. In a touching exchange, Caitlin voices her desire for them to be equal partners in both responsibilities and joys, highlighting the maturity and understanding within their marriage. Solomon acknowledges her concerns, promising a more balanced



consideration in future endeavors.

Outside his marriage, Solomon delved into night-time experimentation, focusing on propulsion improvements while Caitlin involved herself in broader geopolitical discussions about Martian resources and Earth-Mars relations. When Solomon finally sets off to test his experimental design, the results are disappointing, showing decreased efficiency. Despite setbacks, he remains determined, reflecting the perpetual struggle between dreams and reality.

In the backdrop, political tensions simmered between Earth and Mars. The declaration from the United Nations about Martian shipbuilding restrictions went largely ignored locally, and life on Mars persisted despite the looming threats of conflict. Colleagues around Solomon experienced significant life changes, from resignations to personal losses, illustrating the ever-shifting landscape of personal and professional life on the frontier.

A year after acquiring the yacht, Solomon attempts another engine innovation. During the test, a call from Caitlin briefly interrupts him, revealing the enduring support and connection in their relationship, despite different focuses. Solomon's commitment to his craft never wanes, as evidenced by his persistent adjustments and trials, ultimately leading to the pivotal moment of acceleration, positioning him amidst the weight of aspirations and scientific discovery.

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Chapter 7 Summary: 7

In Chapter 7 of "Drive" by James S.A. Corey, we find Solomon, a pioneer of space travel, on a perilous journey that may cost him his life. Solomon's small yacht moves further away from Earth's gravitational pull at an unprecedented speed, leading him to the somber realization that he will likely perish in space. Despite his imminent death, he takes comfort in the thought that his work will leave a significant impact: his drive technology will enable future explorers to journey to distant celestial bodies such as the asteroid belt and the Jovian system, including moons like Europa and Ganymede.

As his physical condition deteriorates due to the effects of a potential stroke, Solomon contemplates the broader implications of his technological achievements. His invention dramatically alters the dynamics between Earth and Mars, previously hindered by vast distances. With the newfound accessibility of the asteroid belt and the moons of Saturn and Jupiter, the abundance of resources like lithium, molybdenum, and tungsten promises to end the hostilities that have prevented lasting peace between the two planets.

In his final moments, Solomon experiences poignant aural hallucinations, hearing songs reminiscent of his father and reflecting on the unfulfilled dreams of contacting his loved ones, particularly Caitlin, his confidante and beneficiary of his legacy. Solomon draws parallels between his situation and



the biblical story of Moses, who saw the Promised Land but couldn't enter it, pondering if the unattainable horizon is what renders such lands sacred. As the expanse of space embraces him, Solomon finds solace in knowing the upcoming eras of space exploration owe much to his ingenuity, even if he won't witness them firsthand.

Ultimately, Solomon's narrative is a meditation on legacy, sacrifice, and the relentless human drive to reach beyond current limitations, leaving the reader with a sense of awe at both the cost and the potential of human advancement.

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