Little Brother Essay

“Little Brother” is a fiction and cyberpunk book released in 2008 for teens. Mark is a very smart hacker who can go through his school systems like tissue and outsmart security cameras. After he got captured by the DHS with his friends and being accused of a recent terrorist attack, Mark realizes that the city has turned into a state where everyone is being monitored and being watched by the DHS. Mark is angry that the DHS is treating people like potential terrorists, and he decides to shut down the DHS by himself, and with the help of his friends.

Mark is just a regular teenager who likes to hang out with his friends. They sneak out of school all the time to play a game called Harajuku Fun Madness, which is an alternate reality game, similar to Pokémon Go. However, after Mark and his friends get brutally interrogated by the DHS and treated like prisoners, Mark’s personality changes. He doesn’t become the fun and joyful person he is anymore. Instead, he becomes scared and tries to stay away from doing other things that will get him into trouble, until he decides to take down the DHS once and for all, for the illegal things they’ve been doing in order to get information from innocent people.

People probably would say that Cory Doctorow tried to imagine the future while writing this book. The story never tells us the year or time it is, but anyone can figure out the author is talking about the future by the many new devices no one has heard of before, like ParanoidXbox and ParanoidLinux, which are devices that does everything to keep your communications and files a secret. The author implements other future technology like gait-recognition cameras, which are supposed to detect how people walk, but they are still not perfect since you could just walk differently to not get detected from those cameras. Most of these devices will control your life if you are not careful with them.

Many of the technology in the story is used by the DHS to spy on people and to get every single detail about each person, as if they were a terrorist. Cameras were once just used to take pictures, to snap photos with your friends, or to make a good memory for your family, but instead now they are used to look at our everyday lives, and they become advanced that they detect your walk cycle. Social media also has gotten out of hand. They can make a good chatting site for your friends, or to post pictures of good memories, but the DHS can also use it to their advantage to spy and get information about people. These devices can all be used against people to potentially ruin their life forever.

This book was really enjoyable. It includes some mature content, including how torture feels like from the eyes of a teenager. It also has some fun and weird devices you can find out by reading the book. The book also tells us how far technology has gotten in the future, and how they can all by used for good or evil. An important lesson from this book is that you can’t do anything by yourself, you need teamwork in order to achieve endless possibilities, including taking down the entire DHS.