

REVIEW OF *WE ARE SATELLITES*

The premise is a nice twist on the idea of intelligence-enhancing technology. The “Pilot” only enhances your mind in a very specific way: it lets you pay attention to more things at once. It also shines a blue light out of the side of your forehead, but I’m willing to forgive this absurdity as being narratively useful.

Family was the shelter and the storm, both at once...¹

The story is primarily a family drama, and it’s a well-done one; the characters are self-sabotaging in frustrating but believable ways. One thing that bothers me is that Sophie never seriously grapples with her betrayal of her brother David (her theft of his work badge). The plot also conspires to vindicate Sophie’s we-are-good-and-they-are-evil worldview despite her not originally having much basis for it. What would her life trajectory look like if BNL hadn’t turned out to be nefarious; if the Pilot had been safe and helpful for the vast majority of users, and the problems had been handled transparently and responsibly?

¹Sarah Pinsker, *We are satellites*, First edition (New York: Berkley, 2021), 327.