

Palladium: Trust No One

Dylan Diggs

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Having neutralized the Garrack alien threat to earth, you would think Sophia Baker and company would have earned some time off. But when a top-secret prototype for a piece of stealth technology is stolen, Sophia, John, Hayden, and Kim must recover it before it lands in the hands of any one of the dozens of terrorist organizations that want it. Having battled aliens, now the agents find themselves in the middle of an all-too-human guerilla war.

In *Palladium: Trust No One*, the third novel in the *Palladium* series, author Dylan Diggs returns to the twenty-second century. Despite having terraformed and colonized the solar system, humans have not managed to learn how to live in peace. The Claxx Confederation of Venus are blowing up targets all over the solar system, and their neighbors the Eryneys, the only democratic nation on Venus, have declared war on them. When the totalitarian regime the Furies enters on the Eryneys' side, it's only a matter of time before all hell breaks loose.

Agent Hayden Daily has a personal vendetta against the Claxx, who murdered his fiancé. As he teeters on the edge of sanity, Sophia, John, and Kim must attempt to recover the technology, keep a leash on Hayden, and neutralize the terrorist threat.

Trust No One, while an entertaining adventure, seems to serve mostly as a prologue for future books. Less time is devoted to our A.D.A. heroes than in the last novel, while the author makes a heroic effort to outline the complicated political situation of this future realm. The situation on Venus is a thinly veiled reference to current events in the Middle East and offers Diggs the opportunity to expound on philosophy, both political and otherwise. These discourses are sometimes heavy handed and do not mix particularly well with the action adventure tone of the rest of the book. While using science fiction to illuminate the human condition is a time-honored practice, Diggs would do well to tone down the rhetoric just a bit and make these speeches seem more organic to his characters.

However, Diggs continues to display his talent for world building and quirky characters, as well as nonstop action. *Palladium: Trust No One* is a serviceable and enjoyable entry in the series that shows great promise for stories still to come.

BookWire Review

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