



The Paratwa

Christopher Hinz

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This is the third novel from award-winning novelist Christopher Hinz. Beginning where the critically acclaimed LIEGE-KILLER and ASH OCK end, THE PARATWA chronicles the lives of the Irryan colonists as they prepare for the imminent attack of the fierce and vicious Paratwa assassins. Facing the threat of their dark enemies, an Irryan named Gillian must also cope with her inner turmoil, as the madness of her nature threatens to consume her life. She discovers that she is a genetically modified creature whose purpose is to serve the needs of others, and the course of her destiny is not in her own hands.

The Paratwa Details

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Author : Christopher Hinz

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Paratwa for online ebook

Simon says

This trilogy started well but became less interesting with each subsequent book. What can I say about this, the final installment? Tedious.

Emily says

A terrible end to the trilogy. Just page after page of info-dumping...which is often repeated over and over throughout the book. There is no character development, really not much in the way of characters at all. The entire story line boiled down to one really convoluted and ridiculous plot line. I'm sorry I wasted my time on this series. First book was good, and downhill from there. I do not recommend.

Mark says

Paratwa

By Christopher Hinz

Publisher: Tor

Published In: New York, NY

Date: 1991

Pgs: 405

Summary:

The Earth is almost ready to be repopulated following the Apocalypse. The colony cylinders are holding the seeds of humanity and Earth. The enemy is coming. The Paratwa, the twinned bioengineered assassins who helped the Earth along on her fall, are on their way. An advance guard is loose in the cylinders. Plans within plans. Secrets within secrets. Long term plans are coming to fruition. A war is coming. Will man survive?

Genre:

science fiction, genetics, war

Main Character:

The Lion of Alexander, the leader of the United Cousteau Clans. He is a grown up, grown old Jerem Marth from the 1st book. He is the narrative soul of this series. And his character shines more here than it did in the other two books.

Favorite Character:

Timmy. All the way up until his ultimate raison d'etre is revealed.

I really wanted more of Meridian, the Paratwa lieutenant to the Ash Ock royal caste.

Least Favorite Character:

Calvin KyJy, the one and only tripartite Paratwa. He undergoes a large personality shift during this book.

And then, shifts again in the run up to the climax of the story.

Favorite Scene:

When Vilakov hefts his geocannon and carries it Rambo-style into battle.

Plot Holes/Out of Character:

Calvin KyJy for the reasons mentioned above.

Last Page Sound:

Better than the 2nd book in the series, Ash Ock. On a par with the 1st book, Liege Killer.

Author Assessment:

I would definitely read more by this author.

Disposition of Book:

Keep it. Re-read it.

Why isn't there a screenplay?

There should be. This would make a great movie. Lots of opportunity for big sci fi action and stuff blowing up. Intrigue. Evil. And heroes.

Casting call:

Charlize Theron as Collette Ghandi the earthbound tway of Sappho

Michael Clarke Duncan as Vilakov

Peter Dinklage as Nick

Patrick Stewart as Jerem Marth, the Lion of Alexander

Lucy Liu as Maria Losef, the Director of ICN, the Colonial banking network

Randy French says

loved it when I last read it again years ago - rereading the trilogy now

Fietspomp says

First part is the best

Rob Trans says

Most of the books I read come from a library. I now understand why I was unable to borrow either Ash Ock or The Paratwa from my local library systems.

The Paratwa is the second half of the story started in Ash Ock. You need to read both to have the full story. I am going to repeat some of my review of Ash Ock because the two books are really just one.

This is a sequel to Liege-Killer set 56 years later when the Paratwa and their Ash Ock masters are expected to return to Earth and the colonies.

I still think Hinz's writing is a little pretentious. He uses adjectives that are not needed and he uses more advanced language when a common word would better convey the meaning. Using the wrong word and other writing flaws break the pace of a book causing me to focus on the writing rather than the story.

These two books delve more into the motivations and inner struggles of characters. Hinz does not handle this kind of material as well as he dealt with the action and investigation in Liege-Killer. The characters change in Paratwa in ways that caused me to lose sympathy with all of them. Through the introspective passages, the author may have been trying to accomplish the opposite.

The author relies much more on exposition in these two books than he did in Liege Killer. One result is some problems are solved and insights obtained with too little effort. In several places the author brings together characters who announce they have discovered information, it gets discussed, and suddenly we have put together a portion of the puzzle. I would have preferred less time on the introspective passages and more time on the characters actively investigating and arriving at their knowledge and conclusions. The author uses narrative of past events more in this book as well.

Ash Ock and the Paratwa could have been combined and a third of the material could have been edited out making a better and faster paced story. In addition to using more words in a sentence than needed (reducing its impact) and spending too much time on introspection, the author also includes whole paragraphs describing things that have little to do with the story. My favorite example is the zephyr chair. This is mentioned throughout the two books, but Hinz waits until halfway through Paratwa to include a paragraph about something he has described in short hand before. Other than a character sitting in a zephyr chair from time to time, it doesn't play into the story.

My first encounter with a zephyr chair was in an old Looney Tunes cartoon in which Goofy came into some money and decided to purchase new furniture. He ended up giving it away and eventually had holes bored in the floor for air jets used to comfortably support Goofy and his pals. Why did I waste your time with the previous two sentences? Why, indeed?

If you loved the universe and the plot of Liege-Killer, then Ash Ock/Paratwa is worth spending the few hours it takes to read them. I wish I had heeded the advice of another reviewer and just stopped after Liege Killer. I won't read Binary Storm (the 2016? prequel).

Tom says

The end of this trilogy and the weakest, I think. There is too much wordy plot exposition, and the links between some scenes are weak. However, the book is worth the reading, despite its flaws. (The analogy that occurred to me when I was reading it was with the Matrix movie trilogy - the problem with the later movies IMO is that they explained the backplot, and it sucked.).

smjbab says

amazing! great story, so well written, kept me riveted to the page.

LG (A Library Girl's Familiar Diversions) says

I really liked *Liege-Killer*, the first book in this trilogy. The pacing was great, and I enjoyed the sci-fi mystery and suspense aspects. *Ash Ock*, the second book, wasn't as good, but I reminded myself that it was the second book in a trilogy, and Hinz probably needed to do some setup for the events of the third book. Now that I've read the third book, I wish I could go back in time and tell myself to stop at Book 1.

This book was incredibly painful to get through. For long stretches, all anyone seemed to do was sit around and talk. Timmy, Susan's mentor, lectured Susan, Gillian, and Empedocles about Sappho's origins, motives, and plans for almost 100 pages. Information necessary for certain scenes to make sense wasn't revealed for hundreds of pages. For example, the Os/Ka/Loq were mentioned long before they were explained, and the phrase "This *kascht* reeks of the lacking" was overused before it even meant anything to me.

The other reasons why I didn't like this book are almost entirely enormous spoilers. You've been warned.

(view spoiler)

So yeah. This book didn't work for me. And the "to be continued" feel at the end wasn't intriguing, it was annoying.

(Original review posted on A Library Girl's Familiar Diversions.)

Alan Mills says

This is the third volume in a trilogy (Liege Killer and Ash Ock are the first two), which I just read back-to-back-to-back. Since I NEVER do that, I suppose I could stop right there, as it's obvious I liked them. But for those who want details, this review covers all three books.

The story begins a quarter century after the earth is rendered uninhabitable by man's insane pursuit of self interest, with nuclear and biological warfare ultimately poisoning the atmosphere. The final destruction was helped along by Paratwas, genetically engineered humans who have separate bodies but share a single consciousness. They also had genetically enhanced physical abilities, so made excellent fighting teams.

In the last years before the final destruction, two groups left earth: one group set up colonies in small self-contained communities in high earth orbit. A second group took off in space ships for distant stars, using newly developed freezing techniques which put you in suspended animation until thawed out.

The difficulty comes when mass murders begin which appear to be the work of Paratwas--which were thought destroyed during the final days of earth. To combat these Paratwas, an expert Paratwa hunter is brought out of deep freeze, and turned loose. The opening issue is whether he will be enough, or whether he will be worse than the problem he has been revived to fix.

Strengths: the first book does a great job of setting up this world, with lots of action sequences and tension. The remaining books are not as good, but Hinz throws in enough plot twists to keep you reading.

Weaknesses: the second book really is a set up for the third, not a lot happens. The third has lots of tension, but only by introducing a wholly unexpected plot twist, which is not logically connected to the rest of the story.

Definitely read Liege Killer, then decide if you are hooked enough that you want to read the second two.

Riku Lindblad says

Finishes the plot, but the last half is just pure exposition with a few interludes of action.

Jim says

A good end to an excellent trilogy. This book sags a little with repetition, but it is bringing a very subtle, complex & thrilling plot to a head. A lot of excellent, smart characters are players & pieces in an intricate game. Revelations are sometimes mind-boggling at first blush, but make sense. On top of all that, Hinz has created a wonderful near future world. It's very detailed & never boring.

If you picked this book up without reading the other two, put it down. Find them. Read in order. It's a wild ride.

Kris says

Book 3 of the Paratwa saga wraps up the story in a logical if not somewhat predictable way. This particular book spent too much time with the characters talking in a meeting of some kind explaining what was going on instead of showing the reader what was happening and letting you then draw conclusions. The story was less satisfying this way as it often felt like you were watching a series of lectures instead of reading a story. The plot is very well put together and it is an interesting set of ideas that evolve but there is not very much emotional connection to the events by the reader so it leaves you a little meh. The one strong kick you do get is what happens to Gillan and Susan in this story and that is some good reading. Overall a 3.5 rating that satisfied me as far as plot but left me wanting more as far as emotional connection.

Adrian Kennelly says

The book that ruined the series.

Stephen says

4.5 stars. Satisfying ending to one of the best (and certainly one of the most under-rated and least known) science fiction trilogies I have read. Beginning with Liege-Killer (on my list of All Time Favorites), continuing with the second book, Ash Ock (a superb middle volume that both continues and expands the story begun in the first book) and finishing in grand fashion with this book, this series deserves a lot more attention than it has been given.

HIGH POINTS (this is for the series as a whole):

1. Well written plot: The plot begins very focused in book one as a terrific science fiction thriller involving authorites trying to locate and stop an unbeatable assassin known as the "Liege-Killer" who is actually one of the genetically created "Paratwa" (beings with a single consciousness contained in two bodies)who were responsible for the "Apocalypse" that destroyed Earth hundreds of years before. From there the plot expands into a race against time against a long planned conspiracy involving a return to power of the Paratwa and a final subjugation of the remaining humans.
2. Great characters : Without giving away there background which is explained at the end of book one, Nick and Gillian are two "pre-apocalyptic" survivors who have been in cold stasis and are brought back to track down the Liege Killer. Both are incredibly well-drawn and Nick, a midget, reminded me a bit of "Tyrion Lannister" in so far as he stole every scene he was in. Add to that the paratwa themselves whose twinned consciousness is incredibly cool.
3. Great World-Building . The survivors of Earth's apocalypse live in 217 "colonies" floating above Earth orbit. The economy, political tensions and social structure of the colonies is well done and believable. In addiiton, the technology described is very interesting and adds terrific flavor to the story.

THE LOW POINTS: One and only one and that is the covers of the three books. They are among the worst I have ever seen and are probably a big reason why they are not better known. The cover of the last book especially looks more like a same sex harlequin romance than a SF epic. All I can say is ignore the cover and read the story.

Bottom-line, if you are a fan of well-written, action orientated SF, this is a series worth reading.
