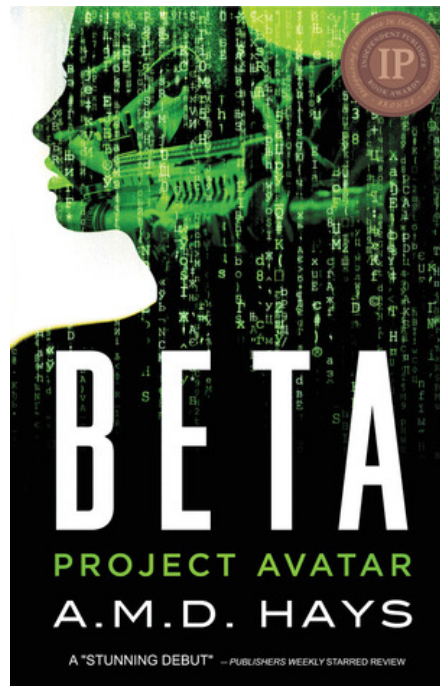




Beta: Project Avatar

A.M.D. Hays

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This is an alternate cover image for ISBN 10: 0985418206 and ISBN 13:9780985418205

When a powerful virtual agent makes its way out of the lab, the military will stop at nothing to get it back.

Hays hacks into our greatest fears of technology while simultaneously tempting us with the phenomenal capabilities of twenty-first-century electronics. This smart, topical, furious-paced thriller thrusts world-class cryptographer Dee Lockwood against an array of rogue, sociopathic assassins intent on stealing a defunded military software application and igniting a Third Gulf War.

Lockwood is on her way to a secret NSA conference when a vicious hijacking leaves her friend in a coma--but not before he has installed the last copy of BETA on her laptop and smartphone. When Lockwood overcomes her fear and provides the impetus for her fellow passengers to regain control of the aircraft, she imagines the terrifying ordeal is over.

But it's only the beginning.

BETA is actually "Project Avatar," a secret military software project that, after losing Congressional funding, was smuggled out of the Pentagon into the seemingly innocuous consumer-grade software application that wound up on Dee's laptop and smartphone. Lockwood finds herself the target of UMBRA Special Forces commandos and the hijackers, who team up and try to kill her for the precious code.

Lockwood enlists the support of her technical-genius friend Abe, as well as John, the handsome and mysterious former MI-6 agent. Mere steps ahead of the deadly commandos, Lockwood's investigations lead her on a breathless flight from the clandestine NSA conference in the Arizona desert to an illicit financial operation headquartered in the Cayman Islands--via the historic streets of Geneva, the ancient royal palaces and gardens of Bangalore, and the jungle trails above Rio.

Dee's worst fears are confirmed when she discovers BETA's true provenance and brings to light Operation Hydra, a shocking policy coup to initiate a Third Gulf War. With the countdown to Operation Hydra under way, Lockwood jets to the Caymans and joins forces with John to expose the rogue plot before all hell breaks loose.

This action-filled, intelligent and thought-provoking novel is a thrill-a-minute adventure from its opening pages to the stunning conclusion.

Beta: Project Avatar Details

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Author : A.M.D. Hays

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From Reader Review Beta: Project Avatar for online ebook

Bobby T says

I couldn't put this book down. It's a fast-paced thriller that just kept me wanting to turn the pages.

The technology is awesome--I want one of these avatars!

I enjoyed the characters, in particular the protagonist has a lot of heart and realistic emotion. There are plenty of well-developed support characters that add further interest, and some laughs.

Its full of chases (including a great car chase) and gutsy escapes... altogether a fun read.

A very timely tech thriller that shows the good and bad side of technology.

Krista Dulaney says

ARC from NetGalley

Another fast-moving thriller, this book is a novel about Dee Lockwood, a woman who does contract cryptographic work and finds herself being pursued after receiving a beta version of a sophisticated phone app. Beta, the high-tech application that is like a souped-up version of Siri for iPhone, assists Dee in an international race to find the answers before she is eliminated by those who want to capture her.

I absolutely loved the characters in this book, especially Dee Lockwood and the maybe-retired-but-maybe-not MI-6 agent John. Halfway through the book, I practically had to stop and catch my breath because the action just doesn't let up. With all of the NSA scandals plus ever-evolving technology, it's hard to separate fact from fiction, and anyone who loves a good tech thriller will love this book!

Ian Bebbington says

Very topical read in July 2013 with Snowden affair ongoing and Assange in Ecuador Embassy

Lexie says

Wow, this book was a fantastic read. I read several books a day, and this captivated me the entire time I read it. The technology and government cover-ups that Hays incorporated into the book reminded me of some of Michael Crichton's work, in particular Prey with the nanobots. I must admit, I'm slightly jealous of Hays' imagination in writing this book. I am always coming up with ideas for novels, but I never would have come up with this. The scary part is that I'm sure this technology exists or is not far off in the future.

Dee is a great leading lady stumbling around trying to figure out just what she's landed in when her life is threatened several times. Not an easy task when she's worked for the government and most high level security companies! Luckily, she has contacts of her own that are able to hack into various portions of the government and companies. Combined with her handy Beta, an avatar capable of much more than just playing games with she just might make it out alive. Now, if only she could figure out just what Beta truly represents and get the Black ops team off her back she'll be set.

My review is not nearly descriptive enough to tell you just how much I enjoyed this book. The character development combined with covert operations & cover-ups makes for a fast and stimulating read. I liked Dee's toughness, and found her character to be very relatable to. I especially enjoyed Beta and her interactions with Dee. This had me laughing, cringing, and trying to stay one step ahead of everything.

Hays did an excellent job of writing a book that is believable and incredibly enjoyable. I will be looking for more books by Hays in the future.

Maggie says

What a fast paced and intense book. Beta is a must have app right next to Candy Crush. Dee is a little bit frustrating. As the heroine of the novel I wanted her to be strong and steadfast but she was a little too much of a cry baby for my liking. You would think by the time she reaches Rio she would accept that she is being chased by a bunch of goons who would love nothing more than to bash her head in with her own smart phone but her weakness makes her relate able. I guess you could say I had a love hate relationship with her. Her relationship with John is a bit confusing to me and understanding John is pretty hard as well (Unless your English..?). My frustrations with Dee start here as well; why do you keep escaping the one person who protects you? And okay I get why you would escape him the first time. But over and over again? Really? Pretty good book just had some issues with Dee or Karen or Denise...etc.

Won from Goodreads Giveaway

Natty says

Entertaining and provocative. I rather enjoyed the writing style and pacing, and the protagonist was quite endearing.

Chris says

Fast paced military/spy/conspiracy story. Loved it.

Teresa says

Dee, a cryptographer heads to a secret NSA conference with her friend Ed. Ed is left in a coma throughout the book after the plane is "hijacked". When Dee finds guards searching her room, it starts her worldwide adventures escaping her pursuers. She has friends to help her along the way along with Beta who becomes both her friend and foe and also the reason the government is after her. This book takes you all around the world with many adventures. Will she be captured this time or next? A government conspiracy is also uncovered. It will leave you at the edge of your seat!

*First read edition from goodreads giveaways

Maria says

Fun read! Predictable ending but I didn't care because the characters were believable and the tech was accurate. Recommended.

Garry says

This first novel was a success. Once I picked it up and started reading, I couldn't put it down. A young cryptographer is caught up in international intrigue when she agrees to try a new software program. The result is a very engaging novel.
