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Clarion Review

Science Fiction

He is Known as Ego: A Superhero Epic
Alexander B. Edwards
978-1-4259-5393-5
Three Stars (out of Five)

The reader of this sci-fi mystery mixed with a dollop of metaphysical yearnings better have a good memory for names. The book starts off with a list of 32 characters (oops make that 44 considering that 12 of them have two names!).

As the subtitle notes this is a novel about superheroes where "A string of unlikely circumstances somehow came together to form the most adaptive and influential superhero group of all time the Eternal Champions." The story follows these Champions first on an assassin/murder case and then onto the trouble stirred up by a Killer Virus and Ego a supernatural being. Apparently Ego feeds off of human emotions "Everyone must concentrate on feeling nothing. That will be the only way you will be able to keep Ego from getting stronger."

A few auxiliary characters join the superheroes to fight crime and evil. A mini-plot is also introduced involving a threesome in the CEA (Counter Espionage Agency) a Washington DC group who has the ear of the Secretary of Defense. Another counterespionage group from Colombia that has the power to neutralize all nuclear bombs on the planet is also thrown into the story. After reading the book a quick review of the Preface and the Author's Notes helps clarify these groups and their relationship to the story. *He Is Known as Ego* is the second book in an eight-volume series: Superhero Epic Series.

The mystery unravels or perhaps ping-pongs around this unwieldy gang of characters their dubious super-being powers and a montage of sci-fi terms that runs the gamete from "hexametric dimensional vortex" to "surfing the Net." Edwards slips into "telling" so much that he loses the rich details that "showing" brings to the reader. However one intriguing example of power abilities happens when Susan "mentally rapes" innocent people and then erases their minds of the encounter.

But too many questions are left hanging or are inconsistent. How can super-beings

sometimes travel by disappearing and flying and other times they have to take an airplane to get somewhere? Why would a “god” (Joshua aka David) need to suck energy from people to stay alive? And why does Elizabeth (Liz aka Isis) hide the fact that her pregnancy has made her lose her visioning power and then proceeds to have dream visions of Ego’s destruction? This makes the reader wonder if the author knows what he’s talking about.

Edwards also crams too many miscellaneous concepts and groups in one book: Project Outlaw Project Jane Galactic Guardians Omega Hackers and the KOR. Let these loose ends happily unravel in the other series books.

The author’s enthusiasm and imagination are noteworthy. Using his obvious experience with military intelligence and interest in para-psychology Edwards has a “Pandora’s” box of creative paths to explore. Simplifying the plethora of ideas characters and plots will add believability and make for a stronger series.

Aimé Merizon