

Negative Zero

Jimm Grogan

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Negative Zero is an action-packed space opera that will appeal to lovers of mysteries, crime novels, and conspiracy theories.

In a distant future when an evolved human race coexists with fantastical creatures, infamous vigilante Negative Zero brings criminals to justice. In classic science-fiction style, Jimm Grogan has created an action-packed world with innovative characters, interplanetary intrigue, and diabolical schemes that threaten the future of the Azten Empire of Federated Worlds. With illustrations by Duncan Long, *Negative Zero* captures the spirit of the righteous avenger.

Tomek Nois Plantona Regalia 1294 2 is a man of many talents. He divides his time between his day job as a spacecraft engineer and his hobby of tracking down dangerous criminals as a vigilante assassin. Using disguises that are unique down to facial features and mannerisms, Tomek feels secure in his anonymity until his involvement in two deadly cases leads to the unmasking of his alter ego, Negative Zero.

The book opens with a suspenseful action sequence involving the takedown of a criminal who feeds human flesh to her exotic, hypnotizing birds. While the book is largely plot-driven, Grogan does include some backstory on Tomek's transformation into Negative Zero, a change shaped in large part by the tragic, unsolved murders of his mother and father. The dangerous cases that Tomek takes on, including a government conspiracy that has cost thousands of lives on the planet Zimvia, all seem to interconnect with clues that could unlock the secrets of the past. Grogan has neatly set up *Negative Zero* for a sequel or series.

A smattering of grammar and punctuation errors exists, including an occasional dropped article and extra spacing between words; these minor details are easy to dismiss thanks to the fast pacing and page-turning suspense.

An illustrated appendix of races provides a convenient reference point for the six major species mentioned in *Negative Zero*, although Grogan does specify that the "Azten empire is home to citizens of about twenty different races. However there are significant populations of only about seven of them." Duncan Long's drawings complement the text, outlining complex social customs and appearances of each, whether they be human, orwallin, zimvi, or navino.

Although *Negative Zero*, with its futuristic technology and civilization, is pure science fiction, it will also appeal to lovers of mysteries, crime novels, conspiracy theories, action-adventures, or any genre wherein good overcomes evil.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (September 3, 2014)

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