

Renegades

Thomas Locke

Revell (Nov 7, 2017)

Softcover \$12.99 (288pp)

978-0-8007-2790-1

Thomas Locke's science fiction straddles the line between tragic and comedic, striking a perfect balance.

Renegades, by Thomas Locke, is a sci-fi adventure with a cavalcade of distinct characters and well-described action. Among the humor and sorrow, a true coming-of-age story emerges within a galactic conflict that threatens the very fabric of the universe.

Sean and Dillon are twins from a backwater planet. They have special abilities of transit, a rare form of teleportation rarely seen within the Human Assembly. Both attend the Academy, where they hope to hone their abilities and use them to maintain galactic peace. However, after the twins are imprisoned for trumped-up charges, they must decide which side they want to throw their lots in with for the coming conflict.

At a distant outpost, a young military leader from a disgraced bloodline possesses the unique ability to sense others with transit abilities. Although this power has been outlawed for as long as anyone can remember, Logan collects these "ghost-walkers" and brings them together for a risky mission that could change the public's opinion toward them.

Renegades has many elements of a classic coming-of-age story, particularly seen in Logan and Dillon, who grow substantially throughout the course of the narrative—Logan grows into someone more self-assured, while Dillon learns that a laissez-faire attitude on the battlefield can cost lives.

Humorous moments come as well, in descriptions such as "The senator's wife wore so much hairspray it reflected the light," though settings are less described and are sometimes hard to envision.

Renegades straddles the line between tragedy and comedy, never feeling too much like one or the other.

GREGORY A. LOWE (November/December 2017)

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