Clarion Review

General

The Terrorist Legacy
Mr. Pat
978-1-4389-2004-7
Two Stars (out of Five)

The plot of *The Terrorist Legacy* sounds as if it were pulled from the headlines. Sam Ellington is the head of the Foundation for Peace, a group that rescues children from refugee camps and educates them to be peacemakers. After meeting Kathryn and George Stanton, an affluent and philanthropic American couple, Sam becomes intent on building one of the foundation's schools in Ashoud, Israel. Along with Sam's friend Greg, an Israeli arms dealer, the group decides to use a mega-yacht, the *Diversion*, to move refugee children. Little do they realize that the *Diversion* and her crew are not what they seem. Soon, Sam and his colleagues are embroiled in a stand-off involving the American military, hostages that include members of their own families, and terrorists bent on nuclear destruction.

From the start, it's clear that Mr. Pat has put a lot of research into his latest novel. This complex story weaves together the war in Iraq, the situation in Syria and Iran, the genocide in Darfur, the Israel conflict, and other events. While this level of research might shed more light on global political situations that baffle most Americans, Pat's story doesn't really explore the dramatic depths of that link.

Almost every detail of this story is told by the omniscient narrator and rarely does the story unfold through action. Readers are told point blank that “Sam Ellington is sensitive, resourceful, and successful.” Rather than tell the reader, the author should show Sam in action, interacting with refugee children or improvising when medical or food supplies are short. In another example, the reader is told that Melissa, the Stantons’ restive daughter, is in an unfulfilling marriage with her husband, Abraham. One wonders whether Pat could better illustrate this through an argument or a scene that demonstrates their silent disconnect. While Pat clearly has a gift for creating realistic characters with a substantial backstory, the lack of description is disappointing, particularly when the action ratchets up. In the end, readers are left feeling that these characters are moving through cardboard backgrounds.

Nonetheless, *The Terrorist Conspiracy* has potential as a political thriller. The subject matter is interesting, and the gears that turn the plot mesh together. If it were written with an ear for descriptive drama, this could have been a novel that made headlines itself for changing perspectives on a terrible conflict.