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Clarion Review ★★☆☆☆ THRILLER

We Love You, Madam President

Alvin S. Berger
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The political thriller We Love You, Madam President *responds to government chaos with technological advancements as an AI hybrid ascends to the White House.*

In Alvin S. Berger's political page turner *We Love You, Madam President*, interconnected government intrigues and scientific breakthroughs lead to an unbeatable life form.

Mallory is an eager test subject who becomes the recipient of unfathomable intelligence: she and Adama, an Israeli AI program, merge to create a walking, talking human-computer. The influx of Adama's limitless knowledge, combined with a hidden line of computer code, gives Mallory the push and confidence to run for president.

Mallory's goal is to beat the current cad in the office and make history as the first woman commander-in-chief. With the support of her husband, Matt, the National Independent Party's backing, a pro-Mallory team of writers, and excited constituents, Mallory leaps into the political realm. On her road to the White House, she dodges slander and assassination attempts, avoids seedy government officials, and uses honest tactics to win over the American people. Through the challenges she faces, Mallory proves she is the best of both worlds—human and AI. She makes plans to use her abilities to make the United States the country it should be.

The novel incorporates several subplots within its main plot, resulting in layered angles and conspiracies for its litany of characters. Romance, mental breakdowns, and complacency appear and escalate without much explanation. Political schemes, and Mallory's conniving cabinet and security team members, are underaddressed. The overarching narrative takes off in medias res, with the opening scene broken up by hefty chunks of explanatory debriefing, presenting it as a sequel of sorts. The hefty amount of backstory often slows the pace and leads to rushed scenes.

Though the book's many characters are fleshed out in terms of their personal traits and motivations, differentiating them from one another is difficult, particularly because the language used to define them is repetitive, and because so many of them switch between extreme levels of confidence and self-doubt. Keeping their connections straight is also overwhelming work. Exaggerated dialogue tags make their exchanges unrealistic and awkward; their verbiage is too often robotic.

Proceeding as a connected series of vignettes, the novel is cohesive, though some of its chapter and scene transitions are choppy. Its language is succinct, though its visual descriptions of settings and people are limited; undue attention is placed on unimportant details, including a cigar, a new television, and the amount of a ride share fare. And despite its early high-stakes tempo, the story fades toward an anticlimactic finale involving neat, uneventful wrap-ups for a limited portion of its cast.

The political thriller *We Love You, Madam President* responds to government chaos with technological advancements as an AI hybrid ascends to the White House.

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ALEX DAILEY (January 8, 2021)

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