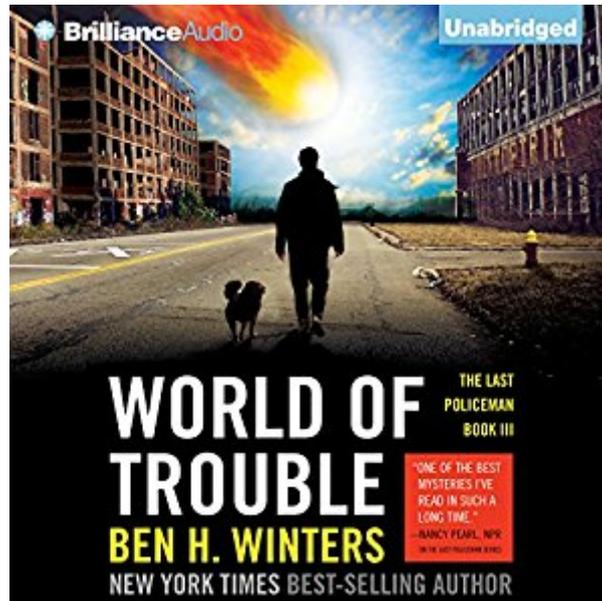


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World Of Trouble: The Last Policeman, Book 3



Synopsis

Critically acclaimed author Ben H. Winters delivers this explosive final installment in the Edgar Award winning Last Policeman series. With the doomsday asteroid looming, Detective Hank Palace has found sanctuary in the woods of New England, secure in a well-stocked safe house with other onetime members of the Concord police force. But with time ticking away before the asteroid makes landfall, Hank's safety is only relative, and his only relative - his sister Nico - isn't safe. Soon, it's clear that there's more than one earth-shattering revelation on the horizon, and it's up to Hank to solve the puzzle before time runs out - for everyone.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This conclusion to the *Last Policeman* trilogy finds Detective Hank Palace embarked on a private quest: to find his sister Nico in the days before an asteroid collides with earth. Palace doesn't have to. He could instead ride out his last days in an otherwise-safe redoubt with some other cops and their kids, including Officer Trish McConnell, with whom he has developed a thing during the second book. But the various drives that impel him - the detective needing to uncover the truth, the loyal older brother needing to protect his little sister no matter what, the Don Quixote taking on lost causes - push him onto a journey through pre-Doomsday America, hundreds of miles west to a small town in Ohio, on a bicycle, accompanied by sidekick Cortez and pet dog Houdini. It's a bleak book. With time getting short for humanity, some people hunker down, suspicious of all strangers and ready to drive them off with a gun. Some think that with enough

supplies and buried deep enough, they can ride it out. A few maintain civility and kindness, some just because, and one group that's been kept in the dark about what's really going on. And some let loose with their worst behavior. Palace must consider another scenario. Nico is part of some group sure that the catastrophe could be avoided, that the government wasn't telling the truth, that the asteroid might be deflected with rocket-launched nukes. And he's seen some evidence of a larger, well-oiled effort, notably the helicopter on which Nico rescues him during the second book. Is Nico really on to something? As the time ticks down toward the expected impact, Palace continues his lonely drive, for his sister and for the truth. No spoilers here.

I was not prepared for the visceral reaction that I had to the end of this series. Even though you were preparing from the very first book for this, it still hit me hard. I connected with Hank Palace, I connected with his journey, but I did not have enough time to connect with Ruthie. Her last acts of bravery and compassion tore me open. Tears still come to my eyes when I think about it. The World of Trouble jumps right into the story of Detective Palace assuming that the reader remembers where book two left off. There is not a lot of rehashing and the reader will have to hit the ground running. I will admit, I could not remember certain players and for the first chapter I felt I was playing catch up. The Last Policeman series revolves around Detective Hank Palace who at once is trying to bring order to his last days on earth as an asteroid is heading for earth and finding his sister Nico who is a bit of a radical and is rumored to be with a group of extremists that have their own plan on how to save humanity. With Book III there are only fourteen days left and chaos reigns. Hank has tracked Nico to a rural police station, when he arrives, it appears abandoned but there are signs that Nico has been there. Signs that only Hank recognizes and the reader is left wondering what is real and what is hope. When Hank follows a bloody trail he finds Lily, but what Lily leads him to is the beginning of the end for Hank. He has one final murder to solve. One final quest to pursue. It is the compassion of an Amish man that brings peace to Hank's final day. A farm and a family that will meet its end without the fear and trepidation that the rest of the world has been facing.

The books are well-written and very engaging. Ben H. Winters is a good writer. Nonetheless I found myself disappointed by this last installment. This may be because I was hoping for a different kind of book. NOTE: I assume if you are reading this review you have read the first two books. There's a later warning about book III spoilers. The trilogy posits that an asteroid is going to strike the Earth. At the beginning there is some possibility it will pass the Earth safely, but as time passes and more is known it is determined that impact is inevitable. This shift from scary possibility to sure thing helps

create an interesting story environment. Mr. Winters does a very good job in extrapolating how people may behave and society change. I'm not sure his version is the most compelling or likely that one could imagine, but it's to his credit that he makes it all quite plausible. You cannot help when reading this to be thinking how you yourself would behave at the impending end of the world. It's a terrific backdrop for a story, detective or otherwise. The thing is, it's also a bit depressing. And distracting; when you read a book where it's already made clear that everybody dies at the end it's hard not view all the action in that context. In the first two books there is some hint that perhaps all is not lost, at least perhaps not for everyone. There is hope, and that hope informs how you view each character's actions. **SPOILER ALERT:** Some plot details are revealed. In this final book *The End* is well nigh. It's days away. And the book slowly makes clear that any notion of hope was a waste of time. It comes down to what do you choose to do when you, and everyone else, has a week to live.

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