



# Hostage Run

*Andrew Klavan*

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Heroes needed.

Rick Dial's life as a superstar quarterback ended when a car accident left him crippled. But his uncanny gaming ability caused him to catch the attention of a secret government organization trying to stop a cyber attack on America. He's been to the Realm . . . and returned to Real Life victorious.

But the stakes just went up. Another attack is imminent. Though they're in a hidden facility, there seems to be a traitor among them. Every time Rick returns to The Realm, he risks becoming trapped there permanently. And now, his best friend Molly is being held hostage. And they're threatening to kill her.

He's not sure the people in charge can be trusted. The people closest to him are in danger. A fate worse than death may be waiting for him. With no good options, how do you proceed?

In the tradition of "Ender's Game "and "The Matrix, "The MindWar Trilogy is a complex thriller about a seemingly ordinary teenager who discovers a hidden gift--a gift that could make him a hero . . . or cost him everything.

## **Hostage Run Details**

Date : Published March 17th 2015 by Thomas Nelson (first published March 1st 2015)

ISBN : 9781401688950

Author : Andrew Klavan

Format : Hardcover 352 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Young Adult, Christian Fiction, Fiction, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Hostage Run for online ebook

### Jenneth LeeD says

This is the second book in Andrew Klavan's newest trilogy, The Mindwar Trilogy.

Rick Dial's girlfriend, Molly, is swiftly kidnapped by Kudodar's men as insurance Rick will not return to the MindWar Realm. Kudodar plans to use a fleet of stolen drones via the MindWar to reek havoc on an American city of his choice--all with a single thought. Rick must take out Kudodar's new outpost in order to stop the attack while the Traveller's bodyguard, Victor One, is tasked to bring Molly home safe and without harm.

As in the last book, I'm really not a fan of the Realm. Klavan's a terrorist writer, so the chapters dealing with RL terrorists and RL situations are always more appealing than Minecraft meets Zelda--even if a terrorist is running the game. That being said, I, a faithful follower of all bookworm rules, found myself tempted to skip the Rick chapters and read only the Molly and Victor One chapters.

Rick is a hot-headed, video game dork who lives in his room fantasizing over his glory days in his football career. Obviously, the games have died down some now that he's dealing with the living Realm game, but he continues to think with his burned out mind and seems to have only a handful of thoughts and emotions: Love and Anger; thoughts of Molly (and/or Mariel), football, video games, his father's betrayal. Oh yes, and the thoughts of the girls are maddeningly overpowering compared to everything else.

Actually, most of the characters in this book are equally likable. Mars doesn't care if Rick lives or dies; just get the job done. Miss Ferris has no emotion at all (we're repeatedly reminded of this). Juliet Seven has a total of two actions in this book. The Traveller is likable, but only has a small scene. Etc. etc.

Granted, The Girl (AKA Molly in this Klavan book) is unlike the usual Klavan girlfriends. Although she's the pretty damsel in distress pawn from the first chapter, this girl is actually capable of acting more than just a love interest for the protagonist. In fact, her chapters are the most exciting. Unlike screaming girls who do nothing but flirt and cheer on the Klavan hero (\*cough cough\* Beth from The Last Thing I Remember), Molly is actually capable of carrying her own weight. She can fight her captors and take out a few deadly drones along the way. She's cool!

But not as cool as...ahem...the totally boss government soldier who equals SEAL Team 6 on the epicness scale, Victor One. Not to mention, the ONLY "good guy govie guy" in the series \*silent fist pump for awesome.\* He's that good-looking AMERICAN special ops killer who's totally on your side. Like, he's totally and patriotically AMERICAN it gets me all ready to grill hotdogs and watch fireworks. He's got cool guns and knows how to use them like an AMERICAN. DID I MENTION HOW AMERICAN HE WAS???? Okay, breathe. The way Klavan writes him is totally likable. He still works for the government, so Rick has to obey any and all orders 'cuz he's in charge. He's a totally boss killer who can shoot three terrorists dead in two seconds. Yet, when he doesn't have to, he's completely laid back and calm--not a guy who wants to tackle shoplifters and pin them into the blacktop with their arm behind their back. He doesn't use his army powers in normal situations. =Cool. And, on top of that, he totally gets the job of saving the girl. Ahem. \*favorite chapters\*

So in summary, the Realm chapters aren't near as cool as the real world chapters, even though each kind of chapter has the potential to heavily affect the other kind. Characters are a little rough around the edges, but Klavan supplies a few perfect characters to keep you turning the pages. Yes, I'll read the third and final book (I mean, c'mon, it's ANDREW KLAVAN!) and see where it takes me.

### Things to Watch Out For:

**Romance:** two characters kiss briefly

**Language:** "hellish"-2 (35, 322); it's implied a Christian character is thinking swear words; "fool"-1 (60); H-2 (60, 208); "butt"-2 (255, 302)

**Violence:** teen girl is kidnapped; character kills video game creatures, which spurt blood; character stabs another character in the throat with a three-inch nail; generic video game violence; video game character is sliced in half but there's no gore; man is shot in the head and gore is described to cover his face, but he survives; girl is shot in the arm; gunfights that kill multiple characters; a large computer villain gets its eye shot out, which is described in detail; a character is shot in the chest

**Drugs:** mention of vodka; character uses cigaret lighter to start a fire

**Nudity:** none

**Other:** an evil man was raised Christian, yet never lost his faith. He believes he'll face eternal judgement based on his works; a villain calls himself God

**Ages 14 and up**

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### Christian Fiction Addiction says

From the fantastic opening line to the gripping conclusion, I enjoyed every moment of "Hostage Run". The book moves along at a break-neck pace, and alternates between the view of Rick as he battles evil in the cyber world, and Molly as she seeks to simply survive. Both of these characters have been well-developed, and I couldn't decide whose story I wanted to focus on more as I liked them both equally. And unlike some books where you may feel annoyed every time the author switches to a scene involving the other character, that simply doesn't happen here because you barely have time to breath from one chapter to the next. Like the first book of the series, MindWar, Klavan has done a good job at bringing to life the cyber world, where real people's lives are blurred with a virtual reality called the Mindwar Realm. Reader are expected, of course, to suspend their own understanding of reality while reading this book, but it is fascinating to consider whether such a concept could actually be created with technology today. But what amazes me most about this story is that in the midst of the action and the nail-biting scenes, Klavan weaves in moments of true introspection that lead to some deep thoughts on faith and belief in God and how we wrestle with our doubts.

Teen readers looking for an exciting fiction book that is filled with heroic characters and action-packed scenes should plan on picking up this excellent second book in the MindWar Trilogy. When I was a teen, this was the sort of fiction that I was always looking for! I am greatly anticipating how Klavan wraps things up in the third and final book in the series, "Game Over". I award this novel 4.5 out of 5 stars.

A review copy was received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. I was in no way compensated for this review.

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**((Silver O. Smith - "You wanna know why I haven't cracked? It's because I'm a diamond. Diamonds don't crack. They cut." - Harley Quinn )) says**

This is a wonderful book. It phrased things about the Catholic faith that I knew but hadn't thought of it that way. The action is awesome, the writing is great, the details are just right. I even found some things in here the way I would write it!

The only downer was that I wish Victor One had more chapters.

Great book Mr. Klavan!

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### sh(e)reader says

I remember liking book 1 ... enough that I picked it up in print to keep in our home library in case one of the boys would be willing to give it a try (I don't think that has happened). So when I needed another book, and this book 2 was available, I figured I'd give it a try.

Looking back at my review of book 1, I hadn't been impressed with the narrator. I think this was the same guy. The voice didn't really bug me this time, maybe even matched the text ... it all felt a bit disconnected. Lacking in real emotion. No breaks at all between finishing a chapter, the final word, then saying "Chapter 25" ... gimme a pause or something! It's a new chapter. Take a one second break at least to let us realize it has ended and a new one is starting.

I mentioned in book 1 that it was clean. No swearing or sex. I didn't note it being Christian fiction. Not sure if I just didn't pick up on it, but it was impossible to miss here. So much talk of God and prayer and belief. I didn't like it ... felt very preachy.

The story was fine, although extremely unbelievable (even the IRL stuff) ... hated the ending. Or lack of an ending. I swear it didn't even finish the sentence, leaving the reader absolutely hanging. While I might want to know what happens, I think I'm annoyed enough that I don't plan on continuing on.

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### Melanie says

3.5 stars

Hostage Run is a good sequel to Mindwar, but I think I liked book one a little more. It took me a while to get back into Rick Dial's world and all that was going on, but once I was about halfway done, I started to really enjoy the read.

I liked the characters and my favorite was probably Victor One. I was very intrigued by his character and loved the way he was so heroic. The book ended on a cliffhanger that makes reading the final book a must and I can hardly wait to pick up *Game Over* and see how the story ends.

All in all, a good read.

\*Disclosure of Material Connection: I received one or more of the products or services mentioned above for free in the hope that I would mention/review it on my blog. I was not required to give a positive review, only my honest opinion - which I've done. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own and I only recommend products or services I use personally and believe will be good for my readers. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.\*"

## Joey T says

Honestly I love Andrew Klavan. He is a great author and I would suggest any of his books as great reads but about this one...

Wow. Might I just say wow. I love it.

1. The characters! I actually cared about all the characters! Normally, it's pretty easy to get me to care about at least one or two but about... maybe five or six characters had me holding my breath. If anyone dies in the next one....

2. The plot: the continued plot was great and very fun yet intense. Although at some point I feel like all of the different mindwar creatures are getting a little old.

3. One of the main reasons I love this author is also because of his strong Christian emphasis throughout all of his books. It does my heart good to read authors who are completely unashamed of owning their faith in Christ!!

Overall this book is a clean, action packed adventure for any fantasy lover!!

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## Gabe Martin says

I read this book because I thought it would be good for my 10 year olds and I would recommend it for that age group.

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## Jordyn says

This book was alright, however I had a strange amount of trouble getting into it. The storyline was good, the characters were interesting enough, but I feel the author needed to put a little more emotion into it, add to the suspense. All in all I still enjoyed this book and will make sure to read the next!

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## Abby Lim says

An absolutely thrilling series. Well crafted, with hidden missives laid along the path of a new era. A gripping and can't-put-down trilogy.

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## ✪?az?? - th? ?ock C?ick ?airy✪ says

### 2 "you-just-can't-end-it-there" stars!!!

This book is once again action packed and with a lot of twists. However, if you browse through my comments while reading this, you'd know that I'm not such a big fan of the protagonist, Rick now. He's not such a big hero to me because of his attitude towards a being in a game.

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Before I go to the bad part, I just want to say that I appreciate the action scenes. The characters are tougher and more adaptable now. I love, love Molly and Victor One!!! They were the main characters in my head. What an adventure! The two of them has good chemistry. I wish Molly would just... \*sigh\* Anyway, the plot is pretty straightforward. They have to save the world from a guy who think he can own the world via virtual reality. It's an ambitious plot, but the author managed to make me think that this could really be happening, so kudos to that.

Now we go to the love part, which truly should be amended although it's not the main topic of the book.

The virtual reality girl in the game.

I mean, I know that she could be a real girl too, sure, but he doesn't even know her! She's a water creature in the game world for goodness sake. He goes saving her instead of doing his main goal which is to save the world. I hate how torn he is about it when another girl is waiting for her. Another girl who is REAL and a girl that he has known practically his entire life. -- In the book, he says that he could be falling for the water girl... ummm.. dude, she just saved you, like IN THE GAME, and you met her what? Like less than 8 hours? (He can only be in the game for 60 minutes or something and that's still limited since he can't go there every time or else his mind will be ruined literally).

Rick, if I have it right, you don't really know the girl! Think hard on that, mister!

I know there's a twist somewhere here which will only be revealed in the third book. Looking forward to that and finally wrapping this series up.

Still an entertaining read though.

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## **Tracey Dyck says**

Klavan's books are always super fast reads for me, and this one was no exception! Although it's been a couple years since I read Mind War (the first instalment of the trilogy), I was able to remember important details fairly quickly, thanks to helpful reminders sprinkled throughout.

What I Liked:

-Like other Klavan novels, the writing style was sharp and to the point. Nothing fancy, but it feels the way Rick himself would tell his story.

-Molly. She annoyed me in book 1 because we knew so little about her; she felt like the stand-in love interest. But here she got a lot more screen time, and her parts of the book were my favorite.

-Victor One. He is the best. <3

-Rick was honestly trying to forgive his father and mend their relationship, which was refreshing. Most angry son characters just spend a long time wallowing in that anger.

-The Breach was cool, even if it wasn't explained as thoroughly as I wanted.

-I have THEORIES.

What I Didn't Like:

-Mainly just the Octo-Guardian. I guess it was \*supposed\* to feel like a video game, so a big bad octopus/spaceship with an almost-human face is an acceptable video game scenario... but I personally felt that it stretched my suspension of disbelief a little much. But it didn't ruin the book for me!

Overall, it was great to devour such a fast-paced book, and with that ending, I'll be sure not to let another couple years go by before I pick up the next one!

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## **Jerry says**

A sequel that does justice to the original.

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## **Don says**

courage as turning off part of mind to do otherwise, lose faith in God lose faith in everything, from boy faith to man faith, something bigger inside him.

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## **Kara says**

\*minor spoilers, 3.5 stars\*

I really loved MindWar, but really had trouble getting into the story this time. Rick's dad is now in the story, but things are still tense. Rick is dealing with anger against his father for abandoning their family even if he understands his reasons for doing it. Rick is suffering from headaches and nightmares after being in the Realm from the first book. Loved his mom and brother even though they're only in the story a little bit this time.

This time Molly is much more into the story and I was more interested in reading about her and Victor One's escape more than anything else.

Lots and lots of violence, both in the Realm (more monsters and impossible situations Rick has to resolve) and in RL (Real Life) with Molly. There is never a shortage of bad guys and Rick's dad suspects there's a traitor among the good guys. The stakes are definitely raised in this book along with the tension and danger. Still enjoyed the video game aspect of the chapter names.

Also, just as I thought certain characters would be revealed in this book, the story ends on a huge cliffhanger! So. NOT. COOL. I was so eager to learn about Favian and Mariel's identities, but that will obviously happen

in the 3rd book. Hostage Run can easily be read in one sitting and it can also be read as a stand alone, but I thought the first book was much more humorous and not as dark as this one is.

I'm sure Klavan's fans will enjoy this book or those who enjoy YA books.

I enjoyed it overall, but there was just too many things in the story that didn't make sense to me. Didn't like the violence/darkness/intensity, Rick's anger towards his father and his family being together but still lacking the family appeal, how Molly suffers while she is kidnapped, Rick is having trouble trusting the people he's working for (which is understandable) while trying to help Favian and Mariel, and Rick is also suffering quietly with those nightmares/having his head messed with.

Klavan knows how to write darkness/intensity, last minute they get saved moments as tension builds, and having your faith to back you up when there's nothing else. His writing style keeps you turning the pages quickly and his imagination for the Realm is unmatched, but the heart of the story seemed lacking in this sequel.

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### **Rakayle says**

Awesome second book. As always I love Klavan's stories. The character are so real and easy to love. Molly is cool and I really enjoyed to get to know Victor One. Can't wait to read the next book!

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