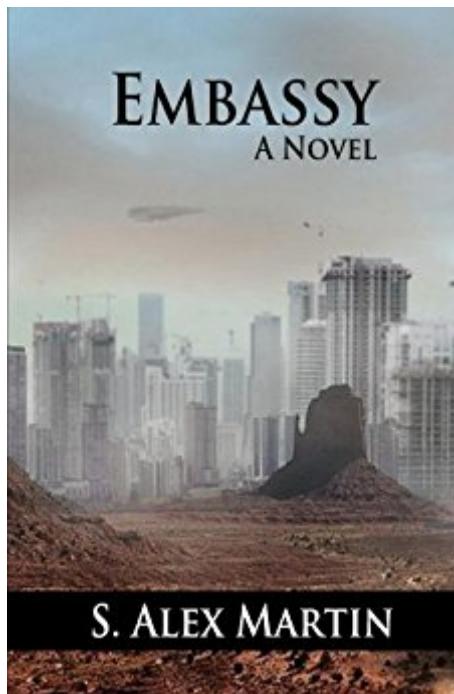


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# Embassy (Recovery Book 1)



## **Synopsis**

Arman Lance was supposed to travel the galaxy with his father, not watch him die. He was supposed to experience the adventures from his father's stories, not isolate himself from the world. He was going to join the Embassy Program, fly across the galaxy, and find Ladia Purnell, a girl from another planet with whom he had a summer fling years before. Clinging to his fading hopes and dreams, Arman joins the Embassy Program to fulfill that last promise. If he can reach Ladia, he'll never have to worry, never have to feel alone. But it doesn't take long for his plan to fall apart when he's confronted by his fellow Embassy recruit, Glacia Haverns, the ever-smiling adrenaline junkie who decides it's her job to show Arman there's more to life than chasing a desperate obsession.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Review was originally written for the Duende literary magazine.--In his debut young-adult novel *Embassy*, S. Alex Martin creates a detailed and impressive sci-fi landscape, through which a tale of

mental wellbeing and personal growth is told with clarity and strength, set against the sprawling science fiction landscape of advanced technology and global catastrophe. The novel follows Arman Lance, a young man who suffers from guilt over his father's death, believing he was the cause. He doggedly forces himself to live, his every step weighted with feelings of inadequacy and remorse. While the larger plot deals intimately with the aspect of ecological disaster and society's response to it, the true pillar of the story is given to us in the very first chapter, when we are introduced to Arman as he listens to a speaker at his father's memorial service, "We Narvidians have a saying," Ambassador Gantz says. He speaks slowly, and with a harsh accent, one native to his home planet. 'Darall ravams.' In Standard, it means, "We are revealed at death." "Darall ravams." In Standard, it means, "We are revealed at death." This statement, "We are revealed at death," hints at the true exploration taking place in this series. Not the outer world of spaceships, planets, and environmental catastrophe, but the inner world; the troubled psyche of a young man who must face the death of his egoic self in order to be revealed as more than a broken child standing in his father's shadow. The themes Embassy deals with, therefore, are especially impactful for its target young-adult audience, who are undergoing this very same aspect of the heroic journey from childhood to adulthood. What Martin manages to pull off, in this case, is an exploration of what it feels like to truly face the prospect of leaving childhood behind, and he captures it from Arman Lance's own internal perspective perfectly. As Arman Lance takes his first steps into the larger galaxy as part of the Embassy Program (the illustrious interplanetary directive designed to foster diplomacy between the colony worlds of Mankind), his inner world is in turmoil. Directionless anger drives him forward, fueled by feelings of inadequacy and a belief in his complicity in his own father's death. Far from accepting the burden of adulthood, he remains fixated on a childhood romance from years before, trapped by fantasies of a love he believes will heal him. He sees enemies in everyone, especially his friends from school, and he teeters on the edge of a dark psychological abyss that threatens to swallow him whole. Until Glacia Haverns arrives on the scene. In the tried and true format of classic young adult novels, it is the romance arc which provides one of the principle movement points for the story. Glacia is a talented and energetic young woman who embodies the motto "Carpe Diem." She greets the world head-on, and when it refuses to budge she socks it in the jaw. Just as Arman explores the depressive qualities of the young adult experience, Glacia expresses the opposite— "A formidable passion and drive towards excellence that sweeps Arman out of his unconscious state. The process is slow, as Arman resists all contact with

the world around him, but when Glacia finally breaks through to him we begin to see his potential to become a fully realized individual. Midway through the book, after taking Arman into the desert far from the bustle of the urban landscape, Glacia points toward the horizon: "Look at it." "And I do. The Embassy sits alone in the dark. The Crown rises from the center and the other towers peak around it. Lights shine between the gaps of buildings and in the rows of windows. I can reach out and hold the city in my palm. I shiver again, suddenly terrified. My whole life I've been contained to one city on one planet." For the first time I truly realize what I truly am: a piece of it [the world]. And the story expands from there into the larger world, literally, as Arman, Glacia, and his peers all set off on an interplanetary mission of aid. The world of Belvun is suffering from a total ecological collapse as the human-made climate changes caused by terraforming threaten to extinguish all life on one of the few habitable planets known to man. Mirroring the threat of our real-world ecological disaster, Embassy takes a proactive approach as the characters work together to discover a solution for the environmental degradation, giving the book a far more progressive and, in some sense, uplifting quality than many other popular young adult novels. Martin is still early in his writing career, and his work shows signs of growth in-progress, but the intelligence and passion evident in his work is both moving and invigorating. For a self-published writer, especially, this is a work of quality and originality and will provide any reader with a stirring journey through the depths of consciousness and the frontiers of time.

There were so many things about this book that I loved. The world was incredibly detailed, full of relevant technologies, history, and culture. The main characters were very lifelike. They had real flaws but were endearing in their own ways. I would have to say my favorite characters were Arman and Captain Blitner. Arman was moody and single-minded but I liked him all the same. Captain Blitner was so real and life-like that he stood out against the other characters. The story is not fast paced or action driven, but I didn't mind that. The stakes aren't life threatening or earth-shattering (for the most part). For the most part, I was content to explore the world and go on this journey with Arman into the Embassy program. That being said, there were a few moments where the story lagged a bit and I wasn't sure what was driving the plot forward. I think the author could have drawn out character interactions and subtext more to compensate for this. And the ending was a bit mixed for me. I really enjoyed the emotional impact as one subplot arc was concluded, but another one felt like the timing was off and made the additional content a little awkward. Finally, a lot of the secondary characters were a bit flat and forgettable. But the good definitely outweighed the bad for me. It's a more of an old-school Asimov science fiction. I'm so looking forward to continuing the

series with this author!!

At first, it seems like a story that is all about the future: flying Molters, exploring other planets, and finding that some stars and planets are no more. But it is so much more than that. Once you really get into "Embassy" by S. Alex Martin — which is incredibly easy to do — you find that it's more than a story of the future. Arman Lance lives his life with one goal: reuniting with a girl from another planet. He had fallen in love with her during one summer, and only thought about finding her again. But as the years pass and he becomes a part of the Embassy, he realizes just how much he may have wasted those years. Arman had isolated himself from his friends and worse—but still only yearned for Ladia. Arman's story teaches us a lesson some of us might not want to hear. He quite literally had almost missed the moon while counting the stars, and in more ways than one, letting his happiness be dependent upon returning to Ladia. With the help of some his new friends — Glacia especially — Arman sees just how much he has been missing in the past few years. Some people live their lives going through the motions of an everyday routine, working for the destination and not enjoying the journey; we see this in Arman. "Embassy" teaches you to live life to the fullest and be the happiest you can be. After all, you don't want to look back on life at the end and say, "Eh, it was okay." The book constantly leaves you ready for the next page, toys with your emotions, and leaves you in suspense, all the way up to the most important decision Arman makes in his life thus far, walking all the way to the cliff of self-destruction. A work unlike any other I have ever read, it has truly lead me to wonder, am I living my life in the best way that I can, or will I look back and say that it could have been better?

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