

OVERVIEW OF THE TRUST SERIES OF BOOKS AND NOVELLAS

BY CL HYDE

Vodka Martina... all shook up

The stories combine thriller pacing, situations that intrigue and distinctive characters. By sifting these elements through a mystery plot, my aim is to create anticipation that sizzles with ambiguity until you reach a cooling finale that clarifies. In the Trust series, obstacles arise from the lead characters being different from those in the rest of society.

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Difference can strengthen us. It compels one to battle for what most take for granted, for loved one's interests and to protect others similarly marked.

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The discovery by the protagonist that they are a member of a community supported by an organisation called The Irish Yew Tree Trust eventually provides succour. However, a community bound by a shared difference and a need to counter hostile forces bring obligations and dilemmas—importantly, how far one will go to protect your community?

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The Trust series is for readers craving thrillers that are divergent. Well-worn thriller tropes remain in the writer's notebook. You'll find no trace of a lone wolf hitman whose conscience turns him into a saviour, or a harried detective pursuing a devious killer or a mastermind out for world domination.

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Pinocchio lives... in the High Castle

The Trust is a wealthy and secretive organisation. Whilst it is a fiction, its foundations are far from fictional. It is a genuine possibility. The legal structures and industry of bankers and lawyers giving it life and the ability to conceal the people it benefits are thriving.

ENTHRALLING STORIES

The Trust is a secretive organisation... its foundations are far from fictional.

Often harnessed by nefarious interests, the structures that the Trust uses are in regular use. The scale of wealth such arrangements control will surprise. Journalist Oliver Bullough¹ estimates such means have been used to strip a trillion US dollars from countries such as Russia by their kleptocratic elites. Proof that facts are indeed often stranger than fiction.

... the structures that the Trust uses are in regular use.

The clever ways we organise our affairs influence us deeply. They combine the effects of a home and a job. They shape us. Both in how we treat one another and our aspirations. We ascribe organisations' purposes. We then inhabit them. By so doing, we often become their creatures—doing bidding we'd never do solely under our own impetus. Outcomes may be good or ill. They're rarely in between. Unfortunately, the law of unintended consequences and tendency for oversight to be late, meek, and compromised suggests there is a bias built into organisations that favours the demon.

The clever ways we organise our affairs influence us deeply.

It is the extremes that motivate commitment to an organisation and make it valuable to those it serves. The Trust is, therefore, as influential in the stories as the characters. As the series unfolds, you'll decide whether it is a villain or a hero.

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Circle, no... it's a spiral of life... and it's happening

Those who benefit from the Trust's largess are agents of change for humankind. They are a custodian of a transformation in our nature. One as great as that which led to humankind's cultural flowering, which occurred sixty thousand years ago.

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The essential story of life is about genetic winners and losers. We've got used to the idea we are the winners because our forebears were. Darwinism suggests it is an inevitability, however, that we will inherit the Neanderthal's mantle. If the AI doubters are correct,

¹ How to Steel a Trillion, BBC Radio 4, 6 episodes on BBC iPlayer by Oliver Bullough, author and journalist, 2022, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0017t8k>

this is an event we may need to hope for rather than fear—The Trust series is perhaps merely an echo of that hope, or a harbinger of the change AI may bring.

The true story of life is that it's about genetic winners and losers.

Hot Cocoa and marshmallows...

Conspiracies, strong female characters, cliff-hangers, and hidden clues run through the Trust mysteries. They make up the base flavours. Story arcs that traverse the series underpin and enrich each novel and will compel you to seek the next instalment.

Speak the unpronounceable...

Action and adventure scenes splatter the stories. The core of the yarns, however, is an exploration of the dilemmas created by the human condition. As a result, pursuing joy and romance, fulfilling responsibilities to family and community, and dealing with loss are prominent in the tales.

The lens of the Trust and the community's difference exaggerates the dilemmas. This feeds suspense, psychological intrigue and emotional highs and lows that draw you through the pages.

... the stories centrally explore the human condition.

If you're not found, are you hidden?

Intrigue in a thriller is the equivalent salt in a savoury dish. So, scenes take place in locations deserving of description and we journey to multiple countries. The lead characters all have Dutch ancestry but are a culturally diverse group. Woven into the series are insights from science, medicine, and historical influences—which percolate the present through the characters' long lives.

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ENTHRALLING STORIES

Living the past...

Across the series of Trust books and novellas, the reader will journey into the characters' pasts. You will voyage to all the centuries to the sixteenth, where the Trust's beginnings hail. We may be what we eat, but we exorcise our pasts by what we do—again and again. Such exorcism is the iceberg above the waterline and stories rely on the lurking berg beneath to propel their characters. With its principal characters' long lives, The Trust series distinctiveness is the explicitness of the treatment of this underplayed literary current.

We may be what we eat, but we exorcise our pasts by what we do.

How often do you see them? ... All the time.

Multiple story lines twist and turn in the books until they thread through an eye of a finale that illuminates and tantalises. Tantalises because a follow-on story is my promise. As is traditional in mystery tales, the culprit, and their motives surprise, only becoming clear in the finale. What I guarantee is our deepest needs and desires will always play lead roles in story outcomes.

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ENTHRALLING STORIES

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