



The Final Hour

Andrew Klavan

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"You're not alone. You're never alone."

Charlie West has held on to that belief, but now he's starting to wonder. He went to bed one night an ordinary high-school kid. When he woke up, he was wanted for murder and hunted by a ruthless band of terrorists. He's been on the run ever since. Now he's stuck in prison, abandoned by his allies, trying desperately to stay a step ahead of vicious prison gangs and brutal guards. And a flash of returning memory tells him another terrorist strike is coming soon. A million people will die unless he does something. But what? He's stuck in a concrete cage with no way out and no one who can help. Charlie has never felt so alone and yet he knows he can't give in or give up . . . not with the final hour ticking away.

A thriller that reads like a teenage version of 24 . . . an adrenaline-pumping adventure. TheDailyBeast.com (review of The Last Thing I Remember)"

The Final Hour Details

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From Reader Review *The Final Hour* for online ebook

Jeremiah says

Great book, great read. It was exciting, action packed, and fun. I would recommend this series, not one book, all of them. You have to read them all, if you don't it won't make sense. This is one of my favorite series. Definitely recommended.

Josiah says

Charlie West (with young Larry's timely intervention) saved the day at the end of *The Truth of the Matter*, helping Detective Rose apprehend top members of the Homelanders terrorist group, but those accomplishments came at a price. Charlie has been remanded to Abingdon State Prison to serve his sentence for the murder of Alex Hauser and his subsequent escape from police custody, though he now knows he didn't kill Alex. The Homelanders have confirmed Charlie as a traitor to their cause, an American patriot who couldn't be corrupted, and they want him dead. Numerous Homelander agents among Abingdon's prison population are ready to kill for their bosses, but Charlie has some unexpected supporters: incarcerated neo-Nazis, who fight on Charlie's behalf for no other reason than to antagonize the Islamists. The Nazi leader, a sadist known as Blade, has an offer for Charlie: join their escape attempt through the prison sewers, and Blade will guarantee Charlie's survival until then. With the Islamists a perpetual threat—as well as the "Yard King", Chuck Dunbar, who runs his prison like a mob boss and despises Charlie—hooking on with the Nazis might be Charlie's only chance. Can he reconcile himself to allying with a hate group?

While Charlie tries to stay alive, two separate visitors show up to conference with him. The first is Detective Rose, secret liaison of the government task force Charlie had signed on with to infiltrate the Homelanders a year ago. The main players in the Homelanders organization are behind bars, Rose reports, except for Prince, the most dangerous of them all. But the government wants to pretend the Homelanders were an isolated cell, that no problem with Islamic terror exists in the United States. They refuse to acknowledge Charlie's role with the program to nab the Homelanders; thus, his fabricated murder conviction stands. How could the government strand him in Abingdon when Charlie risked everything to help them? Rose vows not to stop pushing for Charlie's exoneration, but time is running out. When Sensei Mike visits later, and Charlie hints that he's considering a jailbreak with the Nazis, Mike urges him not to do anything rash, but there isn't much choice. The time to move is now.

An explosive sequence of events hustles Charlie and his quasi-allies out of Abingdon with the police hot on their tails. With freedom in reach, Blade and his Nazis become as big a threat to Charlie as the Homelanders, and he must elude them to go on the lam from the law. Among Charlie's recently restored memories is a spy outing he took almost a year ago, which ended when the Homelanders caught him snooping at their headquarters and ordered him executed. He recalls hearing Prince speak of the organization's most ambitious terrorist attack yet, but the details of the memory remain hazy. Something is going to happen soon, and as long as the authorities won't accept Charlie as a credible information source, only he can stop Prince. He needs to clarify what he remembers right now, or his government service in opposition to the Homelanders—which tore him away from his family, friends, and girlfriend, Beth—will have been for naught. How and where would Prince launch an all-out terrorist strike on the U.S.?

Joined by friends who played important parts in the first three Homelanders novels, Charlie travels to where

he believes Prince plans to attack, all the while stalked by terrorists. The Homelanders employ every resource they have left against Charlie and his companions. At any moment Prince will release his hidden weapon to massacre millions of innocents in the name of Islamo-fascism. As the resistance nears Prince's base of operations, Charlie's crew is taken out of commission one by one until it's only him and Prince battling over the fate of an American metropolis. Can Charlie win out against men more powerful than he will ever be? And how many of his friends will make the ultimate sacrifice for America to emerge injured but unbowed?

"We all want the same thing, I guess. Killers or no, good or bad. We all want to be free. We all want to go home."

—*The Final Hour*, P. 158

Dramatic personal growth was necessary for Charlie the high-schooler at the start of this series to triumph against such unlikely odds. Not a book goes by without him having to stand firm against the enemy at enormous cost. Charlie's father instilled these values in him, but Sensei Mike helped them grow. "Mike taught me that, whatever the situation, whether I was outnumbered, outsmarted, or even beaten and at the end of my rope, I could always ask myself a simple question: *How can I come out of this stronger? Better?*...He talked about how, in karate, whether you did well or badly, whether you won or lost, whether you got good breaks or suffered bad luck, there was always a path forward...to a better, stronger life. He taught me that if you look for that path hard enough, you will always find it." Even if the worst happens and your future is a shambles, the best thing to do is focus on strengthening yourself through the experience and prepare for what comes next, however difficult it will be. There is more hope than you're able to see in the midst of crisis.

Terrorism is a complicated area of government policy. How should global and domestic responsibilities balance out? Hardcore fiends will take advantage if politicians are too easy on foreign terrorists, which is what Prince is counting on. "When you attack Americans, they don't make themselves stronger, they make themselves weaker. They say to themselves, 'Oh, if only we are nicer to our enemies, they will see how wonderful we are and come to love us. They will stop being angry at us'...They don't understand that this is warfare in the name of God, warfare to the death. Two ways of life, two ways of looking at the world that can't be reconciled. One must live and the other must perish." Charlie has seen the Homelanders' evil up close, but those who haven't tend to downplay the threat. Taking it seriously is the only way to avoid mass bloodshed, and people like Charlie are needed to wage the war that most civilized folks shy from. Apologists for the other side play clever games of strawmen arguments and non-sequiturs, but their reasoning is fatally flawed, as Charlie understands. "(I)t's not a question whether your country is perfect or imperfect; it's a question of whether it's free or not free." Perfection isn't required for a nation to be good. Individual freedom and accountability is the only way to maintain a good society, and as long as that's not infringed on, we live to the highest potential of tarnished human nature. However Charlie's story ends, his ideals are right and his mission noble.

Andrew Klavan's debut YA series is filled with drama, action, and a fair amount of unpredictability. Unlike most series, I consider the middle books—*The Long Way Home* and *The Truth of the Matter*—the best Homelanders novels, with *The Last Thing I Remember* and *The Final Hour* a bit less engaging. All four are good, though, a superb execution of an imaginative and philosophically robust story idea. The payoff for following Charlie's odyssey from book one is substantial, and I'm glad I did. I'd rate *The Final Hour* at least two and a half stars, and I recommend the series for anyone who favors solid narrative undergirded by moral values. You won't be disappointed by the story or characters Andrew Klavan creates.

JonathanT says

Well, okay. I still love this series- even though the ending does sag. A lot.

In book four, Charlie knows the terrorists are going to strike. He knows when. Only problem is, the police have finally caught up, and he's in jail now. And since the government doesn't believe him, he's going to have to break out if he wants to save the day.

Like I said, this sags. It's a good ending, with a good storyline, but it sags. Klavan no longer has the "What's going on...?" element to hold over us, an element he relied on in the previous three books. Now, since we learned most everything in book three, that element is gone.

That's not to say this is terrible, because it's not. But in the end, without the "What's going on...?" element, this wasn't the greatest.

And then the ending makes me a little angry. Charlie's mentor throughout the series, Mike, gets shot. AND THIS IS WHAT WE GET FROM MIKE:

"I mean it. You and me, chucklehead, we never talk about the faith stuff much. The way I see it, there's not much to say. But you know where I stand. I did my best to live true, and whatever happens next, I'm gonna be fine. Alright?"

SO FRUSTRATING. Here we have the perfect opportunity for the author to at least drop a HINT about the Gospel, and instead we get a vague statement about "living true"! Later, when Charlie thinks he's about to die, he wonders the same thing- "Have I lived true?"

Salvation has nothing to do with "living true." Salvation is about putting your faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone, and Klavan (who I'm pretty sure is an Evangelical Christian) completely dropped the ball on that.

I still recommend this series, even if the ending isn't the greatest. :D

Aerykah says

This is a great series! The story never slowed down, never got boring and it kept my full attention from start to finish.

I highly recommend this series to anyone who likes these kinds of books -- Christian Young Adult, Action, Suspense, Mystery. But then, I'm not a big fan of YA books and I absolutely loved these!

m a r y l i z says

Um...so it was good? I felt like it was a rather disappointing end to the series and I didn't like the ending - it felt too abrupt to me. (Plus, I fell asleep like two or three times while reading this...though that's probably just because I'm a tired college student. xD)

I also felt some of the characters' actions weren't 100% in line with their character and that bothered me a bit. Maybe I'm alone in this? *shrugs*

Overall, it was a decent book but not as good as the third one. I enjoyed the series but don't feel the urge to read more Klavan books...unless I'm really in the mood for some action. You never know. *mysterious smile*

3 stars

Mikayla says

I was strangely satisfied at the end of the third book, more so than I was at the end of this one. For one thing, it was really drawn out. It really could have been half the length and been fine.

So many people are in danger, nothing ever happens to them.

But what really got me was that Charlie didn't really care about his faith anymore. He had a perfect opportunity to share his faith several times and he wasted it.

The ending was super rushed and I was so sad I didn't get to see things wrapped up.

Overall, this series was very clean, with fairly good characters. It was worth a once read.

Melanie says

Wow! Great book from beginning to end! Loved it! So much action and a lot of surprises! Thrilling end to a fantastic series! :)

I borrowed this book from the library, I was not required to write a review, but chose to. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

Abigail says

This series ended very well! I was not disappointed.

Jill Williamson says

Charlie West is in prison, and not just some juvenile detentions center. He's in Abingdon State Prison, a high security prison for the vilest offenders. And between the prisoners and the brutal guards, it looks like Charlie might be someone's next victim.

But his memories are slowly coming back, and Charlie learns that a terrorist strike is coming soon. He has to do something, but what? No one will listen to a convict, all his allies are gone, and time is ticking away. But Charlie can't give up. Not when lives are at stake.

Loved it! And I closed this book with a smile on my face, because these four novels really felt like one big story, and it was tough to wait for each next one. I loved the way Andrew Klavan told this tale, how he weaved it backwards and forwards with action and memories and mystery. It was very cleverly done. This is a GREAT series for boy readers. So if you love action and adventure novels, or if you're looking for some books for a young man, look no further. This is the series. I highly recommend all four Homelander books.

Hannah K says

AWESOME! Just finished this and I'm so glad I read this series. The writing wasn't the most spectacular but the incredible plot definitely made up for that. I loved all the action and how real everything became to me as I read. Plus it's written from a Christian perspective with a strong Christian hero. What's not to love?! We need more fiction like this! Who's going to get out there and write it?

Lauren says

Sorrrr good!

Austin Davis says

This book was about a boy named Charlie West who loses his memory and has to follow clues to figure it out. He takes an antidote for his memory loss and finds out he was part of a terrorist attack only he was working undercover for a secret organization. He is wanted by the police and gets caught and gets sent to jail. Charlie has to break out and stop a massive terrorist attack called the Great Death. I liked this book because of the suspense and action on almost every page after Charlie escapes prison. I would recommend this book to ages 12 and up because there is violence and words that younger children wouldn't know.

Jerry says

What an exciting conclusion! I had forgotten how epic this last volume was!

Calvin Edwards says

This book was pretty good. I really liked the author! The four book series was good, and it was interesting how "The Truth of the Matter," unfolded.

Courtney Vail says

The Final Hour is the last installment in the Homelanders Series. The story opens with young hero, Charlie West, in the slammer for a murder he didn't commit. He only agreed to take momentary blame so he could infiltrate a terrorist ring, and the terrorists have mostly been rounded up, yet days, weeks, months go by, without a peep that tells him why he's still locked up.

His cop contact Rose finally visits but delivers the bad news, that Washington wants to brush events under the rug, as the controversy could hurt their global interests, so getting him out isn't going to be as easy as Rose had thought. He promises to continue to fight for Charlie but doesn't make any promises as to when he'll be released, but says it will, at minimum, take weeks.

The missing year of Charlie's life from taking a drug to erase his memory while captured by the anti-Americans is still trickling back in bits and pieces, and he begins to remember a terrorist plot that's planned for New Year's Eve. But with sketchy info to go on, no proof, no one to call, more than a million lives on the line, and the prison guards not only against him but abusing him too, he has no one to turn to and no way to out to stop it. Charlie doesn't have weeks! Only days!

The Final Hour offers a gritty glimpse into prison life and contains some violence, but it never veers into the obscene. It's in line with other thrillers of similar vein. This beginning unfolds more slowly than the previous because he's locked up, but Klavan does a good job of building suspense and keeping it taut throughout.

Even though there's no hammering Christian message in this book, which I prefer in fiction, it still managed to feel, to me, a little preachy at times, even though it's not talk but rather a string of moral dilemmas Charlie must wrestle through. And the current rhetoric that insists "terrorists hate America because we're free" felt very heavy-handed as well and was clung to so mightily, it nearly topples the story. Terrorists have a blend of motivations and reasons for committing acts of terror, but with Klavan picking just this one and having the Homelanders be so blatant with their hate and anti-American speech, it made the recruitment of random, everyday Americans implausible. Even if this is the main drive of such radicals, one would think, to recruit, you'd exploit the susceptible where their hate can bloom into a desire to commit violence. You wouldn't really care if they believed the same as long as there was a willingness to act.

There were parts in the end, showing Charlie in action, which were almost laughable, but still, it does provide great escapism and this is the perfect series for teens, boys especially, who love thrillers. It's hard to find good "boy books" and this is a wild, morally sound, action-packed ride. You don't need to be a Christian to enjoy this, just a YA thriller lover. If you enjoy books by Robinson Wells or Patrick Carman, you will love the Homelander Series.

* I received this book free through Booksneeze, but that in no way compromised or affected my review.
