



## Faraday

### Mark Lingane

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*With a perfect blend of humor and danger, this steampunk thriller is a truly exciting and intense reading experience.*

In the third installment of Mark Lingane's steampunk series, the mood darkens as young tesla and Academy student Sebastian continues to search for purpose in his life. In *Faraday*, he finds that purpose—and learns that he won't be around once it's fulfilled.

Sebastian's best friend and sworn protector, Melanie, is dying, but not due to her close proximity to Sebastian and his tesla power. After Sebastian destroys a major power source, the cyborgs of the city begin to deteriorate, poisoned by their own body fluids. Melanie is exposed to this poison during battle. As her condition worsens, Nikola, Albert, Sebastian, and their new friends must fight their way to a research facility to make an antidote. But a traitor joins them, bent on annihilating the Academy and Sebastian in particular.

There's a delicate balance between humor and danger in *Faraday*, an important aspect of pacing that's key to the plot. The pace builds as the characters approach their various goals; the breaks between battles and encounters get shorter as the story unfolds.

Things get quite serious early on in the narrative, with lives in danger, powers not completely controlled, old relationships broken, and new relationships forged. Some characters are eager to embrace their destinies, while others rebel. Lingane's characters remain true to their own personalities even as more (and more lethal) obstacles are placed in their paths.

The characters become richer and stronger as they deal with serious personal issues while trying to stay alive. Melanie—the most put-upon character, and the strongest—has to recover from her boyfriend's embrace of cyborgdom, keep Sebastian out of harm's way, and endure the death of a new friend. Her recovery from all this, only to be cast down again by a deadly betrayer, is a major plotline. And that's just one character.

The novel's steampunk elements are clearly present but not pointedly obvious, making the Tesla series a good introduction to the genre. The cover's depiction of a cyborg in a menacing pose reflects these steampunk sensibilities with subtle details, most obviously the gas mask. The cover serves as a hint of what's to come: within these pages, something unfamiliar lurks, despite elements of familiarity. It's a great example of enticing book packaging that sparks curiosity while depicting a scene or character from the story.

Lingane is adept at firmly holding the story's threads without choking its pacing and flow, which makes for a truly exciting and intense reading experience. This book is highly recommended.

J. G. STINSON (January 13, 2015)

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