

Halting State Charles Stross

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~~Halting State Charles Stross~~

Hugo winner Stross blends plausible near-future SF and crime in this brisk sequel to 2007's Halting State. In the mid-2020s, the police monitor the Internet full-time to prevent crime. In ...

~~Books by Charles Stross and Complete Book Reviews~~

Equivalent to the free safety in football, Sanchez did a solid job in halting any breakaways from Brudy and Casique. Brudy didn't score. "I knew a couple days in advance, so I had enough time to ...

STROSS/HALTING STATE

"Halting State [is] a near-future story that is at once over-the-top and compellingly believable." - Vernor Vinge, author of Rainbows End In the year 2018, Sergeant Sue Smith of the Edinburgh constabulary is called in on a special case. A daring bank robbery has taken place at Hayek Associates—a dot-com start-up company that's just floated onto the London stock exchange. But this crime may be a bit beyond Smith's expertise. The prime suspects are a band of marauding orcs with a dragon in tow for fire support. The bank is located within the virtual reality land of Avalon Four, and the robbery was supposed to be impossible. When word gets out, Hayek Associates and all its virtual "economies" are going to crash hard. For Smith, the investigation seems pointless. But the deeper she digs, the bigger the case gets. There are powerful players—both real and pixelated—who are watching her every move. Because there is far more at stake than just some game-head's fantasy financial security...

It was called in as a robbery at Hayek Associates, an online game company. So you can imagine Sergeant Sue Smith's mood as she watches the video footage of the heist being carried out by a band of orcs and a dragon, and realises that the robbery from an online game company is actually a robbery from an online game. Just wonderful. Like she has nothing better to do. But online entertainment is big business, and when the bodies of real people start to show up, it's clear that this is anything but a game. For Sue, computer coding expert Jack Reed, and forensic accountant Elaine Barnaby, the walls between the actual and the virtual are about to come crashing down. There is something very dangerous and very real going on at Hayek Associates, and those involved are playing for keeps. No cheats, no back doors, no extra lives - make a wrong call on this one and it's game over.

Meet Edinburgh Detective Inspector Liz Kavanaugh, head of the Innovative Crimes Investigation Unit, otherwise known as the Rule 34 Squad. They monitor the Internet for potential criminal activity, analyzing trends in the extreme fringes of explicit content. And occasionally, even more disturbing patterns arise... Three ex-cons have been murdered in Germany, Italy, and Scotland. The only things they had in common were arrests for spamming—and a taste for unorthodox entertainment. As the first officer on the scene of the most recent death, Liz finds herself sucked into an international investigation that isn't so much asking who the killer is, but what—and if she doesn't find the answer soon, the homicides could go viral.

Awakening in a clinic with most of his memories missing, Robin goes on the run from unknown enemies out to kill him, volunteering to take part in the Glasshouse, an experimental polity simulating a pre-accelerated culture in which he will be assigned an anonymous identity, but he experiences radical changes that threaten everything. 20,000 first printing.

Charles Stross

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Sometime in the twenty-third century, humanity went extinct, leaving only androids behind to fulfill humanity's dreams. And, having learned well from their long-dead masters, they've established a hierarchical society—one with humanoid aristo rulers at the top and slave-chipped workers at the bottom, performing the lowly tasks all androids were originally created to do. Designed as a concubine for a species that hasn't existed for two hundred years, femmebot Freya Nakamichi-47—one of the last of her kind still functioning—accepts a job from a stranger to deliver a package from mercury to Mars. Unfortunately, she's just made herself a moving target for some very powerful, very determined humanoids desperate to retrieve the package's contents...

In a world transformed by the Eschaton, a sentient artificial intelligence, the colony of New Republic, founded by people who wanted no part of the technological revolution, is threatened by an information plague of advanced technology. Reprint.

Believing she has found a career-making story when she stumbles upon a money-laundering scheme, reporter Miriam Beckstein is shocked when she is fired and threatened with death, a situation that turns increasingly bizarre when she learns the fate of her murdered mother and is transported to a parallel earth where her family rules a powerful kingdom. Reprint.

A tale set at the end of the twenty-first century finds the planet's divided hominid population subjected to the forces of a splintery metaconsciousness that inundates networks with plans for cataclysmic technologies, prompting an unwitting jury member to participate in a grueling decision.

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