

SKYGUARD•I: The Aegis—Synopsis

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Genre: Romantic “Soft” Science Fiction

SKYGUARD is the U.S. Government agency responsible for cataloging and tracking asteroids, comets and other near-space objects; however, a covert portion of Skyguard continues the work of Project Blue Book—a study of the UFO phenomenon conducted by the U.S. Air Force between 1948 and 1969.

In *Skyguard I: The Aegis*—book one of the Aegis Trilogy—a county sheriff investigating a routine car wreck discovers an invisible dome, later code-named “Aegis,” in the middle of a remote field. Unsure who to notify, he calls his friend David Powell, a past director of Skyguard, to investigate. A Skyguard site investigation team led by Dave determines the Aegis to be a transparent spherical shell of pure energy buried halfway in the field. All attempts to penetrate the Aegis, ascertain its technology, or determine its purpose meet with failure.

When the Aegis suddenly becomes opaque, a Skyguard helicopter drops a team member on its apex and is fired upon by a sniper. The sniper is a man named “Smith,” and is posing as an NSA agent. He has murdered one of the sheriff’s deputies, who has apparently been luring teenage girls to his mobile home for sexual purposes. Dave and Laura Scott, the team’s photographer, investigate the murder, find photos of the girls in the trailer and immediately begin a search for their whereabouts. In the midst of their investigation, Dave and Laura have several intimate encounters and fall in love.

When the temperature of the Aegis stabilizes at 98.6 degrees and dozens of heartbeats are detected within its shell, Dave and Laura surmise that the Aegis is an artificial womb about to give birth. But to whom?

Matters are complicated by the discovery of a second Aegis, high in Colorado’s Rocky Mountains. Dave and Laura attempt to fly to Colorado but their Learjet is forced down by an unseen assailant.

During their flight, Mary—one of the teenage girls from the deputy’s trailer—is recognized by authorities in Oklahoma City and is recovered by Skyguard. Diagnosed with complete amnesia, Mary appears lost and confused. Though physically an eighteen-year-old woman, her behavior is that of an immature child and she unknowingly demonstrates fluency in at least five languages. When Dave and Mary meet for the first time, they both realize that somehow they were meant to be together, although neither of them know why. Realizing Mary’s importance, Dave and Laura, who have announced their engagement, hasten their wedding in order to become Mary’s legal guardians.

Their honeymoon night is interrupted by frantic pleas from Mary, who insists that the three of them visit the Aegis immediately. When Mary touches the Aegis, she is able to pass through its surface and they are finally able to enter. They discover that the Aegis is a complex machine built for the purpose of manufacturing some sort of humanoid life form. Unfortunately, the heartbeats they had detected are gone; the Aegis is now empty.

While they are exploring the Aegis, Mary falls into a trance and becomes a conduit through which the mysterious creators of the Aegis can communicate. Dave and Laura are told by the “creators” that a hundred human replicas nurtured by the Aegis have been mistakenly released into the world flawed and incomplete, and that they must be

destroyed. Dave and Laura are not told the nature of the flaw, the replicas' location, or their ultimate purpose. Their only clue is Mary herself, whom they are told is the product of an earlier Aegis—as is the NSA Agent “Smith”—but unfortunately, Mary has no knowledge of her own origin, nature, or powers.

Dave and Laura are also warned through Mary that the second Aegis site in Colorado will be destroyed. After the Colorado Skyguard team is safely evacuated, Agent Smith enters the second Aegis, terminates the lives of the flawed replicas who are gestating there, and by using a certain chain of thoughts, vaporizes himself, the Aegis, and everything else within a twenty-mile radius.

Dave and Laura are left with an empty Aegis, an eighteen-year-old girl/woman with no memory, and the knowledge that together with Mary they must stop a hundred creatures whose identity, location and purpose are unknown.

Dave's life is further complicated by Mary's obvious sexual obsession with him, and although Dave is deeply in love with Laura, he finds himself irresistibly drawn to Mary. Mary devises ingenious ways to arouse him and she begs him to make love to her, but Dave refuses, believing that she is not psychologically mature enough to understand love and the true meaning of physical intimacy. Dave and Laura realize that Mary is much more than an emissary from the creators and that her eventual physical union with Dave is part of a plan which will alter the future evolution of the entire human race.

Dave is re-hired by Skyguard as Director of Operations and Laura is promoted to Co-Director. Together, they must assemble a team to hunt down and destroy the replicas, discover the true nature of the creators, and protect the public from discovering the horrible secret of the Aegis.

NOTE: The novel can stand on its own but is continued in *Skygaurd2: The Apocrypha* and *Skyguard3: The Creators*.