

The Hidden Saboteur

A Christian Psychological Thriller

by Charles Besondy

“Stack if over again!”

Book Blurb

Clay Austin’s career was taking off. Then the nightmares took over.

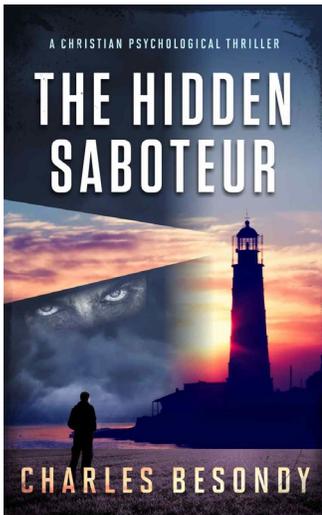
No place is safe for Clay. He is besieged. Voices from the past haunt his Seattle house boat. Demonic machines attack him on the street and in his dreams. Clay becomes a confused, weakened man fighting a losing battle for the very essence of who he is.

He turns his back on a promising career and cruelly pushes away the one woman who loves him. His life crumbles as he falls under control of hidden evil.

Clay gives up on himself, but God doesn’t.

The Hidden Saboteur is a tense, sweeping story of Clay’s battle between the Deceiver’s lies and God’s light.

Clay is a founding partner of the most respected marketing agency in Seattle. He is smart, single, and wealthy. So why, at the pinnacle of his career, are terrifying hallucinations and nightmares suddenly opening deep wounds from the past and eating away at his confidence?



Without Clay realizing it, God’s plan goes into overdrive to draw him away from the Deceiver.

On one drizzling night in a parking lot his loyal assistant, Sheryl Landing, hears a voice telling her to “Protect him; bring him to me.”

The spiritual battle is on. Clay bounces back and forth like a ping pong ball in a high stakes game of good versus evil. The winner takes all. The winner takes Clay.

Events draw him to a small town on the Washington coast where he becomes the prize in a showdown between God’s light and the Deceiver’s lies.

Can Clay bring himself to do the one thing that will free him from the chains of the past? Was Sheryl’s determined love going to be strong enough?

From the rain-drenched streets of Seattle, across the dry plains of Texas and back to the wind-swept bluffs of the rugged Washington coast, Clay experiences the hidden destructive power of the Deceiver, and the over-powering light of God's love flowing through those around him. Which force will prevail?

Book Facts

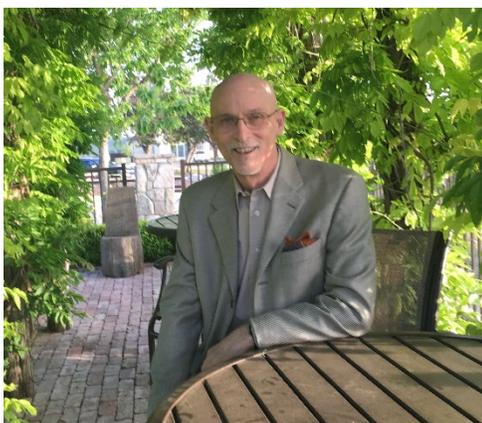
- Gold Medal for Christian Mystery/Thrillers, Illumination Book Awards - 2020; Honorable Mention for Christian Thrillers, Readers' Favorite Awards – 2020.
- Written between February 2017 and August 2018
- Published by Charles Besondy in eBook format on October 7, 2018. Also available in paperback and audiobook. Audiobook performed by Shawn Saavedra.
- Cover design concept by Charles and Sofia Besondy. Design by James at GoOnWrite.
- "The Hidden Saboteur" was the first title written in the Clay Austin Series.
- The Clay Austin Series consists of two novels, a novella, and a short story.
 - "The Hidden Saboteur," 2018, two-time award winner for Christian fiction
 - "The Chase," 2021, award winner for Christian fiction
 - "All for Clay," 2019
 - "Painting for a Stranger," 2019
- Besondy's books can be found on Amazon. Audio versions are available on Audible, Amazon and iTunes.

Author Facts

- Charles Besondy and his wife, Sofia, live in Lakeway, Texas.
- Charles spent the first 23 years of his life in Oregon, followed by 26 years in Seattle, Washington before moving to Austin, Texas in 2000.
- Charles graduated from the University of Oregon before starting his career in Marketing.
- He was baptized in 2007, the same year he met Sofia.
- He self-published his first non-fiction book in 2008.

About Charles Besondy (in his own words)

It all began as I sat uneasily in a high-back chair while 14 men in a semi-circle studied me intensely through dim candlelight rippled by rising smoke from white sage incense.



I was attending my first Christian men's retreat. It was May 2015 a few days before my 65th birthday, and it was my turn to *be in The Chair*.

After long moments of silent prayer, each man, in turn, told me what the Holy Spirit was telling them to say as they studied me. I was not to respond – just listen and be present to their words.

Today, I can't recall most of what was said to me in that room. What I do remember, because it struck such a powerful chord in me that night, was three of the men had said, "I see you as a tall shining beacon."

I can assure you, up to that moment I didn't see myself as anything close to a tall shining beacon – quite the contrary – but from that moment on I gradually began to see me as God intended. Something else happened that night in the cabin on the San Saba River in central Texas. Without me knowing it, the Holy Spirit had planted a seed that three years later would become my first novel, “The Hidden Saboteur.”

The seed began to sprout a single leaf the following year. At this time in my life, through the patient coaching of my wife and Bible study, I recognized how I was allowing my past to control who I was being. I had been believing a self-perceived lie that I wasn't good enough for love, happiness, and success. I certainly wasn't created that way by God – not good enough – so why was I believing it? Once I realized the deception of that perception, it opened my eyes to how nearly everyone's life is limited by similar lies – the “not good enough,” the “not worthy,” the “never can do it right.” I wondered what can I do to free people of the chains and limitations of the deception? That was the first leaf of the budding seed.

The second leaf sprung suddenly into my head one day while working in the yard. Three words, “the hidden saboteur,” summarized for me how Satan works inside each of us planting deceptive thoughts and beliefs that limit who we were created to be.

Weeks later, another leaf of the seed appeared. This time in the shape of a vision. I saw a tall lighthouse with its lantern shining brightly out to sea.

An awareness of self-limiting deception, three words out the blue, and an image of a lighthouse – three ways the Holy Spirit grabbed my attention. And then I understood – I had to write a book.

Eighteen months later, “The Hidden Saboteur,” was released to encouraging reviews, and better yet, more story ideas were coming into my head. By January 2021 I had written four books in what had become the Clay Austin series of Christian fiction.

Readers comment that my books draw them close to the complex characters, thrill them with unexpected twists, and take them into vivid scenes. Many reviewers have noted their appreciation that Christian themes are apparent, but not over-bearing.

Excerpts from “The Hidden Saboteur” ©Copyright 2018, Charles Besondy

Clay watched the movement of the white and red lights as they were rocked in unison by the waves off in the distance. He screamed, “Turn hard to port, turn hard to port!”

The forward progress of the lights suddenly stopped. Clay wiped sweat from his eyes and peered intensely through the thick glass. No movement. The red and white lights were in the same position. In a few minutes, Clay could no longer see the red bow light. Only the white mast light remained. A few minutes later the light flickered and vanished into the darkness. The boat had sunk.

You stupid piece of crap! Clay screamed. Because you couldn't fix the light, people are crab food now. You can't do anything right! He picked up the tool carrier and threw it across the lantern room, scattering tools everywhere. He collapsed to his knees, totally defeated. Tears flowed like rivers down his face. (more)

“Wait a second,” Clay said. Sheryl turned back around to face him. He opened his arms, “Could I give you a good night hug?”

She looked into his face, and Clay thought he could detect the same nervousness he felt in her. “I think a hug would be appropriate,” she said, moving into his arms, clutching him closely to her.

Even through their heavy coats, Clay felt something magical with the embrace. It was like no other hug in his life. He instantly had the feeling that this woman belonged in his arms. She fit perfectly. Holding her felt so natural as if she were a part of him. So good. Too good, perhaps. *Stop it.*

With a little extra squeeze of his arms, he released Sheryl, said good night again and walked down the sloped parking lot to his car. His mind was swirling. Holding Sheryl had disoriented him.

He sat back in his chair and took a long drink of wine to calm his nerves. His eyes went from the fireplace to the rack of wood next to it.

Then he heard a voice from somewhere in the darkness of the house.

"Stack it over again," was all the male voice said.

Fear shot through Clay like a flaming arrow. His heart raced as adrenaline pumped through his veins. It was all he could do to set the glass of wine down on the stand by his chair without spilling its contents all over his prized Persian rug.

Except for the glow from the fireplace the house was dark. Somebody was in the house. Somewhere. Or was it his imagination? His mind had certainly been working overtime lately. Anything was possible. But he had heard the words clearly: “Stack it over again.”

He gathered the courage to turn on the reading light by his chair and stand up in a single fluid motion. He faced the darkness ready for a ... ready for what? Fight or flight?