



## Hell Hound

*Ken Greenhall*

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## **Hell Hound Details**

Date : Published 1977 by Zebra

ISBN : 9780890833032

Author : Ken Greenhall

Format : Mass Market Paperback 192 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction

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## From Reader Review Hell Hound for online ebook

### DeAnna Knippling says

Not your momma's Cujo. Nothing like Cujo, as a matter of fact. A sociopathic dog unleashes itself coolly on the small community surrounding it...

Sorry, had to write the pun. I wrote the pun, went, "Hey! Pun!" and had to leave it in there.

This is more like "Apt Pupil" than it is like "Cujo." It's often not the most elegant writing (some of it is a bit too "on the nose"), and I could see the ending coming from about a third of the way into the book, which I generally dislike. But tons of wonderfully cool, dysfunctional characters. A short, cynical read.

I unreservedly recommend this for horror fans.

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### Rebecca McNutt says

This disturbing and strange book about a sociopathic dog and his attempt to find an equally demented owner was very different and imaginative. Written in a noir style, it's unlike any other story.

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### Ashley says

I was worried when I started this book that it would diminish my love of dogs. But fear not, that is surely impossible. Instead I now have an anti-hero canine to love, a Batemen-esque Baxter. Sure, I wouldn't want him as a pet (I kind of do), but he's an amazing protagonist to read. Credit to Ken Greenhall for imbuing Baxter with inhuman human emotion. To create a novel where we see the world through Baxter's eyes and to communicate this gap in human and canine was done so subtlety that Baxter felt more human than Carl. Following that thread, Carl's lack of humanity was underscored by Baxter's observations. Greenhall wove everything together masterfully. Another fantastic overlooked horror classic looking spiffy again thanks to Valancourt.

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### Justin Tate says

Realllly close to 5 stars. Some of the best animal POV I've read. Genuinely unsettling. You'll never look at dogs the same way again. Definitely scarier than Cujo although not nearly as well developed. So glad it got dusted off for a re-release. Hope to see more lost horror novels from the 70s and 80s resurface!

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### Johann (jobis89) says

"What if some morning as the old woman stood at the head of the staircase she were suddenly to feel a

weight thrusting against the back of her legs? ... What would become of me if she were found unmoving at the bottom of the stairway?"

Baxter is a sociopathic bull terrier who is on the hunt for his perfect master, as he plots the demise of his current owner...

Days later and I am still thinking about this book. I even gave my boyfriend a detailed description of the events in the book (which I'm pretty sure he loved - let's not ask him though). I just honestly did not expect SUCH a great story, in fact I'd never even heard of Hell Hound nor the author before - thank god for The Nocturnal Reader's Box, eh!?

What I really enjoyed about this was the fact that the story is told from a number of different POV's - we have the POV of the dog, Baxter, and then a number of the humans that come into contact with him. This book started off being quite humorous, some of Baxter's thoughts and comments were hilarious. Then it takes a bit of a dark turn... although some humour is still retained. I actually got quite intense Apt Pupil vibes at times, and we all know that novella is dark as shit!! I was uncomfortable for sure. However I did feel like I was looking at dogs a little bit differently after reading this one... WHO KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON IN THEIR MINDS? Are they plotting to kill us?! I don't know!!

The story itself didn't feel dated, it almost felt like it could have been written in recent times. There are seriously dark undertones and I constantly felt on edge as I really didn't know what to expect. Greenhall kept me guessing right until the end, and holy SHIT, that ending. I LOVED IT. I did have a teeny tiny minor issue with the story that I can't really go into much detail on without giving a potential spoiler, but some ridiculously bad parenting left me a bit pissed off and felt a tad unrealistic (hence it doesn't get the full 5 star treatment).

Basically, I DIG THIS. Very much. But if you are a bit sensitive when it comes to doggos...beware. I just tell myself that it's fiction and therefore it's fine. But I know that doesn't work for everyone. Thoroughly enjoyed this one - 4 and a half stars!

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## **Valancourt Books says**

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## **Karl says**

This hardcover is copy 40 of 250 published and is signed by Will Errickson (Introduction) and Thomas Walker (Cover, art).

This is book number 5 in the Vintage Horror Series of books.

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## Will Erickson says

A spectacular, chilling novel about a sociopathic bull terrier! Baxter makes *Cujo* look like a clumsy amateur. Greenhall can really write and tells parts of the novel from Baxter's POV, which makes for compelling reading. Ignore the cheesy Zebra cover; this book's got the goods. Highly recommended!

My full review is here:  
<http://toomuchhorrorfiction.blogspot....>

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## Cody | cody'sbookshelf says

Ken Greenhall's long-forgotten horror masterpiece, *Hell Hound*, is finally getting the recognition it deserves, thanks to a recent reissue. This was my first novel by this author, but it certainly won't be my last.

This tale — one of a psychotic and cunning Bull Terrier — is bloody and mean and aims for the throat; told in precise prose, this is a terrifying hellraiser not concerned with sentimentality or sympathy. The obvious comparison is to Stephen King's *Cujo*, though these stories are wildly different. Of the two, *Cujo* is perhaps better written, but something must be said for this book's heartlessness.

This is a title more horror readers should be aware of. The length of a long novella, really, this is a quick, effective read: one that is finally getting its due.

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## Marvin says

Baxter is a bull terrier. He lives with in a precarious relationship with an elderly woman. Baxter sees the young couple next doors and wonder if that would be a better match for him as he tries to figure out these strange two legged creatures called humans. So one night, he places his body between the woman's legs and the long flight of stairs going down.

Baxter is a sociopath. He loves nothing yet has a curious obsession with humans and what they can teach him and what he can teach them. After a try with the young couple, that ends up for them no better than that of the old lady, he finds what may be a kinship with a young boy who is fascinated by Hitler and has as little capacity for love as Baxter. It is a match that will not bode well for anyone.

*Hell Hound* was written in 1977 by Ken Greenhall. If you never heard of him, you are not alone. We learn from the excellent introduction by Grady Hendrix that Greenhall wrote only six books before he passed away in 2014, not writing anything for 16 years before that. *Hell Hound* came out during the flood of horror paperbacks in the 70s and was undeservedly neglected. It is a minor masterpiece and certainly a horror novel ahead of its time. While other books of the 70s delighted in demon children, slashers and a bevy of visceral horrors, *Hell Hound* is deceptively quiet and vastly disturbing. Its sense of horror is directly related to Greenhall's subtle style. While murder and violence is present in the book, it is more unsettling to hear Baxter's own thoughts as he ponders over those who "own" him.

People have a great capacity for loyalty for those who seem to depend on them. I have benefited from that loyalty but I don't understand it. Urinate on their carpets, chew up one of the objects they endlessly accumulate. They sometimes punish but in their loyalty they always forgive. Does their loyalty have any limits? Some day I'll know. Soon, perhaps.

While most of the novel is in third person narration, there are interspersed passages that are from Baxter's first person...er...dog...viewpoint. And therein lies the brilliance of this tale. We usually view dogs, as least the pet variety, as an extension of their person. Baxter's evilness does not come from nurturing. He is truly evil. In fact, we see that his later ward's control of him doesn't make him meaner or more violent than he already is. Baxter is actually rather philosophical about who he kills and insists on being the one who decides. His equally sociopathic ward focuses him and give an understanding of the evil existing beyond him. The kind he must learn from and conquer.

Despite the stylish subtlety that we don't usually see in a book like this, *Hell Hound* fits quite well among the horror novels of today. It has a cynical look on love and loyalty all the more disturbing since it is coming from man's best friend. It is certainly different from anything of its nature that I have read before. Comparing it to a contemporary canine of its time, *Cujo* was a sick doggie. Baxter is an intelligent bundle of terror. Of the two, Baxter is the one that will keep me up at night wondering what my pets really think of me.

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### **Mindi says**

I changed my star rating. I spent an entire day thinking about this book, and it's definitely 5 stars for me. It got into my head.

First lets dispel any similarities between this book *Cujo*. Whoever thought this book should be compared to *Cujo* didn't read either of them. They both have a dog. That's it.

The dog in *Hell Hound* is a Bull Terrier named Baxter, and apparently he's a sociopath. Now, we all know that dogs aren't actually capable of sociopathic behavior, but this is 70's horror, so just go with it. Baxter doesn't like his current owner, an old lady who spends most of her day staring at the TV and has little time for Baxter. He would much rather live with the young couple who moved in across the street, because they look much more interesting and exciting. So one day Baxter decides to take matters into his own hands. Or paws.

I was expecting over-the-top 70's shlock horror with this one, and instead I got a quietly terrifying and nuanced horror novel that could easily have been written today. This book is dark, but it isn't ridiculous. Especially when Baxter ends up living with a teenage boy and his family. This is where the novel shifts, and Baxter is no longer the antagonist. Suddenly, a sociopathic human becomes a much scarier focus of the novel, and then in an ending I never saw coming, the novel goes full circle.

This is deep for 70's horror, which may be why Greenhall fell into complete obscurity. People wanted gore and campiness, and instead Ken Greenhall gave them a literary horror novel. I'm so glad Valancourt books brought this one back into publication, and that Grady Hendrix, who also wrote the introduction for this edition, gave Greenhall an entire section in his book *Paperbacks From Hell*. I would love to read more from Greenhall now. I just hope I'm able to find his other works.

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### **Out of the Bex says**

Horror is so disturbing because it is the most honest of any genre. It reaches into the dark corners and crevices, the crawling little places you don't want to see but can't help but look into.

Hell Hound was like that. Subtle and stirring.

I admired the author, Ken Greenhall's, style. It didn't shock with the blood and gore of the flesh, but, rather, of the mind. In my opinion, a much more terrorizing notion.

It read like a classic, slow and thoughtful at times, startling at others, and poignantly full circle. Perfect for any horror lover.

I received this book in the epic The Nocturnal Readers Box. The best box EVER for anyone who enjoys horror, sci-fi, and thrillers. Watch my unboxing and use my discount code if you want in!

Video:

<https://youtu.be/8I6jyb1NaH4>

Discount code:

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### **Nate says**

Hell Hound is a book of sinuous, silky prose full of startling observations that reflect sociopathic tendencies in almost every character. Does the oddness of each character tax credulity? Not in the least, as truth rings out upon reflection. I didn't think I would ever give something this brief 5 stars, but there is no denying this work of perfection. Hell Hound is a complete and compulsive read that is both unsettling and gratifying. Another excellent republishing choice by Valancourt books.

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### **Char says**

In the late 70's, I started reading horror in earnest, and I honestly thought I was familiar with most horror writers of the time. I was wrong. I'd never heard of Ken Greenhall until Valancourt Books brought him to my attention. Now, I want to get my hands on everything he's written.

Baxter, the bull terrier, is a sociopath. But he's just a dog, you might say! It's true, but he's observant, willful and extremely dangerous. With some portions of this book being from his point of view, the reader gets a clear look into what's going on in that doggie head of his.

I know this book sounds cheesy, and perhaps like a rip-off of Cujo, but the facts are that it's not cheesy at all, and it was written before Cujo. Featuring keen insights into human behavior, precise but spare prose, and bringing to the reader a growing sense of dread and horror, I'm pretty sure this will be among the best books I will read this year.

My highest recommendation!

You can get your copy here: [Hell Hound](#)

\*Thanks to Valancourt Books for the e-ARC in exchange for my honest feedback. This is it.\*

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### **Emily says**

"Someone else will love me, as she has loved me. I'm certain of that. People have a great interest in love. They see it everywhere, probably even in me."

I finished Hell Hound earlier today! I liked it, but it was surprisingly heavier than I expected. Like The Nocturnal Reader's Box said, it's amusing, and then it gets dark. This is a good description. Some aspects of the book reminded me of We Need to Talk About Kevin, but I prefer this one. I would like to read more from Ken Greenhall - this book was so interesting, unique, and much deeper than I expected. I kind of love Baxter. There is some cruelty, but thankfully, it's not graphic.

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