



# Stained

*Lee Thomas*

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A madman. A secret, generations old. Another missing boy. They called the sadistic killer The River Rat, and he'd struck again. In a desperate search for his neighbour's son, Ted Lewis came face to face with the killer and survived, but his life was irrevocably altered. The residents of Marchand, Louisiana believed they were safe.

The murderer had been captured and was behind bars. But the nightmare wasn't over yet. Because on that summer night, something passed between the two men. Memories of brutality and phantoms of countless victims torment Ted. His normal life is shattered, and he struggles to fight a growing presence that threatens to leave his soul stained forever.

## Stained Details

Date : Published April 20th 2004 by Wildside Press

ISBN : 9781930997530

Author : Lee Thomas

Format : Paperback 292 pages

Genre : Horror, Mystery, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Suspense

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## From Reader Review Stained for online ebook

### **Jon Recluse says**

A stranger can lurk behind the eyes of someone you know.

The mask of a friendly face can hide a serial killer.

In a small Louisiana town, when the killer known as the River Rat is finally captured, that fact will rock a community.

But what lurks behind the mask of a serial killer?

For the terror has not ended. Something is loose out there. Something that can hide in plain sight. Something old. Something with a hunger for blood and screams.

Thomas' debut novel, and Bram Stoker Award winner, is a taut, fast-paced supernatural tale that expands on a concept from the classic short story by Robert Bloch: "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper", and deftly surpasses the source material, creating an excellent example of small town horror/thriller that delivers it's share of both thrills and chills.

Highly recommended.

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### **Donna says**

#### **Psychological Thriller**

The beginning of this book, a kind of explanation of its birth, mentions the movie Fallen. After reading the book, the parallel is clear. However, Stained is even more twisted. A deep psychological and paranormal thriller. This well written, horrific tale is spellbinding yet terrifying. You might want to keep the lights on.

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### **Enid says**

#### **Have to share**

This book was wonderful except I didn't care for how it ended or I would have given it five stars. I'm sure many of you will love the ending as well so if you love sick, twisted stories, this one is for you.

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### **Jeremy Hurd-McKenney says**

Probably a notch above standard horror fare--the story was intriguing, especially for a debut novel, but suffered from stock characters and pacing. Almost nothing happens for the first 200 pages, and then too

much happens in the last 100. Some of the prose is cringeworthy, but Thomas takes an original concept and pairs it with a high and bloody body count, which makes the bad writing palatable.

I read the 10th anniversary print edition, which I do not recommend, because it is riddled with typos.

This was a June 2015 selection for the Horror Aficionados group.

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### **Chris Cangiano says**

There's a serial killer of young men loose in Marchand, Louisiana, and the town has been seized by fear and paranoia. Ted Lewis, recently returned to town, accidentally helps bring the killer to justice but the deaths don't stop there. Has the evil spread to Ted and is it forcing him to commit atrocities against his friends and neighbors, and if so is there any way to stop it? Lee Thomas has created another well written mix of serial killer mystery and supernatural horror. Recommended

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### **Jimmy says**

I loved this gory, suspenseful, intense, supernatural, chiller that'll leave you with goose bumps and gasping in awe. Lee Thomas wrote such a mind-blowing fantastic novel that it is no wonder he won such a deserving award for it. The story is a combination of the serial killer mystery *Silence of the Lambs*, with the possession of *The Exorcist* or *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, with the drastic bloodshed of the *Saw* and *Hellraiser* movies, with the creepy fright of ... [insert the scariest movie you've ever seen, that keeps you up at night for a week with nightmares, and multiply that by 10]. I'm astounded and at times blown away at the disturbing brutalities that Lee Thomas imagined and created for these stained murders, making me feel secure in my own sanity.

The story takes the reader along with Ted, who has returned to his hometown in Marchand, Louisiana to a small town life. When the River Rat serial sex killer is caught by Drew, the bloody nightmare doesn't end. Eventually Ted's past catches up with him to his new start when he dates Drew's niece, and as Drew is drawn into investigating both him and the captured River Rat killer.

The killers aren't just possessed but their souls are stained by what they call The Jack which manipulates their desires, passions, and cravings into something ugly and violent. For those who transmit The Jack, the nightmare isn't over. Once twisted and with the vivid memories of The Jack's past experiences, their violent cravings can continue.

(view spoiler)

With such a powerful driving force that Lee Thomas has masterfully created, you cannot put this book down. He keeps you turning the page. I really enjoyed this true to the word horror novel, and I highly recommend it to horror lovers everywhere.

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### **J. says**

An excellent page turner! What's more, Thomas really understands the intricacies and peculiarities of Louisiana culture.

Not just another police procedural, though--at the heart of this story is a chilling idea about where evil comes from, how it is passed on. One hell of a metaphor for the cycle of violence.

I read the 10th anniversary edition, which includes an afterword by the publisher, and I agree with what he says there: in a sense, the book is The Jack, itself, and you can put the book down, but you won't forget it. Recommended.

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### **Mark says**

Bram Stoker and Lambda award winning author. Pretty good novel. Very graphic but had a really interesting premise. It makes me want to search out more of his books.

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### **The Behrg says**

Review to come.

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### **Ms. Nikki says**

"The Jack didn't change a person: it stained them, darkening their desires, their vices and their souls."

Bam! Intriguing, right? For sure. I don't know what I was expecting, but I knew it was going to be *awesome*!

The River Rat, a serial killer, has been captured. But during the scuffle one of the officers, Ted, has been stained by his contact with the murderer.

Hallucinations, doubts, and darkness are driving poor Ted down a dark road he doesn't think he can turn off of. Can he cleanse his body and mind? Will The Jack let him?

The written story did NOT do the idea justice. At about the halfway point the story went a little wild and was not reigned in. One minute Drew was Ted's best mate, the next he doesn't want him near his sister, Linda. Then, at the next turn he leaves the two alone to copulate or whatever.

Linda was just looking for a fling, no real commitments. She was really adamant about that due to her recent separation. A couple of chapters down the road and she is riding Ted so hard about commitment that I thought about going back and seeing if I had missed some scenes.

The whole "lock me up" scenario had me shaking my head. Drew, hell, all of the characters needed some real work. They were all over the place.

Not to be funny, but I would have been really pissed if I had paid the \$9.99 it cost because, in my opinion, it was not worth it.

2 Disappointed Stars

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## **Susan says**

This mystery grabs you right off. Then just as sudden, the bad guy is caught. Or is he? Can evil transfer from one person to another with each being more cruel and vicious? But who has it transferred to, and can it be stopped. As the first book in a series, you won't find all of the answers and take little pleasure in being right about the answers you do find.

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## **The Behrg says**

"Stained" is a book that dives into some pretty dark landscapes. The concept is quite entertaining - whether it be an infection or virus or actual entity possessing people, murderers have "caught" this disease.

I really enjoyed the set-up and character development for the first part of the novel, but for me somewhere along the ride the train sort of derailed. The book loses its identity, trying to decide what it wants to be -- an outright horror show? A "who-dunnit" mystery (that's poorly tacked together)? A character-driven suspense tale, but one that loses its way beneath the pulling tide of the plot? Unfortunately the combination was less than cohesive.

That being said, it's still a book I enjoyed and maybe even more so for what it tried to accomplish. Ultimately I think it fell short of the final draft needed to pull the threads together into what could have been quite a masterpiece, but it's still worth the price of admission.

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## **David Brian says**

At last the River Rat killer has been captured, and so a town can breathe a collective sigh of relief. Except, nothing is quite so straightforward. Contact with the Rat will leave you Stained!

Something ancient lurks, but victims aren't so much possessed as they are 'stained', their souls darkened, tainted by evil. It is an excellent premise for a novel, although the pacing is a bit skewed; everything moves slowly for 200 pages and then a breakneck finale. The edition I had was also littered with typos, which was somewhat distracting.

Overall, a darkly disturbing and entertaining read.

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