



Claus: Legend of the Fat Man

Tony Bertauski

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Some legends are forged in fire.

Others are born in snow.

In the early 1800s, Nicholas, Jessica and Jon Santa attempt the first human trek to the North Pole and stumble upon an ancient race of people left over from the Ice Age. They are short, fat and hairy. They slide across the ice on scaly soles and carve their homes in the ice that floats on the Arctic Ocean.

The elven are adapted to life in the extreme cold.

They are as wise as they are ancient. Their scientific advancements have yielded great inventions -- time-stopping devices and gravitational spheres that build living snowmen and genetically-modified reindeer that leap great distances. They've even unlocked the secrets to aging. For 40,000 years, they have lived in peace.

Until now.

An elven known as The Cold One has divided his people. He's tired of their seclusion and wants to conquer the world. Only one elven stands between The Cold One and total chaos. He's white-bearded and red-coated. The Santa family will help him stop The Cold One.

They will come to the aid of a legendary elven known as... Claus.

Claus: Legend of the Fat Man Details

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Author : Tony Bertauski

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From Reader Review Claus: Legend of the Fat Man for online ebook

Sherry Fundin says

At the North Pole, Nicholas couldn't believe the Inuits had left them, taking all their gear and food. He left Jessica and Jon in the tent and went to investigate their disappearance. He had tied a rope around himself so he could find his way back. When it wrapped around his feet and tripped him, he realized it had been cut. He turned to walk back and fell through the ice.

Back at the tent, Jessica reeled in the empty line. When she stuck her head out of the tent to see if she could catch a glimpse of Nicholas, she was grabbed and thrown in the air. When she awoke, she found Jon with her in a warm room surrounded by ice. Where did the light come from?

She called out, "Hello", and people-like creatures appeared. One of them, Merry, introduced herself and Nog. She said they needed to leave, now. Nog packed up the room and put it in a bag he had pulled from his pocket. What? How did he do that? How did the whole room end up in his bag.

Jon thought it was magic. Nog told him it was science. He said they were elven and had been around for more than 40,000 years. There was no time to explain right now. They had to relocate. The Fracture, war, had separated the elves, and the colony has to move every two weeks.

How would they travel? Why, reindeer and sleigh. Was there a reindeer with a red nose? What do you think?

Jack was the only elven with no sense of humor. When he was really upset, two words always calmed him, Silent Night, and he would repeat them over and over.

Pawn approached Jack to tell him they had found an injured warmblood. He had been caught in their trap, but the other two got away with the rebels help. He had been put in Claus` lab, because he had been injured and Claus was the only one who could heal him. Pawn told Jack the warmblood's name was Santa.

Jack and Claus were twin brothers. Jack wanted to kill all the warmbloods and return the world to the Ice Age. He had been waiting to capture a warmblood and now he had one. He had held Claus prisoner, even though he was treated well, because he would need his help to turn the warmblood into a weapon.

Merry had a special relationship with the reindeer. She could hear them. When everyone found out, they all began ignoring her. No one would play games with her and they called her names. What a great twist on Rudolph's story.

As she was calling out their names for Jon, he shouted out the last one, Blitzen. How did he know? He didn't have an answer for her.

Claus tried to explain to Nicholas, that he could be their salvation or their destruction. He could bring distinction to the human race.

Of course Frosty the Snowman is there, but what part he plays, you will have to read to find out.

5 STARS - Would Buy It For Them (lol)

There are two different covers for this book and I loved them both. The title speaks for itself. LOL

An amazing and awe-inspiring novel of how Santa came to be. I was stunned at Tony Bertauski's descriptions of the characters, critters and their environment. It was nothing less than amazing. His descriptions of the environment, technology and science fiction involved in the writing of this novel had me.....I can't even think of the words to describe how impressed I was. As you can see, I am now repeating myself, so read the book and you will see what I mean.

His creativity with mixing so many genres - the environment, technology, science fiction, magic, fantasy, Christmas, etc. - was superb.

The book has an unexpected ending, but no peeking.

I can see this as a television Christmas special. I think it would be a classic.

I have read one other book of his, The Annihilation of Foreverland and was equally impressed with that novel. This is an author you want to place on your must read list.

I got the book for free, and whether Tony expected a review or not, here it is. LOL. I loved everything about this book and would have reviewed it no matter what.

Claus: Legend of the Fat Man Tony Bertauski

Traci says

Disclosure: I received this book for free from the author in exchange for a review. It didn't influence my opinion either way.

I've thought all afternoon about how to start this review and I guess the best way is *wow*.

My first exposure to this author was by reading The Annihilation of Foreverland and when I started this one I kind of expected similarities. I didn't get any. I mean, sure, they were both sci-fi. But that's about where the similarities ended.

Claus: Legend of the Fat Man takes familiar Christmas story elements (Santa, Frosty the Snowman, Jack Frost, elves, reindeer, and some carols) and throws them in a blender with a good healthy dash of science fiction (it actually reminded me a little of Star Wars, mostly because of the rebels). What comes out is recognizable, but such a creative interpretation of a familiar story that I literally read this in one sitting.

In this novel, the Santa family is on an expedition to the North Pole when they are separated. Evidently, the North Pole is populated by nearly-immortal elves, in the middle of a kind of civil war. Nicholas Santa ends up in the lab of an elf named Claus, while his wife Jessica and son, Jon, are rescued by a band of rebel elves on the run. They're on the run from a dictator who's trying to take over the world—Jack, called The Cold One by them—who is incidentally Claus's younger twin brother, and who has a mutation which causes him to freeze things when he touches them. Jack wants to lead the elves to eradicate humans (warmbloods) from the earth, because he believes they're destroying it (and he's probably right, let's face it). Unfortunately, power corrupts, and he's a prime example.

The rebels move frequently with the help of genetically altered reindeer, who can't fly, but who can leap great distances in one jump. The elves in general are very technologically advanced, and even though this is set in the 1800s, there's nanobots, a halo that wipes memories, genetic engineering, and a device called a timesnap that stops time.

Anyway, I honestly cannot discuss the plot more than this because it will give something away and this is really an enjoyable story. It's not short-story length, but it almost reads like one—you jump into it right away, and I've already said that for me, it was a quick read. Through about the first quarter of the book, I was trying too hard to reconcile what I was reading with the Santa story I am familiar with, even though I know this wouldn't work... and it didn't, and once I stopped doing that everything fell into place. I stopped looking for similarities and just let the science fiction element take over and tell the story, and this was apparently the key to maximizing my enjoyment.

That isn't to say it had a slow beginning, because it doesn't. The first thing you see is Nicholas Santa getting lost in the snow because a rope is mysteriously cut. The first time I see my favorite character (this is one of those times when the antagonist is my favorite) he's freezing fish in a really horrifying manner. There are literally six-limbed snow monsters in the beginning.

Let me just deviate here and discuss Jack for a minute. It's obvious he's the antagonist, which is fine. It works well and this is a story about how Santa Claus became Santa Claus, not a whodunnit. But he is the exact opposite of what I would expect an evil dictator to be. He is... in a word... *fabulous*. I loved his attitude, and his interactions with his brother, and the reveal at the end involving him, Claus, and their mother was very unexpected.

Other than Jack, I found the characters to be very realistic. I liked the rebel elves that the story followed, and I enjoyed Jessica's journey and Jon's as much as, if not more than, I enjoyed reading about Nicholas. That was a pleasant surprise to me, considering that Nicholas was in the "heart" of the action.

Minimal typos/formatting errors, not enough to detract from enjoyment of the book.

Overall? I'd definitely recommend this one. I was blown away.

Rebecca says

OMG What an amazing take on the Santa legend. It was wonderful.
An emotional roller coaster taking you deep into a fantastical world.

Donald Armfield says

Two twin brothers born minutes apart grow together but one is different "cold" as in cold hearted. As Jack grows he is picked on by others even his own brother. They go their separate ways.

Nicolas Santa and his wife are on a voyage in the Arctic regions near the north pole when a horrible storm tears them apart. The search for their warm embrace to be together once again.

A race called Elven are found they are hundreds of years old they are short little people with beards. With their help will husband and wife be together again.

Tony Bertauski author of Annihilation of Foreverland. Takes the story of Santa Claus to a whole new meaning of Christmas. With a heart warming story that's better than a Hot Cup of cocoa. This Christmas be sure to check out this masterpiece of the fat man we once or still believe in. Tony Bertauski as the song goes "you'll go down in hisss-torrr-y"

Thank you for letting me read and review another one of your books!

Bai says

We have all grown up with stories of Christmas, of Santa coming to give us treats at the dead of the night, Rudolph's nose leading the way - but how many of us have seen, or read about the evolution of this legend?

Tony Bertauski's novel gives a whole new take on the children's fantasy. And I loved it!

The main theme

The Santa family, consisting of Nick Santa, his wife Jessica and their son Jon are left to die in the frigid temperatures of the North Pole. They have little hope left, and they only wish to end their adventure in the arms of each other. Little do they know, their adventures are only beginning...

Part fantasy, part sci-fi, *Claus* is an unique mix between children's fancy, and an adult's concerns. Riddled with issues like family, loss, regret and loneliness, it is more than just a story of a bad villain and the good hero.

It is a story about families, one lost in the wilderness, one torn apart by war and one broken at the seam because each member was too busy to see beyond their own means.

Writing Style

Tony's writing has always been one of my favourite aspects about his books. It an effortless blend of contrasting elements, a flawless storytelling.

Claus is set against the backdrop of a war, not a human war of great proportions, but a war nonetheless. But life goes on, and not everything is desolate. the little scenes of humour, the love shining through remind of those. And it is the execution of these scenes that tell us how great a storyteller the author is.

And finally we come to the *Claus* part. You know, I really don't want to comment on this as it will give away the fun! I loved reading the novel and suddenly coming up with a tiny detail that reminded me of all the stories I had heard as a child!

Conclusion

The author promised us a novel which would give us a completely new perspective on the legend...and he delivered beautifully. I would recommend it to anyone who likes a good book. Trust me, you'll not be disappointed.

Rose says

I'm not what you would call a lover of Christmas. I'm probably just one "bah-humbug" away from being considered Scrooge. Even still, when all the houses were decorated and the mall trees were lit (even though it was still November), I started feeling a bit of spirit. I decided that I would take this opportunity to delve into Bertauski's Claus series. I've read Bertauski before so I knew it would be good and I knew he wouldn't be shoving Christmas down my throat. It turned out to be perfect. Exactly what I was looking for.

This is the story of life at the north pole. It's also the story of how Santa Claus came to be. And it's nothing like any of the stories you heard before. Aside from the fact that it was supposed to have taken place in the 1800's but the speech and other indicators just weren't there, it was great. The elves, reindeer, flying all over the world in one night, are all explained via science fiction. I bought the full box set so I'm moving on to book two while I still have some Christmas spirit left.

Jim says

This was a wonderful YA novel about the origin of Santa Claus. Take the myth, mix it with some reality, a dash of fantasy, a splash of SF & we wind up with a fun romp. I'd love to see this made into a cartoon or something like the claymation Rudolf that we used to watch every year. It's seriously that much fun & good.

Yzabel Ginsberg says

I must admit I didn't enjoy this book as much as the other one I read from the author. Nevertheless, it was enjoyable in its own right, and proved a gripping read.

It was also a somewhat weird novel, in that some things in it that might have thrown me off-course actually proved palatable in the end. The idea of the elves as a science-based civilization is so different than the usual take on the whole North Pole/Santa Claus/elves vision that even though it seemed weird at first, it very soon left me going all "Sure, why not?", and discovering it became an enjoyment in and of itself. Same went with Jack's antics: in the very beginning, I thought they'd be unnerving... but then, all of a sudden, I realized that I was actually waiting to see him come into the story again, with his crazy ways of acting and the way he would treat the people around him.

The story also tackles touchy themes, such as the loss of memory (which is probably worse than dying for some people, at least) and how gestures (or lack thereof) seen as insignificant, or overlooked, in the past may give birth to a monster. Those are part of the themes I can easily be brought to appreciate in a fictional setting.

I think the one thing that left me hesitant was the 19th century aspect of "Claus". I couldn't relate to those parts of the story—being an avid reader and student of 19th century literature, I didn't find the 'feeling' I would expect from the chapters about the Santas' life before arriving among the elves. I probably wouldn't have minded as much hadn't I already had quite a pile of previous readings behind me, though. Still, it happened. That's too bad.

Otherwise, if you like different takes and original twists on very traditional tales, go for it.

Kimberly says

The author sent me a copy of this book for review, although I almost wish he hadn't. People might assume that skewed this review in his favor. Little secret — I was going to buy it anyway. (Sorry, Mr. Bertauski) I had recently discovered this author on my own after downloading *The Annihilation of Foreverland* on Amazon. I loved that book enough that this one was already on my reading list. Add in the embarrassing fact that I am the ultimate Christmas geek — we're the house on the block that blows fuses at Christmastime, and I leave up a different Christmas decoration in my house all year (this year, a 5-ft tall animated Santa in my dining room), and this was the perfect book for me.

Please do yourself a favor and pick up this little gem, even if you're not a Christmas fan. It is an absolute riot. As the title infers, *Claus: Legend of the Fat Man* is a new twist on the legend of Santa Claus. It's such a compelling fusion of fantasy, sci-fi, and modern culture that I'm having a little bit of trouble describing it.

It's the early 1800's and Nicholas Santa and his adventurous family have decided to become the first people to explore the North Pole. To their surprise, and dismay, the North Pole is already inhabited — by technologically and socially advanced elves, who happen to be having their own little crisis at the time.

Enter Claus and Jack (yes, as in frost), twin elven brothers and complete opposites. Jack has a little bit of an attitude. Well, okay, he's a complete psycho, and he's taken over the elven world with a dictatorial iron fist. Claus, the good twin, is pretty much a hostage and a band of rebel elves have gone on the run.

First and foremost, this is a tale of the ties that bind, family drama and redemption; it is a story of regret, love and sacrifice. All this, you say, in a little fantasy novel about Santa Claus? Abso-frickin'-lutely. It is also hilarious and smart. Mr. Bertauski doesn't miss anyone in this book: Frosty, Rudolph and his clan, the Abominable . . . the list goes on, but they're not what you might expect.

Want to know how reindeer can fly? How Santa makes it around the world in one night? How he fits down those chimneys? How the whole thing started in the first place? Covered, covered and covered. I loved the technology piece of this book. These elves have more tricks up their stubby little sleeves than my kids have logged x-box hours. And that's a lot. The author obviously let his creativity and imagination fly here, and very successfully I might add.

Jack. Ah, Jack. What a bad, bad boy. How did this happen? How did you become the world's bluest, meanest dictator in all the land? Turns out it's tough living in your perfect brother's shadow. And Claus, former beloved leader of the elven, downtrodden and used, I was disappointed in you too — until I figured out that you had a few plans of your own all along.

I've had a difficult time writing this review because I didn't want to ruin any plotlines. . .they're too much of a joy for the reader to discover on their own for me to do that. Let me just say it again. Get this book, it's a delight. While I imagine it's labeled YA, everyone will enjoy it. I certainly did. As I discovered with his previous book, Mr. Bertauski's works are not your typical YA fare. He assumes his readers are intelligent and thoughtful, which is quite refreshing.

With this second novel, Mr. Bertauski has gained himself a true fan. Can't wait to see what comes out of that imagination next!

Clare O'Beara says

This book is set at the North Pole, as three crew aboard an early Polar expedition ship get off at Greenland and walk. They encounter a strange race adapted to life in ice caves, with their own technology, something like a Jules Verne story. However the antagonist is one Jack Frost who seeks to bring all the polar realm under his control and he has evil plans for the warmbloods.

I am fine with the concept that this might be how Nicholas and family got to the Pole and started legends. I just found the continuous forcing of names like Merry, Nog, Claus, Rudy, Dasher, Dancer and the rest of the GM reindeer, into the tale overly silly and it stopped me enjoying what might have been a great Verne-ish read. But some folks will be happy to read it for the laughs and be fine with the contemporary references. Some of the adaptations and new tech ideas are great. Hard to know if it's a fantasy or SF but I'm calling it fantasy. I've read SF by this author which was rather darker and very good indeed.

The author made this available as a free download. This is an unbiased review.

Meghan says

Christmas is one of my two favorite holidays and I am always looking for a good Christmas book to read in December. Last December I found this one. I especially like ones that are different than the norm and this one is definitely that.

It has tons of action, the good brother vs the bad brother (when done right, it can never get old), highs and lows - there were several times that I actually caught myself holding my breath as I read, worried about what was going to happen next.

And the story behind HOW Santa became Santa ... loved it.

It is a book that I will definitely read again and one I think everyone will enjoy.

But it did leave me with one thing - wanting to know what happens next AND wanting to know more about ... THE COLD ONE ...

Natalie says

I wanted to like this book, I really did. But, there were parts that just seemed predictable and I couldn't get past the fact that nothing in the book screamed early 1800s to me from their technology to their speech. I found some of the characters endearing but yet the main characters were a little one dimensional with hardly any backstory to give them life. I had hoped for a big finish but that too was predictable.

However, there was a lot of creativity to the story and I enjoyed all the clever use of familiar names all dealing in some way with Christmas. I think my favorite moment was when Nicholas became "Santa Claus"

after absorbing Claus' memory (cute).

Jane McBride says

If you have stopped believing in Santa simply because the whole thing is just too incredible, then this is the book for you. After all, how on earth could the little fat man get around the world in one night, able to reach every kid? If you're one of those people who needs scientific proof of everything, then, here you go! Well written, fabulous tale of a guy in 1818 (your average, ordinary warmblood) who goes on an amazing adventure with his wife and son-to find the North Pole. That story alone sounds like it would make a great book, but that isn't what this one is about. This one is about what happens to them after they get there and, finding themselves in desperate circumstances, are rescued by the Elven. The Elven are in possession of technological advances that might seem like magic even to modern day eyes, let alone to someone in 1818. The story is told in a very believable, matter of fact way-and seems to answer the question, "How does he do that?" on every level. I definitely will be recommending this one to everybody I know.

Side note-There are a lot of other reviewers complaining about American slang making it's way into early 1800's Elven speech. May I remind you people that one of the first things Jessica sees after being taken in by the Elven is a Star Trekkian desk with color screen and touch pad? I just have this feeling that those 1800's Elves were watching our tv, listening to our music and listening to us talk-in OUR time. Don't nit pick, people, can't you just have a good time?

Tony Bertauski says

BERTAUSKI STARTER LIBRARY is FREE!

Get 3 full-length novels and 1 novella...Just tell me where to send them.

<http://bertauski.com/>

Kynthos-the-Archer (Kyn) says

4 Stars for this Bone-Freezing yet Heartwarming Book.

Nearly freeze my butt off reading this one. Felt like I have just gone through sub-zero in the North Pole. I was effectively transported to the Arctic experiencing blinding white snow and bone-deep chills. Besides that the reindeer rides almost ripped my poor *acrophobic* heart out. No amount of preparation could have calm my heart enough for such a rough ride. The World's Top Rollercoaster ride would simply be kiddie rides in comparison.

The story begun in year 1818, with an adventurous family of three trekking through the harsh Arctic environment with undying determination to reach the North Pole. It is a feat no one has yet succeeded. Unfortunately their plans was foiled when they were left for dead by their guides and a snow storm was raging. The Santa family was torn apart during that storm and Jessica and her teenage son Jon was left to fend for themselves when Nicholas disappeared in the storm while trying to locate their guides. Unbeknownst to the Santas, they were in for the biggest adventure of their lifetime when they were sucked into the scientifically advance world of the Nordic elven. Although it's a mathematical world with much scifi

elements in it, I still find it magical and wondrous!

In *Claus*, we get to meet lots of fantastical creatures and legendary beings in the land of forever winter. Just to name a few, there is the famed 9 reindeers with Rudy being the biggest and strongest of the herd, the Abominable Snowmans, the round rolly-polly Nordic elven, cold and dangerous Jack Frost, and on goes the list. Only thing is... they all come with a twist, a scientific one of course since this is a scifi cum fantasy take on the legendary red robe fat man. Think genetic manipulation, energy field devices, holographic displays, space compressor and atom fragmenters, doesn't it all spells fun and adventures? So many wondrous things to keep us entertained. Asides from the fun and gripping adventure, the text was powerful enough to help cool down the temperature of my oven-like room. Snow and freezing water never left my mind throughout the story and what a treat it was for a tropical dweller like me. *bliss*

Cane the smallest and oddest elf is probably my favorite character although he is mute and was only a side character with a small role. For some reasons he is very endearing to me. It could be my motherly instinct taking hold of me. Hehehe. I felt that Cane is the character who has truly lost something most precious to him and my heart aches for him.

As for the rest of the characters they were well developed and round (no pun intended). They each have their own background and unique characteristic. They have their own hopes and dreams with strong will to back it up. In short, they are memorable characters. The author's magical pen has brought them to life vividly.

Romance was a constant here even in the midst of chaos caused by the elven war between two elven factions. The pure undying love between Nicholas and his wife Jessica was beautiful to behold. Along with the durable love between the kind hearted elven couple, Nog and Merry was just as inspiring. Then there was also the budding young love between young elven Tinsel and Jon.

Jack, the negative force in this story was just a misguided and misunderstood soul. He could have been as great as Claus if he was given the same opportunity to shine, to be accepted and acknowledged. (view spoiler) I guess he who sows bad seeds, shall reap bitter fruits.

What didn't work well for me was the ending. It was a little abrupt with some loose ends left whipping in the cold winter wind. (view spoiler) Another peeve was with what had happened to Jon Santa after that unfortunate incident while escaping the six-leggers creatures. (view spoiler)

Lessons of the story...

Never play god.

Never ever try to cheat Mother Nature.

Balance is the way to keep the cycle of nature healthy.

Greed only leads to destruction.

Never forsake your child.

Never underestimate anyone.

Never judge a person by external appearance.

Discrimination is an act of cruelty, an assault on human rights.

Courage and determination leads you towards your goal.

Love prevails and kindness rules.

Tony Bertauski has certainly revamped the legend of Santa and making it hip and current. The story and its charming characters touched my heart and warmed my soul. It is a lovely book for those young at heart and great for the winter holiday season.

BOOK DETAILS:

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Related: Claus

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Description:

Some legends are forged in fire.

Others are born in snow.

In the early 1800s, Nicholas, Jessica and Jon Santa attempt the first human trek to the North Pole and stumble upon an ancient race of people left over from the Ice Age. They are short, fat and hairy. They slide across the ice on scaly soles and carve their homes in the ice that floats on the Arctic Ocean.

The elven are adapted to life in the extreme cold.

They are as wise as they are ancient. Their scientific advancements have yielded great inventions -- time-stopping devices and gravitational spheres that build living snowmen and genetically-modified reindeer that leap great distances. They've even unlocked the secrets to aging. For 40,000 years, they have lived in peace.

Until now.

An elven known as The Cold One has divided his people. He's tired of their seclusion and wants to conquer the world. Only one elven stands between The Cold One and total chaos. He's white-bearded and red-coated. The Santa family will help him stop The Cold One.

They will come to the aid of a legendary elven known as... Claus.

WHERE TO BUY:

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This review has also been cross-posted at:

* Reviewed on December 18th, 2013