



At the Behest of the Dead

Timothy W. Long

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"Long writes with graphic glee."-- Tacoma News Tribune

"Timothy W. Long brings his undead wit and wiseassery to the urban fantasy genre to fearsome effect. Necromancers, demons, and mayhem...what more could you want?" -- Tim Marquitz, author of the Demon Squad series

Phineas Cavanaugh likes to play with dead things. As a centuries-old necromancer he is Seattle's foremost investigator on the recently deceased, and he hasn't met a corpse he didn't like.

Hired to track down a serial killer, Phineas and beautiful Detective Andrews face off against an enraged beast that should not exist. Things go from bad to worse when is summoned to probe the murder of his teacher and oldest friend.

Phineas learns the hard way that the two cases are related when a demonic force attempts to devour him. Now, if he is to survive the night, he will have to join forces with his former flame, a witch named Glenda; Frank, a Native American changer, and a snarky demon--who may or may not be--under Phineas's thrall.

With the power over the dead at his command, Phineas' destiny leads to a showdown in Hell, where the price of failure may be his soul, and nothing less than the very Earth itself.

At the Behest of the Dead Details

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Author : Timothy W. Long

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From Reader Review At the Behest of the Dead for online ebook

AudioBookReviewer says

ABR's full At the Behest of the Dead audiobook review and many others can be found at Audiobook Reviewer.

First thoughts about the cover of At the Behest of the Dead? Ohh... Spooky. I dig the eerie feel of the building in the background. The skeleton lurching towards the man with the ball of fire is very creepy. Shivery and spooky.

The main character in this story is Phineas Cavanaugh. He's a really old (He looks about thirty though.) Warlock Necromancer. He seems to get himself into danger rather easily. Almost as if the danger clings to him. He underestimates his own talents, and thereby having others around him underestimate them as well. He's kick-ass in a magic fight. Fair warning – His wit and sarcasm will randomly have you giggling like a loon.

My favorite character in this story, besides Phineas, is a male demon in a female Pomeranian host named Peaches. Peaches is a very good bad little demon dog that you cannot help but want to pet. Peaches' voice always makes me smile. Think guttural, scathingly deep, nails on chalkboard and you'll have Peaches' voice.

The Narrator is Todd Menesses. I loved the voices used in this book. Phineas has an English accent, even in his own thoughts. There are lots of different characters in this story and Todd Menesses very convincingly brings each of them to life with their very own voices. That is an awesome talent to have. The Author is Timothy W. Long. This book is 10 hours and 10 minutes long.

I greatly enjoyed this book and would recommend it to mid-teen and up. I say mid-teen and up because there is a bit of blood, terror, and different things that go bump in the night, and vivid details of things about the occult to keep the story juicy. It keeps you guessing at the next bit of trouble Phineas will find himself into.

This book left me with the impression that anything is possible given enough belief and a bit of bravado to back it up. Do not let others tell you that you are wrong and should give up. Remember that knowledge, sarcasm, and faith are their own versions of magic and can be used for both the greater goods or the worst evils a person can imagine.

Audiobook provided for review by the narrator.

Sammy Smith says

I'm a huge lover of paranormal fantasy: Karen Chance and Ilona Andrews being my faves - but I think if this is a measure of Long's storytelling talent - he'll be joining my list soon.

A warlock investigator in a magic-fuelled world has disaster written all over it, and at times, there is a worry that Phineas and the story might fall into cliche territory in such a saturated market. However, I'm pleased to say that this book manages to avoid the pitfalls of urban fantasy and stir in wit, style, satire, grit, darkness and fun in a heady mix of awesome for the reader.

This book only took me a couple of hours to read, and I put that down to three things 1) great story 2) great writing 3) great characters.

Give it a go - you won't be disappointed.

Ben says

I wasn't sure about this story at first, but I really enjoy Tim's stories, so.... As I immersed myself in the insanity that Phineas Cavanaugh got summoned into in this book, I found this story to be an amusing ride into a unique world of magic. Warlocks, witches, demons, multiple dimensions, and "cute cuddly" Pomeranian demon traverse the entirety of this book. There were some occasions where I kind of lost track of the imagery Tim was weaving and there are a few typos in the version I read....but that in no way diminished the great entertainment value this book produced. Tim is a very talented author that imbues many of his books....especially this one, with great sarcasm and humor. Do yourself a favor and check this book out...Peaches and Phineas make a great team and I look forward to future adventures with these characters. Well done!

Ryan Lawler says

At the Behest of the Dead is a solid urban fantasy, not the best I've read but far from the worst. If you like the Dresden Files, Iron Druid Chronicles, or the Demon Squad series, you will probably find some enjoyment with this story.

The style of writing is very much a hard-boiled detective, with a few noir influences and some snarky humour. The detective and noir stuff is pretty good, but the snarky humour rarely connected for me. It felt too... vanilla? Maybe its just that other urban fantasy books have trained me to only laugh at the outrageous and the offensive.

The worldbuilding and magic were great, and Long obviously put a lot of time into crafting these elements. The individual elements aren't all that original, but Long combines them effectively to craft out his own distinct stuff.

The characters didn't work for me, I found it hard to connect with Phineas and his plight, and I found it hard to differentiate between the rest of the characters. This is kind of exacerbated by the large amount of dialogue that is used - during the rapid fire exchanges I just couldn't tell who Phineas was talking to.

The story was good and I really enjoyed how it played out, but the plotting was often murky and at times it was hard to keep track of where I was and what was happening. The ending was pretty cool and Long has really set things up for a lengthy episodic series.

At the Behest of the Dead is an okay start to a new series. There are a number of issues, but there is also plenty to like. By the end the book the author had really found his feet, and I don't think it is unreasonable to assume that the next book will be a lot better.

Criss Hanson says

The first thing that I like about this book is that it satiates my hunger for Dresden books in between Dresden books. If you have only ever seen the TV Show of The Dresden Files and have decided based on the TV show that you won't like the books, you are doing yourself a disservice. Read the books! But, I digress, this review is about Timothy's book.

The second thing I like about this book is that none of the characters are 15 or in high school and only one of the characters is a supermodel. I would like to say I'm a fan of the urban fantasy genre, but 95% of what I find in that genre is YA. Even though most of them are well written and suitable for any audience, there is only so much of my time that I want to spend reading about prom going vampires and wizards on their school sports team. Phineas Cavanaugh is a respectable 30 something (300 something) warlock with a very much non perfect life. His heart is broken, he is broke, and his career centers around dead people and vengeful, plotting demonologists, so basically he's someone the average adult can relate to.

The third thing I like about this book is the humor. Timothy imbues all of his work with subtle and not-so-subtle humor. From little jabs about the weather in the Pacific Northwest to sarcastic dialogue with ex-girlfriends, old rivals, and demons, Timothy delivers the lines we all wish we thought of. Like this one: "Warlocks, chasing people out of coffee shops since 1993."

This is a book that you can easily (pun intended) sink your teeth into and consume in a rainy weekend. The balance between witty dialogue, narration through inner monologue, and fast moving plot made it a fun and fast read. There are a few places where we switched locations and I got lost. There was also a couple times where I wish I knew where the dog was and/or what arrangements Phineas made for the dog. For instance, once he's gone for 3-4 days, and then we see Phineas picking up Peaches at the kennel, but we never saw Phineas drop Peaches off at the kennel. Overall, the story flowed in a way that was easy to understand.

The thing that made me give this 4 stars instead of 5 was the grammar. Unfortunately, I found at least one major grammatical or punctuation error about every 10 pages. Halfway into the book it gets even worse. For instance, there is a scene where the narrator is talking about the detective and referred to the detective as "He." The only detective in the book is female. At first, I thought I missed something, so I scrolled back a few pages and re-read, to make sure I didn't miss another detective's entrance. I hadn't. It was just a typo. The next chapter and once more in the book, he referred to the main character Glenda as Glena. Again, I had to scroll back a couple of pages to make sure that Glena wasn't someone else. There's another line where he says, "an understanding that we might well FINE each other one day. " While this could be funny, I'm pretty sure he meant "find" each other one day. I also caught a few times of using too instead of to and vice versa. Each of these typos, while small, take me out of the story, and a reader should never be taken out of the story for anything short of an emergency bathroom break or a day job.

I bought this e-book on a day when it was on sale for .99. The typical amount that I spend on e-books is up to \$3.99 for authors I'm not familiar with and 7.99 for well known authors. I've spent up to 15.99 for something highly recommended or series that I collect. This is one that I'm glad I only spent the .99 on. Anything I spend more than that on I want well-edited, even if I did enjoy it thoroughly.

I look forward to the sequel and/or prequel. The back story of the officer that was a serial killer intrigued me enough to want a prequel based on it.

Todd Menesses says

I narrated the audiobook for this one and really enjoyed it. Great character development with a good sense of sarcastic humor and horror. I've talked with readers who read the book and then got the audiobook version and each one said the audiobook version made them appreciate the story and characters more! The Audiobook version is available here: <http://bit.ly/1piH3sk>

Patrick D'Orazio says

Phineas Cavanaugh is a hack Necromancer living near Seattle who scrapes by tracking down lost souls or by occasionally helping the police out with a murder investigation. He left his guild pretty much in shame a few years back and has had a hard knock life ever since. Things start to get interesting when he is hired to seek out the lost soul of an elderly woman's dead husband and a demon tries to devour him in a park while on the job. At the same time the police call upon his services to track down a vicious shape shifter who seems to know Phineas and might just be hunting him as well.

Things get worse from there as Phineas's old mentor is attacked and brutally murdered at his guild and he is called upon to return to his old stomping grounds to figure out what has happened by attempting to speak to his departed friend's soul. That is when all hell breaks loose, literally. Phineas is thrust into a mystery where old enemies and friends are drawn into the fray with him smack dab in the middle. He has to figure out what is going on and what part he is supposed to play before demons and the dead alike tear their way into our plane of existence and destroy everything that Phineas cares about.

At The Behest Of The Dead is told in first person and one can't help but be reminded of noir detective potboilers with its urban sensibilities and snarky attitude. Phineas is a self-effacing schlub with a good heart even if he does work with the dead and rubs elbows with demons and other questionable sorts. It has a bit of Simon Green's *Nightside* going for it, as well as Glenn Cook's *Garrett Files*. Urban fantasy with as much irreverence as mystery, with a bit of romance tossed in for good measure. And Phineas, like other hard luck P.I.-types, seems to attract the attention of the ladies despite perhaps looking and acting like he has been ridden hard and put away wet most of the time. Even though he has rough edges (or maybe because he does), Phineas is a likable sort, making his tale easy to read and entertaining.

Tim Long stretches himself beyond the zombie apocalyptic genre he normally haunts with this one, although he gives a winking nod to his roots with a few zombies showing up, though they are not anywhere near being a critical part of the telling of this tale. He has crafted an interesting world with the magical elements fantasy fans will appreciate while putting his own slant on things, making this world his and his alone. The characters are interesting and diverse enough to make them stand out and I can imagine some pretty intriguing adventures in their future. A fun read that has excellent potential as the start of an enjoyable series of books.

Rosezetta says

I want to put Phineas in the same league as Harry and Atticus... but lets face it, he doesn't even come close. When Atticus and Harry get their ass kicked, their brain works better not worse because dying just isn't an option with them. If it is, you will probably die right along with them.

Okay, so I am suppose to be talking about Phineas. He is suppose to be this renegade warlock with

"potential" great power, that has to be unlocked (but he doesn't know that.) Not until his mentor is found dead and a demon residing in his body. So Phineas has to find out what is really going on. Who killed his mentor whom was like a father to him. In the process he finds out he's knee deep in demons. All of which wants a piece of him, but who's pulling their chains???

I think the saving grace of this book was the demon possessed dog, Peaches. If that doesn't say it all, then go ahead and read the book. ;)

Michael S. Gardner says

From the mind of one of today's great authors comes the story of a Warlock investigator who tends to have trouble following him. At the Behest of the Dead is what I would call an urban fantasy lathered in noir mystery with a hefty dose of humor. This was a very entertaining read: well-written and creatively inspiring.

From the start, Long pulls you in with his humor. Phineas is a supernatural detective and we find right away that his world is far from the norm. He takes a job and, of course, things don't go as planned (do they ever?). A previous reviewer gave a great synopsis of the story, so I won't go into much more description of the book.

What I liked most about ABD is the fact that the author did a great job of making the unbelievable believable. Often, this is hard to do - especially with such elements that are entwined in this story. It's set in a real-world environment, meaning that what transpires in the book could very well be occurring now. Right now, I say!

This didn't take long to read, as I kept turning page after page, often laughing at the Phineas' (and the author's) humor. He's a real lady charmer, I tell ya. While not the normal read for me, I'm a big fan of Mr. Long and have enjoyed everything by him so far. Do yourself a favor and get this book!

Oh, just watch out for Phineas' pet!

Kris Richards says

I found this to be a great mix of fantasy and mystery, but with a mix of comedy and darkness. Phineas is a detective that longs to be like those he's read of before, but he has his... shortcomings. Sarcastic and sometimes verging on buffoonery, he muddles his way through making the reader laugh with carefully placed humour and, in places, clever satire.

There were several twists that were handled nicely, and like any good mystery, the reader is drawn into the world and cares for the characters.

I'd definitely read Long's books in the future.

Dayle says

Loved this book..I would really like to read more about Phineas Cavanaugh and his pet.

Lori says

Phineas Cavanaugh has a bad attitude, bad clothes and a really bad job. Unfortunately, he is uniquely suited for this job, so he's stuck. It's one of those jobs where, once you're in, you're in for life. Kinda like the mob and the DMV. Phineas does have some killer benefits, though - after all, he's a warlock. So he can, you know, perform magic. Cast spells. Scare the living daylights out of people. And he rides a pitchfork. (no, not a broom, WARLOCK, remember?)

Phineas, the main character in Timothy W. Long's newest novel, *At the Behest of the Dead*, is also an investigator. He reminds the reader of those old noir detectives, who ogle the dames and are tougher than nails. Except he wears a robe and knows a lot of spells. When a string of murders have the local cops frustrated, they call him in for help. Someone (or something) has been viciously killing people around town, but it's not your everyday serial killer. The victims' corpses are left in shreds, literally. Whatever is killing them, the cops and Phineas have not seen before.

It's a great mystery story, but any book by Long is also a comedy, I don't think he can help himself. Long's characters are always a pleasure to read about. From the vilest to the most saintly, Long puts the twinkle in their eye that makes you want to read about them. Sarcasm ladled on with a spoon made the book a joy to read for me. And I would recommend this book highly to mystery fans, paranormal fans or, those rare beasts, people who love a well-written book filled with awesome characters and plot twists. That was a joke, not as good as Long would write, but just another example of why you ought to go read this book! He's hilarious!

Timothy W. Long
