



TOOTH AND NAIL

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As a new plague related to the rabies virus infects millions, America recalls its military forces from around the world to safeguard hospitals and other vital buildings. Many of the victims become rabid and violent but are easily controlled—that is, until so many are infected that they begin to run amok, spreading slaughter and disease. Lieutenant Todd Bowman got his unit through the horrors of combat in Iraq. Now he must lead his men across New York through a storm of violence to secure a research facility that may hold a cure. To succeed in this mission to help save what's left of society, the men of Second Platoon will face a terrifying battle of survival against the very people they have sworn to protect—people turned into a fearless, endless horde armed solely with tooth and nail.

Tooth and Nail Details

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Author : Craig DiLouie

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From Reader Review Tooth and Nail for online ebook

Mihir says

Original review over at Fantasy Book Critic

OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS: Tooth and Nail from its blurb quintessentially seems to be a zombie military novel and whilst I went in with those thoughts, the actual book turned out to be a bit more than that.

For one the zombies in this book are scientifically explained. It turns out that something called Mad Dog or Lyssavirus is infecting people in the United States of America and turning them into slobbering angry creatures whose sole instinct/purpose is to bite and eat the other non-infected people. Such is the tremendous assault of the virus that the government has recalled all of its troops from all of its foreign bases and one such group is the second platoon which has been stationed in New York City in one of the interim Mad dog patient hospital camps.

The tale begins by introducing us to Private Mooney who is being acclimatized to this sudden trip home. However home (NYC) seems to be more different than he can remember. The novel then shows the various scenarios of all the characters as they see the people infected with the virus and also some of the more violent confrontations they have with the Mad Dogs.

Thus begins the story as the second platoon receives word about Dr. Valeriya Petrova who seems to have made a breakthrough with the virus and has created a pure sample which can be utilized to create a vaccine. However the lab which she is working in is locked out and is surrounded by Mad dogs both within and without. The journey begins when the soldiers of the second platoon which will see them go through various horrors in order to get Dr. Petrova and the possible cure.

There were a couple of issues that arose during my reading of this novel. Primarily being that the author has written this book with constant POV switches in between lines and paragraphs. This broke up the flow of the story because I was following a certain character it would switch to someone else and then back again and this goes on through out the entire book. This was not only confusing but made it hard for me to follow the story and what character was doing what. This style distracted me enough to prevent me from enjoying the story properly.

Secondly the story didn't have a proper conclusion. It picks from this vantage point wherein the virus has already spread and infected large numbers of people and then ends on another point just after they reach Dr. Petrova but the reader will only be able to fill in as to what might have happened next from his/her imagination.

Tooth and Nail isn't all filled with issues, there are plenty of positives of the novel. This story is very gritty and gruesome as it is told from the eyes of the soldiers in the front and it pulls no punches as the reader sees the fear, the tension and the all pervasive feeling of doom. This reminded me a bit about Glen Cook's Black company books if they ever had a zombie problem. The book is very realistic in its approach to the life of the foot soldier and kudos must be given to the author for revealing it to be such. The body count is also high as no character is truly safe as would be the case in a real-life scenario.

In the end I can say that while this book was a good one, the plot and structural issues threw me a bit off and

therefore did not allow me to enjoy the book as much as I could have imagined. Check this one if you are a fan of Glen Cook's Black Company books or you like gritty military zombie fiction.

amber says

Didn't love it. Couldn't get attached to any of the characters. Was mostly just happy to get it finished. I didn't find it engaging or believable.

Felicia A says

Tooth and Nail features "infected", not "zombies", and the virus is a genetically altered mutation of the rabies virus. So not exactly zombies, but similar, though it reads like a true zombie book.

For a zombie-type book, it had enough of a different bent that it wasn't like just reading another self-published fanboy/fanfic piece focused on guns, gore, guts and rape scenes.

This book has a great premise, a good story arc, and good intentions. It does not, however, have a good execution.

The writing is cumbersome and difficult to wade through, the tenses are not consistent, the dialogue is truncated and distant and the editing is nearly non-existent.

The good thing about the editing, though, is that this time it's not for horrid mistakes that a simple spell-check or basic middle school English class could have corrected. No, in this book it is less of a proofreading issue and more of a REAL editing issue. A professional editor would have been able to release the writing from its distant, stiff and tight confines, enabling this story to flow effortlessly from chapter to chapter, bringing us all along for the ride.

There are a lot of characters to keep track of, none of which are particularly well developed, but it is clear that the author has some knowledge of military procedures and uses that knowledge to drive this book. It's a good thing, though.

POSSIBLE SPOILER BELOW! POSSIBLE SPOILER BELOW!

You've been warned.....

The Mad Dog angle and exponential rate of infection is a good one, as is the military rescue of the scientist who identified the Mad Dog strain and its methodology.

The medical science and military knowledge was believeable enough that it could carry this book through to the end, but the sequel, which it's clear is coming since this ends on such a bloody cliffhanger, is going to need A LOT of work.

T.W. Brown says

28 Days Later was one of those moves that really helped push the zombie back to the forefront. Only...zombie purists will tell you, "It's not a zombie movie." In many ways, *Tooth and Nail* by Craig DiLouie is much the same. In fact, this book could be seen as the Americanized version. And I mean this in a good way.

While Lieutenant Todd Bowman is named on the back jacket, there are a number of characters in this fast-paced tale. Some might complain about the number of characters—a criticism I never quite understood—but each one is three-dimensional. What I mean is that each is given enough depth for you to care about their fate. DiLouie doesn't simply fill his story with cannon fodder and mow them down. He brings you into the heads and lets you look through their eyes.

There is a lot of military jargon here, but he doesn't overwhelm the reader. There is a real feeling of authenticity here. At times, you can get sucked in and feel the emotions swirling as the soldiers talk during the lulls in the action. DiLouie uses dialog to a supreme effect in this regard.

The military and medical aspects of this story all felt plausible and real. It was a rich addition without making you feel like you were reading a medical journal. It was how the "Lyssa" virus worked that really gave this story its 28 Days Later feel. And for the most part instead of the regular citizens, there was a different level of tension than what you find in many stories of this genre. Gone are the obligatory headshots and the sometimes awkward ways in which the protagonists must "discover" how to bring down the monsters. But rest assured, there will be astronomical body counts by the time you reach the last page.

As always, there are a few critiques to go with the praise. I wasn't fond of the tense in which DiLouie told the story. At times it jumbled the scene. And, of course, you will find a typo or two. However, *Tooth and Nail* is a clean read for a small press.

I very strongly recommend *Tooth and Nail* by Craig DiLouie. It is fast-paced and rich with characters that are brought to life in your mind as the story draws you deeper and deeper into the chaos. This story will pluck you from your comfy chair and have you pacing the room as you get to the last dozen pages where the climax becomes all too real.

Tor Gar says

Hace una semana que lo acabé y ya no recuerdo nada. Intrascendente pero se lee. No estorba. Historia de unos militares en NY cuando se expande un virus que convierte a las persona en zombies. No hay mucho que decir, es una novela de zombies pero un poco diferente.

Me recuerda a la última película de Godzilla (Shin Godzilla, la de la Toho) ya que se ofrece el punto de vista de los militares* donde cunde la desorganización y el no saber como afrontar algo así. En particular de las categorías inferiores militares, las que están a pie de calle y tienen que lidiar con todo.

*en la película era más completo. El punto de vista comprendía a todo el estamento gubernamental del país

Steven Konkoly says

Tooth and Nail is one of the most immersive experiences you can find as a fan of apocalyptic fiction. As a former military officer, I can attest to complexity and uncertainty of the difficult decisions faced by second lieutenant Todd Bowman and his men, as they faced an increasingly deadly and nebulous viral threat on the streets of Manhattan. The buildup of tension, confusion and violence was expertly drawn from start to finish. Each soldier's role in the story is examined and expanded through gritty action, well constructed conversation and personal narrative introspection.

Although DiLouie's story leans heavily on brutal action, which becomes a necessary way of life for the platoon, he takes the time to explore the bonds that strengthen this small community of warriors as they try to carry out their orders and makes sense of the madness that has descended on the world. This is one of the most realistic fictional representations of platoon interaction that I have read in this genre.

Beyond military realism is a well developed scientific scenario that gives you a break from the intense military action. I recently saw that the author re-released one of his previous works, called The Thin White Line, which is a research based, fictional account of an avian flu pandemic. I was not surprised to find out that he had started working on Tooth and Nail soon after publishing this work. The exhaustive research in The Thin White Line played out beautifully in Tooth and Nail, adding yet another layer of realism. This aspect is delivered in the form of a parallel, yet crucial side story about several virologists trapped nearby in a secure research facility.

I appreciated the dichotomy of these two worlds: [Brute strength, flexible/quick decision-making and firepower] Vs. [Scholarly intellect, detailed research and organized thought] AGAINST the same enemy. Watching the two merge in this story is a bonus.

DiLouie's story has been called Black Hawk Down meets 28 Days Later. I agree, but would add elements of Zulu Dawn and 300 Spartans to that list. What starts out as a relatively straight forward operation for 2LT Bowman's platoon turns into an epic battle for survival, with more than just his platoon's fate at stake.

Patrick D'Orazio says

Tooth and Nail is blistering fast military-focused thrill ride into the apocalypse. I scanned some of the other reviews and a comment that comes up with some frequency is that the nemesis here are not technically zombies. From a purist perspective, that is certainly true. The Hong Kong Lyssa Virus does not kill its victims...the ones that go "Mad Dog", as they are called, have symptoms similar to someone infected with rabies...along the lines what we saw with 28 Days Later and Rec, as far as movies are concerned. They are fast, they are lethal, and their desire is to spread the virus rather than devour the living, although they are not above tearing someone apart that gets in their way. The effect of this is that the author went to some pretty good lengths to detail out this virus and its effect, giving it a realistic edge where the science felt pretty solid.

That is not where the realism in this tale stops. The story focuses on Charlie Company, who are stationed in Manhattan, guarding one of the hospital where Lyssa patients are being attended to. As the story starts, the city is already on lock down. The U.S. troops have been recalled from all across the globe to deal with the growing threat in America and we are just getting a small taste of what these Mad Dogs are capable of. The Lyssa Virus itself is just like any other flu, or so it seems, but with a small percentage of those getting sick

turning into rabid killers. But that number is increasing as it is discovered that this isn't just an airborne virus and the Mad Dogs are growing as a part of the sick population at an exponential rate. At the same time we are seeing what Charlie Company is up against, we are also introduced to a research facility in Manhattan, where a Russian Doctor is discovering the truth about the virus and more specifically, the Mad Dogs, and trying desperately to come up with a vaccine or cure.

Craig DiLouie has created a very tightly knit story here with a great deal of depth of detail when it comes to military protocol and actions. Since I haven't served in the military, I can't attest to the specific accuracy of everything, but clearly, the author knows his stuff. There is no one single main character here, instead, the cast is more like an ensemble and the story reminded me, in parts, of the movie "Black Hawk Down", where it seems at every turn things are getting worse and worse and the local population is turning more savage by the minute as the military tries to complete their mission. Despite the lack of a main character, the author did a great job of providing the reader with some fully fleshed out characters that were easy to grow attached to for me. Their interactions felt real and natural given the circumstances, not awkward or forced. If I had a complaint about this story, it was with the tense change that occurred at a few points of the story. I can understand the merits of going present tense with a book that moves at the hectic pace of this one, but there are some parts of the book that are in past tense and others in present, which is a shift that isn't always easy to adapt to as a reader. Despite this minor quibble, the book is solidly written and the story well paced. I do hope to see a sequel to this book, but it certainly can stand on its own as a excellent entry into the infected/zombie apocalypse genre.

Kat says

As something of a closest 'Zombiephile', I randomly stumbled upon *Tooth and Nail* in my Amazon recommended list. With so few reviews, and a synopsis that hinted heavily at a military focus, it was with a slightly closed mind that I purchased this book.

And instantly I was pleasantly surprised.

Tooth and Nail starts with a disease that sweeps through the city with rapid pace, beginning as a virus with a high mortality rate, and morphing into a 'zombie' disease.

The pace is fast, and at first I found it slightly difficult to keep the characters straight in my mind - perhaps because as military, they seem to blend together more easily than say, a group of civilians.

It's also pretty light on the whole anatomy of a virus scenario - this is something that has resulted to me skimming in other novels of the same genre (I read these books for a guilty pleasure, not to increase my knowledge of virology!).

I read this in three days, squeezing in a quick chapter wherever possible, as it is very addictive!

I've not come across Craig DiLouie before, but am really looking forward to reading more!

William M. says

This is my first experience reading author Craig Dilouie and I was pretty impressed. Out of the dozens of

zombie novels I've read over the years, this was the first to really focus on the military aspect of the plague (other than Jonathan Maberry's PATIENT ZERO, but that concentrated more on an isolated covert operation and included only a sprinkling of zombie action) Usually the military is used in the periphery, but in TOOTH AND NAIL, Dilouie drags the reader not only into the middle of the action, but into the minds of the soldier. Like any group of people, you have the good and bad, the courageous and cowardly.

This book keeps you on your toes, because at any moment, a character you've been following for hundreds of pages could die quickly and horribly. It is a tense, medically plausible, and brutally told tale. My only criticisms are that, as a New Yorker, I didn't feel as if the author captured the locations or feel of the Big Apple as well as he could have, and I would have liked a bit more depth and insight into the characters. But I would still recommend this book to horror and zombie fans alike.

Joe Crook says

I feel like in order to truly enjoy this book you have to be in the army or some other armed service. People in that situation don't feel the same terror from a zombie plague situation as a normal person would and it showed I'm the writing. It lacked emotion, and focussed more on military strategy and combat. I felt like they could have been fighting any kind of enemy and the book would have read the exact same way, it just so happened they were fighting zombies.

Kaisersoze says

One of my favourite reads of last year came from author Craig DiLouie. I was so impressed with his *The Infection* that I rushed out to order this earlier novel from his word processor. At first glance, they seemed quite similar. Both deal with an apocalyptic end of the world scenario, featuring creatures that, more or less, are zombies. Both follow groups of characters trying to survive as said apocalypse unfolds. Both are written in the present tense and both involve small groups battling superior enemy numbers.

But there the similarities end.

Unlike the book that would ultimately follow it, **Tooth and Nail** is told almost exclusively from the POV of a number of members of the U.S. Army, so it lacks some of the more colourful characters present in *The Infection*. It's also very technical in detail, meaning those who enjoy reading about particular types of weapons, the calibre of bullets they use, and the damage they can inflict will be right at home here. Additionally, the threat itself is far more straight forward - a virus which turns people into "Mad Dogs" with the virus being passed on by any bite from an infected individual - and there are none of the fantastical monsters which DiLouie deployed to such creative effect in *The Infection*.

I guess what I'm, trying to say is: **Tooth and Nail** reads like a first try at an apocalyptic novel, complete with numerous issues, and it seems DiLouie then went away and re-wrote the book in a superior fashion, coming up with **The Infection** in the process. The most prominent support of this is how one dimensional most of the characters in **Tooth and Nail** are. Reading this at times felt like watching **Battle: Los Angeles**. Dispensable and interchangeable grunts battling a superior foe in an attempt to complete their mission and save the human race. I failed to care about any character in that movie (when I could tell them apart), and I

had much the same trouble here for everyone other than Bowman, Mooney and McLeod, until very late in the novel. As such, I was never as fully engaged nor entertained by what was taking place.

All of this is making it sound like **Tooth and Nail** is a poor book when it most certainly is not. It's a perfectly serviceable one. It just isn't great like **The Infection**.

2.5 to 3 LTs ordering FPF from SAW and RPGs for **Tooth and Nail**.

Booksofdoom says

Amazing macho zombie slaughter of the best kind.

A cold and distant reflection on the apocalypse from a military point of view.

Focus is on the individual soldier and its struggle both with survival, conscience and keeping a sane head during Armageddon.

laurel [suspected bibliophile] says

First, I'd like to pause and take a chuckle at the publishing company. Schmidt Haus. Very witty.

Second, I'd like to note that at this time I am preparing my bug-out-bag, complete with bushknife, ka-bar, 12 MREs, 12 shotguns, 15 millions rounds of ammo, three gallons of water, a first aid kit, sleeping bag, two turtle doves, kitchen sink, industrial strength hair dryer, and anything else I can't live without when the proverbial s&\$! hits the fan

This particular book (1) terrified the hell out of me and (2) made me very glad I am no longer active duty. Then again, this book is about an Army battalion. For the record, the Marine unit took over Staten Island and killed everything. Oorah.

When all military units are redeployed to the homeland to respond to a mass epidemic called HK Lyssa, Second Platoon is pulled out of Iraq and dropped into the heart of Manhattan to guard a hospital. The Lyssa virus is a lot like the flu, but a small percentage have the virus go to their brain, start frothing at the mouth, become enraged and attack everything in sight. They are called Mad Dogs. Fairly soon, these Mad Dogs start spreading, and it becomes pretty apparent that they spread their version of Lyssa through biting. Soon, all of New York starts teeming, and the Army begins to lose its hold on the city. The government collapses, and Second Platoon must fight to survive.

Unlike a lot of zombie books where it seems like no one on the planet knows what a zombie is, in this one they do, but it takes a while to connect the dots. I enjoyed that the author really thought about the implications of deploying active military forces onto American soil, and the thoughts and feelings of the soldiers who are suddenly faced with the dread possibly of shooting their own countrymen to survive. A lot of the soldiers cracked under the strain of murdering unarmed citizens, and others cracked because they weren't able to save the uninfected. And bonus: the military stuff seemed pretty legit. Army is different from

Marines (like officers calling enlisted by their first names—what?), but he got the feel of it dead-on.

It's not a terribly deep novel, but it definitely made me wonder about following orders, duty (to family, country or organization) and survival. Like any good zombie book, it got right into the psychological terror of survival at all costs.

Heather Faville says

Technically a 4.5, but worthy of a round up!

Craig DiLouie's ?Tooth & Nail ?is a zombie story filled with practically non-stop action and very realistic detail. It is obvious that DiLouie did his research before or while writing this novel. ?Tooth & Nail?? is very military focused and while I have a little bit of knowledge, I do not know a lot of the details of the military world. Therefore, I asked my husband as I was reading questions here and there about whether this would work, would they really do such and such and each time he affirmed that what I was reading was spot on. The military personal are very realistic and believable, there are no SUPERSOLDIERS who do extraordinary feats. They are simply men doing their job in a world that's gone to hell.

The other aspect we come across in reading ?Tooth & Nail ??is civilian scientists who know what caused the virus and are hoping to find a cure for it. Now there are many zombie novels out there and a lot of them do not bother to go into the reason behind the outbreak simply because it can be very difficult to pull off a believable cause for the infection. DiLouie's reason is not only believable...it is plausible, which is scary as hell.

Tooth & Nail ??shows us a very human side to the military during a situation in which NOBODY can really train. They have self doubt. They make good/bad decisions and all along the way their characters develop to where the reader feels a certain kinship to what they are going through.

A definite must read for all fans of the zombie genre and those who enjoy a realistic military aspect to the zombie genre.

Travis says

An extremely strong Post-Apocalyptic effort. It excels in communicating the experience of life in the US Army and it puts that Army is a hopeless situation. We get to live the experience along with the soldiers. You and they realize simultaneously that they are going to die. It's a neat trick, executed to perfection.

The story begins just before the point where the virus moves from merely a pandemic to an apocalypse. Most of society's infrastructure is intact- water, electricity, etc. However, society is collapsing before the eyes of the soldiers and the reader. For both the characters and the reader, it is a vertiginous experience- how deep is this abyss?

It turns out the abyss goes all the way down. Battalions are wiped out wholesale. Superhuman sergeants are cut down. AWOL soldiers get their faces chewed off.

The only hope that exists in this book is embodied by the scientist who may have an angle on a vaccine. That DiLouie offers this hope only serves to ennable the Army - this book is a love letter to our armed forces. The individual soldiers have ample opportunity to desert, quit the fight or frag their superiors but they don't. (References are made to other units who do) They put the mission above all and while the final scene has the sole hope choppering away in a Chinook, all the remaining good men of the Crazy Eights die in Columbus square. And there is no guarantee the Chinook is heading anywhere better.

The weaknesses of the book are modest. I got mildly confused at all the characters, units and ranks. DiLouie also used phrases from various chapters in bold to separate segments and I found that distracting and needless. Warning: This is the closest a reader will come to experiencing life in the US Army short of enlisting. If you don't appreciate such stories, put this book down immediately.

DiLouie is a serious thinker of these scenarios and this is excellent material for those of us who find these scenarios fascinating.

And I loved the final sentence in the book.
