



Haunt of Jackals

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When Jesus was resurrected, ancient scripture says many rose from the grave. Today, 36 from this group of undead remain. Known as the Nistarim, they are here to watch over the world.

When Judas hung himself, his blood mysteriously gave rise to another group of undead: the unholy Collectors. Now very much alive, they feed on souls and human blood.

Both groups of immortals still walk among us in an eternal struggle. Now both are after a single target--a boy named Pavel who may possess the key to the Collectors' unlimited power...or ultimate downfall.

Gina, a woman fleeing for her own life, is determined to protect the boy at all costs. She has survived one battle with the undead already, but has no idea how long she'll be able to stay a step ahead of them.

The Jerusalem's Undead Trilogy takes readers on a riveting journey, as imaginative fiction melds with biblical and archaeological history.

Haunt of Jackals Details

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Author : Eric Wilson

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From Reader Review Haunt of Jackals for online ebook

K says

I am not quite sure how I feel about this book. On the one hand, I give it major props for daring to go where few Christian books are willing to go. On the other hand, this book is so dark that it almost eclipses any redemption. It is the second book, and as second books are supposed to go, it leaves you off with a minor victory but the war still looming large ahead.

My most significant criticism of the book is the lack of world building. Two books into it and I still feel confused about the Nistriam, the undead, Those Who Resist, Those Who Hunt. Some of them are the same but for awhile I was under the impression that the Nistriam were the same as the Unfallen. But the Nistriam can only be men and in this book we meet a woman who is one of the Unfallen. And if the Nistriam are immortal, then how can they be killed? And who are these other Concealed Ones? A little bit more explanation is needed to complete this story and make it a true homerun because the plot line is novel and very entertaining.

The characters themselves are all pretty intriguing, and not a Christian among them, except perhaps Cal but he refers to himself as a Jew, apparently of the Messianic variety. So while a lot of Christian themes are discussed in terms of how the undead came to be and the ultimate battle between good and evil as predicted by Revelations, there is very little Bible thumping because no one has the knowledge to do it.

It is exceptionally dark, think Stephen King or Anne Rice. The vampires in this novel are depraved, not sparkly. Some of the scenes related in this book make me shutter and I love vampire novels. But the reality of our world is that there are dark and depraved people and even the best of us have darkness within us. Most Christian novels want to shy away from the dark side of life, this novel takes it on. If you are a sheltered Christian, you will be offended. If you are like me, trying to understand your own darkness, the tangled thorns around your own heart, then you will find redeeming messages within this book, because ultimately that is what Revelations is about.

Fred Warren says

Haunt of Jackals is the second book in Eric Wilson's Jerusalem's Undead trilogy about immortal vampires and the immortals who oppose them. The series speculates about what might have happened to those folks who were resurrected after the Crucifixion (Matthew 27:50-53).

I haven't read the first volume of this series, so I'm coming in once again at a handicap which may have affected my perception. Book 2 of a trilogy is always problematical—its a transitional story that is very rarely able to stand alone because it relies on the backstory established in Book 1 but can't reach the (hopefully) satisfying resolution to come in Book 3.

Wilson weaves a complex backdrop for this series from a variety of Biblical references (not all of which are connected in context), Talmudic lore, and even current events (the excellent interview he gave to C.E. Moore discloses that the seminal event of the series, the unearthing of the ancient burial ground beneath the Field of Blood, is based on an actual excavation, down to the names on the sarcophagi).

It's a creepy, cool concept, but I think it suffers from the weight of its complexity, and right out of the gate, it undermined my willing suspension of disbelief—that unspoken contract between author and reader in which I agree not to fuss about holes in the story's credulity if the author shows me a good time and doesn't presume on our relationship by offering something so far outside the box that I can't ignore it and still call myself a rational human being.

Judas was one of the Twelve, the inner circle of Jesus' disciples, until he betrayed Jesus to the Sanhedrin for thirty pieces of silver and subsequently hanged himself in a place known colloquially as The Field of Blood. A central plot point of *Haunt of Jackals*, and the other books in this series, is that Judas' blood has a malign power sufficient to raise the dead buried a couple of layers down in the Field of Blood and render them immortal, to be animated and motivated by evil spirits—"Collectors." These undead feed on human blood, passing a nasty parasitic disease in the process that consumes both body and soul. Collectors can possess both human and animal hosts, frequently jumping among hosts when tactically advantageous. No sparkly vampires here. These things are utterly, irredeemably evil, and I like the fact that Wilson doesn't sugarcoat evil as something that isn't so bad if we could only understand it better.

However, and it's a big however...

Judas' blood acting as the catalyst for reanimating corpses and creating a species of immortal vampires didn't ring true to me from the outset. The implication in *Haunt of Jackals* is that Judas was a literal anti-Christ, with a resurrecting power latent in his corpse on a par with Jesus. If you try to brush it off by saying, "Well, it's really Satan's power at work here," you're still left with an image of equivalence in power between Satan and God, if not in quality of outcome. One creates good immortals, the other creates evil immortals. As a Christian, I couldn't buy it. It was a show-stopper, even for a work of fiction.

Now, enter the Good Guys. When Jesus announced, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, the Bible records several notable events that happened at the same time: a massive earthquake, the tearing of the Temple veil in two, and the opening of a number of graves, with resurrection of the occupants. Wilson posits a secret meeting between the resurrected Jesus and these individuals, the Nistarim, in which he grants them physical immortality and assigns them a special mission. The fate of these people is not revealed in the Bible, making it one monster of a Christian fiction opportunity, and I admire Wilson for diving into it.

However, and it's a big however...

I thought the way Jesus' blood was used to sustain the Nistarim's immortality was confusing. It created a sort of parallel Holy Communion that I think would be offensive to most Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox Christians who stopped to think about it a bit.

If you're a Protestant who sees Communion as primarily symbolic, you have a situation where the "real thing" is offered only to a select few, the Nistarim and their successors. It makes a symbolic Communion ring hollow, like a cheap consolation prize. If you're Catholic or Orthodox, you're asked to accept an image that either denies the Real Presence in the elements of Communion as offered in the traditional fashion, or posits a two-tiered system where the efficacy of the immortals' form is clearly superior to that partaken by the common man. The Nistarim literally get "the Medicine of Immortality." Some of the other uses of Jesus' blood, such as saturating a cloth with it and jamming it into a vampire's gullet (an action which, interestingly, didn't kill the vampire, even though we were told repeatedly that ingestion was fatal), furthered the impression of the blood as a magical tool rather than something inherently sacred. The handling seemed a little too cavalier to me.

Using a vampire story to illustrate spiritual warfare and the ongoing battle over our bodies and souls is an interesting idea, but sometimes the truth and folklore are mingled in this story, to the detriment of both.

Overall, this is a well-written book that is very suspenseful, populated with interesting characters, and contains a lot of nice, affectionate travelogue of Romania, Israel, and Oregon. Mr. Wilson is a bestselling author with lots of fans in and out of the industry, and you don't get to that stage without solid writing chops. *Haunt of Jackals* is a pulse-elevating adventure story, and can be thoroughly enjoyed on that level. It's a creative, intelligent, original take on the vampire trope, and, if my experience is any indication, it will provide readers with lots of opportunity for thought and discussion, maybe over a pleasant meal at a nice restaurant.

Just don't drink the wine. Any wine. I'm telling you, don't do it. It's a really bad idea. If you don't believe me, read the book.

Paula Vaughn says

I love this trilogy, so excited for the last book. Great combination of vampirism and biblical history

Ka says

Eric Wilson's *Haunt of Jackals* is the second offering in his Jerusalem's Undead Trilogy and it does not disappoint. More exciting than *Field of Bones*, which is the initial story, *Jackals* takes up the thread and adds to the tapestry with a new character or two. He also gives a new richness and depth to some of the characters he's already introduced.

In this story that speeds along like a cross-country train, Wilson opens the sections with quotes from Stephen King's *Salem's Lot* and follows with Scriptures from Jude. Both are relevant to the story line as he shows how the "Collectors" let people's choices create "thorns" in their flesh that are used against them. Alternately, the "Nistarim" are commissioned to help bear those wrongs and the pain that occurs in the world.

This book is one I could hardly put down. In fact, this book kept me reading until 2 a.m. when my eyes just couldn't take it anymore! In my last review, I said Gina wasn't all that likable, but she has now redeemed herself and I cannot wait to see what happens next. Bring it on Eric Wilson.

Jill Williamson says

When we last left Gina, Cal, and Dov, they were fighting the undead collectors in Romania. Having banished several of the Akeldama Cluster, Gina meets up with Cal to see what's next. He suggests that she relocate to the Pacific Northwest and raise one of the Romanian orphans—one who Cal thinks might grow to be one of Those Who Resist—as her son.

Gina changes her name to Kate, and she and Kenny live the American dream in Small Town, USA. But on the other side of the planet, Natira, the true heir to the Akeldama Cluster is seeking out Those Who Resist. He's found many of them already, but is waiting until he knows where they all are before he strikes. But

what will happen if Natira meets up with the Akeldama Cluster again? He will learn about Gina's existence and want to take her out. And what will happen to Kenny? Gina must face her fears and trust the Nazarene if she is going to survive. But will she?

Eric Wilson is a master storyteller. Every page is an adventure waiting to unfold. His creativity amazes, and his writing gives the reader chills as the Fallen and the Unfallen battle for the souls of earth. Haunt of Jackals increases the tension created in Field of Blood and leaving us thirsty for more. I highly recommend this for older teens who love creepy stories.

Alex says

Firstly, I have to stress that this book is purely fiction and I know that many have found it quite controversial. Saying that, I also have to say that I really quite enjoyed it! I haven't read the first book in the Jerusalem's Undead Trilogy but I found that as I started reading, the story was quite easy to pick up and characters that had been introduced in the first book, Field of Blood, were reintroduced in this one. The character development and fantastic historical & archeological settings made this book a pleasure to read and as I'm a fan of all things vampire & warewolvish, an A+ in my books. I'll be waiting until the next one comes out!

Everley Sharp, the Clankinist says

An electric, thrilling read, this book held me captive from start to finish. What I particularly loved about it was the sense that this all had a basis in fact, as religion always will.

Amydeanne says

Haunt of Jackals by Eric Wilson is a suspense/thriller book. It sheds light on the darkness of sin and how it can envelop us and eat us up if we don't step into the light.

At first when I read this, I thought very "Vatican-ish"; the whole Dan Brown Angels and Demon's things was very forefront in my mind. It took me a while to get into it— probably three or four chapters before I started wanting to read it. But as I got into it, I enjoyed it more and more. The characters were brought to life (and I do think reading the first part of the trilogy would be useful) and I couldn't help but wonder what was happening to them next.

I loved the different views on the story; having the option of seeing it from 3/4 sides was really interesting. I also found the obscure letters woven in the book that come together at the end extremely clever. I love the way the book weaves through history and brings things into life. It is an epic fight of good versus evil and the cost of sin in our lives.

Wilson is a great storyteller who weaves a chaotic tale that will send shivers down your spine. Amongst the fiction, I found truths the book that made me oooo and ah-ha through it. And the more I read, the better I

liked the book. The end of the book made me gasp and cry! I will definitely be getting the next book!

The only thing I worry about books like this, is people taking it too seriously. Sort of like the Left Behind series, or even Angels and Demons. It's easy to get a following for this type of fiction and some of the crazies coming out of the closet over vampires and such (or sporting Harry Potter attire, or trekkie gear.. or screaming "The end is nearrrrrrrr! We're all going to die!!" lol you know what I mean?) It is fiction and we need to remember that! I think it's good Christian Adult reading and competitive for the secular market.

Droid says

This book was much more difficult to get into for me. I felt that the story was pieced together and it was difficult to follow and it lacked a "flow"/direction. While the first book took me a week to read, this one took me much longer to get through. I also noticed that the storyline, or lack thereof, bored me frequently, and I thus lost my place a lot while reading. I'm hoping the third book is much better since I really liked the first one.

Steve Cran says

THis book is the second in the Trilogy called the Jerusalem Undead. The book continues in the Romanian forest with Gina Lazaresque fighting off the collectors. At the end of the last book she defeated Lord Aristin the cluster leader from the Akeldama in Jerusalem, a coven of vampires dedicaded to wiping out the 36 righteous ones. After Gina kills Lord Ariston she flees from the cave with Shalom in hot pursuit. Gina is badly wounded. She finally confronts Shalom who takes on the body of a pig Gina kills her by giving her a taste of the Nazarene blood. She dies.

Meanwhile Cal and Dov are in flight from Erota who pursues them through the forest. She takses on the form of a Raven and attacks them many a times. Along the way they have an adventure at a farmers house where they work for some food. Later on they capture Erota in a cave and with warm milk persuade her to talk and give out details but they are yunable to destroy her. She flees and speaks witrh the other part of the divided coven ion the Negev at their hide away called the Huaunt of the Jackals where Judas IScariot was born. THere is a confrontation and Erota barely gets out alive. She then heads back to Romania.

Gina and Cal reunite in Hungary with Teo her childhod friend in tow. Teo has always had a crush on Gina but could never get that love off the ground. He is jealous of Cal who meets her there also. Littel does Teo realize the Cal is her father a former Mistar himself until he fathered Gina. From Cal Gina gets a new identity and adopts Kenny a Romanian child destined to be one of the 36 Nistarim. They later move to Junction City ,Oregon.

In Junction City they lay low and lead a quiet life. While in a museum her father tells how he was the famous DB Cooper and how her brother supposedly died at the hands of Natira a former Jewish warrior vampire who was killed by the Romans. Mean while Natira is up and around killing of the Nistarim left and right.

Erota in the meantime is travelling to Romania promoting her wine business and making contacts in the

Russian dissidents in order to install the Romanovs missing heir to power. Her brother Shelomzion is transforming into a were wolf after killing so many people and hanging with wolves.

Erota and the Romanian part of the coven unite with Natira to settle matters with the Israeli branch of the coven. Basically a power struggle. Shelomzion goes to kill Gina and Kenny but is defeated. At the end Gina fakes her death and I will let you read it from there.

Armendia says

I just got a peek at some of my Christmas presents. (It's only me and my oldest brother home and he's not paying very good attention.) I got a good look at book one and two in this series, and I pretty positive my name was on the box... ;-}

Adrielle says

Here we have number two! The plot thickens and chaos ensues. Wilson's writing can be quite lyrical at times that I was hypnotised and next thing I knew, I'd read well over 100 pages. I became so attached to characters that I was cheering during little battles.

Sam Lonberg says

Quite good. Glad I continued the series. I like the short chapters and switching between characters. It is getting more interesting as Nickel ties more of the backstory together.

Gabrielle B says

Can't wait to start reading it! The first book was awesome!

Kyle Dickerson says

Eric is an honest and forthcoming person, both in his writing and his life. This characteristic gives his storytelling a power that many lack, and enables him to create dynamic characters which are shown in their fullness, whether that be beautiful or tragically ugly. Haunt of Jackals was full of suspense from the beginning, and never let up. As we bounce through the world, new layers are unfolded at each turn, keeping the reader engaged and the pages turning. A gifted writer, Eric has crafted a haunting world surrounded in questions of 'what if'. I'm looking forward to his newest release, One Step Away.
