



Cruel

Jacob Stone

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“17.” L.A. detective Morris Brick knows the number all too well. It was the gruesome signature the Nightmare Man left next to his victims’ bodies. Brick’s father was the first to investigate the killings. Five women were butchered before the perpetrator vanished. Seventeen years later he resurfaced—to kill again in the same depraved ways. Now another seventeen years have passed. Brick knows in his gut that it’s time for the Nightmare Man to reawaken. But even Brick can’t imagine the madman’s true agenda. Or just how terrifying the sleepless nights are going to get in the City of Angels . . .

Praise for CRUEL

“Jacob Stone is equal parts Thomas Harris, Michael Connelly, Jo Nesbo, and Stephen King. CRUEL will leave you shaking . . . with fear, excitement, and the uncontrollable compulsion to keep on reading.” —Lee Goldberg, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *True Fiction*

Praise for DERANGED

“A dark and different serial killer novel that will haunt the reader long after the book is closed.”
—John Lutz

“Los Angeles has seldom seen such grisly fun. It’s James Ellroy meets Alfred Hitchcock on the psychotic side of the street.”
—Paul Levine

“One of the most compelling, thrilling, and truth be told, at times look-away-from-page-frightening serial killer novels I’ve read in a long, long time.”
—Vincent Zandri

“A fascinating and exciting blend of misdirection, topsy-turvy, and violence.”
—Reed Farrel Coleman

Cruel Details

Date : Published September 18th 2018 by Lyrical Underground

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Author : Jacob Stone

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Genre : Thriller, Suspense, Mystery

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From Reader Review Cruel for online ebook

Steven Zacharius says

Another great brutal serial killer book from Jacob Stone with a fabulous twist at the end that I didn't see coming.

Cheryl says

This book is part of a series of books that feature Morris Brick. Yet, it reads as a stand alone novel. I did like Brick. He showed intelligence and could lead a team. From what I read, I did like this book and do want to get to know Brick better.

In regards, to the killings, they were gruesome. Yet, not a lot of time was spent in great details. Therefore, anyone who is a bit skirish about gore could handle reading this book. Ok, so I admit that I didn't see the plot twist. This is a good thing as I enjoy a book that can surprise me; especially mystery books.

The only reason that I didn't give this book five stars is because most of the other characters while fine were not as up t par as Brick's character. Thus at times I felt the story dragged in parts. Overall, I did like this book and would read more books from this author.

Lou says

'Cruel' is the fourth novel to feature Los Angeles Detective Morris Brick, and I thoroughly enjoyed it for the most part. As always, it's preferable to have read the preceding three books before delving into this one as there is background information, particularly surrounding main character Brick, that you cannot know without reading the series from the beginning. That said, if you're not too bothered by that, it does work fine as a standalone.

After reading the compelling premise, I knew this was my type of read. If the description doesn't leave you wanting more, I don't know what will! The Nightmare Man is a creepy and amazing character. The use of numbers to make the plot more exciting certainly thrilled me too. This is not a book for the faint-hearted as the murders that take place are gory and gruesome - just what I enjoy! Stone is an excellent writer, and the story is so, so riveting that I got through it incredibly quickly. Brick's character is developed sufficiently, although I would've liked some more information about him if i'm honest. The other characters are peripheral, and it is not easy to remember each of their names as they play such a minor part in the plot. This is definitely a story driven novel, rather than character driven.

I am not entirely sure whether this is the end of the series, although, if it is, it sure didn't feel like it as the conclusion left a little to be desired. However, I would read another book should there be one.

Many thanks to Lyrical Underground for an ARC. I was not required to post a review, and all thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

Sherry Fundin says

I love a prologue that hooks me. Like the title, this one only hinted at the ugliness to come.

The Nightmare Man makes a grisly appearance.

Lori was at the shelter, looking for a big dog. A voice kept whispering in her head, warning her that evil was coming for her. She feels it and she is terrified. I didn't see what was coming. I love when I am fooled early on. Just goes to show, it doesn't matter how many books I read, I don't know it all.

Morris had quit the LAPD when a serial killer almost claimed him as a victim. He formed an investigative agency and took some of his fellow officers with him...along with a handful of cold case files that he couldn't let go. Morris has an instinct and a knack for catching serial killers. He is often hired by the city to lead the investigation, and they come to him now.

Morris's wife, Natalie, is a trained therapist, so it's hard to keep anything from her.

I love Parker, his dog. He is a bull terrier, not the most handsome guy around. You know, one of those so ugly he's cute guys. Morris takes him everywhere he goes. He is a bit rude, a little overweight, but loyal.

My first meeting with Nightmare Man caused chills to run up and down my spine. I am given just a glimpse of the gruesome and deadly evil that has descended on the town.

October 2 is rapidly approaching. It had been seventeen years since the last killings that took place over seventeen days. There are more grisly ways the Nightmare Man uses seventeen, but I can't tell you everything, because even I don't know what they all are...yet.

Morris' investigation leads him to the mob and the mystery becomes even more dangerous and complicated. Morris has no choice, a deal is struck.

Oh man...I am bummed. I'm at 30% and I sure didn't see that coming. Now I know the worst. It is sickening, brutal, savage. What a frickin' awful surprise! Jacob Stone doesn't mind killing off his characters and I had grown fond of that one. Oooo, it gets even more depressing. But, it's about a serial killer. It's supposed to be terrible.

It's getting awfully intense and action packed. I keep waiting for the next horrible thing to happen. I am only halfway through and I can only imagine the horrors I'm going to endure to get to the villain. And that is too kind of a word for the evil and insidious menace hanging on every word, every page, every chapter.

The second half of the book flashes back to the previous appearances of the Nightmare Man, back to 1984. 2001. I had wondered how the search could go on that long, but we go back and find out why they never caught him the first time around. Or the second. They will catch him now...but questions still remain.

I voluntarily reviewed a free copy of Cruel by Jacob Stone.

See more at [fundinmental](#)

Trina says

I received this arc from Netgalley.

This was just an okay read. I enjoyed it for the most part. There were places that were a little too detailed. It wrapped up nicely at the end.

Cathy Geha says

Cruel by Jacob Stone
Morris Brick Thriller #4

Serial killer mysteries are not everyone's cup of tea but for some reason I do enjoy such stories once in a while. I also like to read a wide variety of authors and genres and at this time I was ready for a new-to-me author and a murder mystery with an edge – this book happens to be the one that came my way.

Not having read the first three books in the series makes me wonder if those who have are more in tune with Morris, his family and the people he works with. I found him an interesting character though rather laid back and less communicative than I might have liked...wanted to know him better than I did by the end of the book. That said, I learned that he loves his wife and daughter and dog, Parker. He has good men that he works with that are also good friends that joined him when he left the police force. He is invested in solving cases and it seems he is called in to consult with the police from time to time though most of his work sounded to be mundane private investigator type work. That said...he seems to be one who has managed to catch more than one serial killer that has come into his neighborhood.

In this book there is a rather demented person on the loose - a person that kills every seventeen years and does so in a depraved and painful way...painful for the person who dies anyway. The first group of murders occurred in 1984 when Morris was young and his father was assigned the case. The second set of murders occurred in 2001 and Morris was a young man on the police homicide team looking for the killer. As this story begins it is nearing the time for a third round of murders to occur and Morris is concerned – and rightly so.

The mystery is ongoing...

- * Who is the murderer?
- * Why are the murders occurring as they do?
- * Is there symbolism or reason behind the murders?
- * Is there only one person killing people?
- * Why every seventeen years?
- * Will they catch the murderer in 1918 or not?

So, Morris steps in and leads a team of his investigators and some of the police force in hopes of finding the killer before he finishes killing the five women slated to die. As murders begin clues also start to trickle in. When all is said and done...it is a story that is different than most I have read before in this genre. There was torture and enough written about it to know how horrible the experience was for the person who dies without actually having to live through each moment with her. There were not really any suspects to speak of at first though there were hunches from time to time. There was eventually a connection made that provided a tip that that lead to the first concrete steps in figuring out the puzzle of the Nightmare Man but it wasn't until nearly the end that all the pieces were put together.

I have mixed feelings on this one. I never really identified with Morris and am not sure why. And, I wonder again if I had read from book one if that might be different. I liked the women that were murdered and wished they had not died and perhaps that is a sign of a good writer and writing style to so invest the reader in the murdered. I also worried about a dog that went missing and hoped it ended up okay. In the end I did enjoy the book enough to read another one but it did not grab me, make me love Morris and end the book eagerly waiting for the next book to come out. Perhaps that is in part due to the gruesome nature of the murders and my hope that nobody else like the Nightmare Man will show up again.

An aside – with so many serial murderers around in books and on television shows I wondered how many there are actually are out there AND I learned that a person who kills two (I thought it was three or more) is considered a serial murderer so there are no doubt more serial killers around than I thought AND interestingly enough there is a good possibility that there are more on the loose than there are that have been captured...creepy to think about isn't it?

Thank you to NetGalley and Kensington Books-Lyrical Underground for the ARC – This is my honest review.

3-4 Stars

Caidyn (SEMI-HIATUS; BW Reviews; he/him/his) says

This review can also be found here!

Thanks to Netgalley, Kensington Books, and Lyrical Underground for providing an ARC for an honest review! Publishing September 18th.

TW: graphic torture, murder, and serial murder

Kensington Books is a great place to look for upcoming or recently released thrillers. I've requested from them for ages, so I get emails with freebies quite often. This is one freebie I got. I didn't mean to accept it, honestly. I clicked the title to find out more about it and, well, I got it.

I had no idea this was the fourth book in a series. But, I reasoned with myself that, well, if I like it, I can go back and read the rest! Easy.

I don't think I'll be reading the rest or cluing in for more.

What it came down to was that it felt like a run-of-the-mill thriller that used torture scenes as a shock and awe tactic to make up for bland, uninteresting characters. Now, I did like Morris Brick, but he felt like any other hard-boiled detective from any other story. There was nothing to set him apart. And I couldn't even tell you the names of his associates or anything.

It was nice that I could just jump into the series because it felt like none of the previous books impacted this

one. There wasn't any time I felt like I was missing something, so I just moved on ahead and went with the story.

At the same time, that's not great because that means there wasn't much character development or dynamic shift in any of the books.

As for the story, I wasn't wowed by it. Sure, I found it interesting enough to read the whole book, but I also kept wondering when something was going to happen. It took about 40% to get the plot rolling, but it was a quick read so it went by rather fast. (I could read 20-40% in an hour.) It took ages to get to the point, then when it did I was meh about it.

I saw where it was going, basically, I found it boring. I didn't find it some great plot twist or anything else. It was just a meh ending for a meh book. Which is sad because it's well-written and I did like the characters even if they were very interchangeable and flat.

So, there's that. I wanted to like it but didn't think it was as good as it could have been.
