



Order of the Blood

Page Zaplendam

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When a vampire's abilities and defects never fully develop, taking on the head of England's biggest vampire sect could be a bad idea. Ever since he was turned, John Grissom, bacteriologist, has worked to find a cure for the disease. A powerful peer of the realm approaches him about research into the immunological properties of vampire blood, but Grissom discovers a far more gruesome scheme at play. He, his newly acquired assistant Henrietta, and the Prussian Van Helsing, a veteran vampire hunter in the employ of the Foreign Service, must seek out the elusive vampire lord before he succeeds in dramatically influencing the outcome of the war.

Order of the Blood Details

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From Reader Review Order of the Blood for online ebook

William Bitner Jr. says

A Fantastic Gothic Vampire Novel

Just finished reading "Order of the Blood: The Unofficial Chronicles of John Grissom", by Page Zaplandam. A fantastic Gothic Vampire Fantasy read. Set in 1809 London, the Georgian/Regency era (I'm a sucker for a great period pieces). John Grissom, vampire/bacteriologist maybe, but every bit the gentlemen. Miss Henrietta Isherwood, a woman before her time...and Gerhardt Van Helsing, a Prussian vampire hunter all on a quest to stop the evil vampire Lord Waite and his minions from their dastardly deeds, and find a cure for the vampire disease. This read like an episode of "Penny Dreadful", and I for one cannot wait for the continued story to follow in what I am to understand is titled "The Unofficial Chronicles Book Two: The Hellhound of Derbyshire" I am so glad to have won a copy of this book on Goodreads.com.

Synopsis from back cover: "When a vampire's abilities and defects never fully develop, taking on the head England's biggest vampire sect could be a bad idea.

Ever since he was turned, John Grissom, bacteriologist, has worked to find a cure for the disease. A powerful peer or the realm approaches him about research into the immunological properties of vampire blood, but Grissom discovers a far more gruesome scheme at play. He, his newly acquired assistant Henrietta, and the Prussian Van Helsing, a veteran vampire hunter in the employ of the Foreign Service, must seek out the elusive vampire lord before he sets in motion the domino effect leading to Napoleon's successful arrival on British Shores."

Cassia says

An unusual Regency vampire, John Grissom: bacteriologist, researcher and gentleman, he tries to study his own "disease" in order to find a cure. Not a man of action, he is involved in a Foreign Office's mission to fight an evil specimen of vampire and turns into a detective and spy.

Never had a taste for seductive, omnipotent vampires, so I liked John Grissom, very normal, very tormented vampire. I hope other installments in this series will be available soon, because there is so much more to discover about the Order of the evil vampires and the progresses in the study of John Grissom.

Leslie Sholly says

I have always enjoyed historical romances and fantasy. This book has both. Still, I was a little skeptical when I began to read. After all, there have been a lot of vampire novels written recently. What more could there be to say?

But John Grissom is not your typical vampire: debonair, bloodthirsty, seductive, and headed straight for hell. Nor is he a modern vampire: gorgeous, angsty, tortured, all-powerful. Instead he is a Catholic gentleman of the past (England, 1809), a scientist living with what he believes to be a disease, subsisting on the blood of animals and feverishly researching to find a cure. Moreover, he still needs his glasses, is not super-strong or super-fast, and has no problem with daylight.

And he isn't the only unwilling vampire attempting to live a virtuous life--indeed, the opening scene of the novel takes place at a support group meeting for the Afflicted, which will look very familiar to anyone who knows the format of an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting! It is there that he first spots Dr. Isherwood and his daughter, Henrietta, who will become his assistant and ally and possibly more than that in the future--I've been promised there are sequels on the way!

Besides introducing us to the main characters, including an ancestor of the famous Van Helsing, the novel is full of political intrigue and plotting that Grissom, an unlikely action hero, must attempt to thwart. Zaplendam knows how to paint a picture of the era--the characters are clearly of their time (while still being relatable) and I loved all the little details such as the use of appropriate slang terms. You can tell the author did her homework--she didn't just plopp modern characters into an old-fashioned setting. I also appreciate that Grissom is a moral vampire whose Catholic faith and the state of his soul are important to him

This is a short novel, but every word counts. A lot happens in this book and I am impressed by Zaplendam's ability to world-build and create distinct--and likeable--characters with such economy. I was sorry to see the story end and I can't wait for sequels.

Siobhán says

As someone who has never read anything in this genre before, I was sceptical at first and did not expect to enjoy it that much. After the first two chapters or so, I was totally hooked and could not wait to find out what happens next. I have not been so enthusiastic about a book in years. The characters are very believable. I found Miss Isherwood, as a young woman, very relatable and I very much enjoyed how she deals with her circumstances. She is someone I would love to have as a friend. The imagery is brilliant and perfect. There were certain fantastic scenes which I could read and read again! I hate when a book has a lame ending but this has nothing of the sort. It did not read in any way rushed and ended the book perfectly. I would love if there was a sequel!

P.S. The cover art is fantastic and very eye-catching!

Kimberly Marie says

A change of pace

I received a copy of Order of the Blood: The Unofficial Chronicles of John Grissom in turn for an honest review. While reading the description of the Author's writing tendencies I will admit I was hesitant, but thought I should branch out. Upon completion of this book I can honestly say I am very glad I did.

The book follows the adventures of a defected vampire in the year 1809. However, unlike most vampire novels this is not a suave devil may care character, but a God fearing, intelligent bacteriologist, who more than anything wants to find the cure to vampirism. The antagonist on the other hand is a man who is part of a group of believe becoming a vampire means you are gifted and they are by all means superior. With the help of a vampire hunter Gerhardt and his strong willed assistant Ms. Isherwood John is able to spoil the attempts of Mr. Waite who wishes to use vials of an unknown disease against the English army.

Page Zapledam succeeded in writing a truly enticing novel. I enjoyed reading a book full of sarcastic wit, charm, and action. Most admirably for myself was all this was presented without sex. While that is some people's cup of tea I enjoy nothing more than a book that can grip your attention without a couple smut scenes thrown in. The story flows smoothly with character's that I really felt comfortable and able to relate too. I loved that Ms. Isherwood was a strong accomplished woman especially for her time period. I laughed a number of times at the witty banter that formed so easily between herself and John.

I look forward to continue reading this series. The author has done a truly great job of combining the historical and the paranormal. I highly recommend giving this book a read.

Laura Pearl says

My online friend Page Zapledam recently gifted me a copy of her novel, "Order of the Blood, the Unofficial Chronicles of John Grissom," in exchange for an honest review. It was with a heavy dose of skepticism that I started this Regency vampire novel, the first in a planned series for the author.

Yes, you read that correctly: set in 1809, it's a Regency novel that seems as if it could have been penned by the likes of the estimable Jane Austen during her early 19th-century heyday; but its title character is not a Mr. Darcy-esque gentleman, he is a Mr. Darcy-esque vampire. (And not only that, he's a devout practicing Catholic vampire—a new twist on the genre if I've ever heard of one.)

I wasn't skeptical about this book because I doubt Zapledam's writing talents, even a little bit; on the contrary, I have long admired her literary acumen, which I first discovered through her blogs "Regency Catholic" and "The Apostolate of the Pen." I knew she was a skilled wordsmith and a grand storyteller. My problem was with the subject matter, because I cannot stress enough how much I am not a fan of the whole vampire craze that seems to have been enthusiastically embraced by our culture.

Some years back, my sister-in-law suggested that I might enjoy the "Twilight" series. She insisted that the vampire character (Edward? Jacob? I can never remember which one!) shows his deep sense of morality by not having relations with the girl he loves before they're married (okay, I'll give him points for chastity), and he also shows the sigh-worthy depth of his love for her by resisting the temptation to drink her blood (what a guy!). In spite of the recommendation, I was not even tempted to read the "Twilight" series; and I wasn't entirely sure I'd even finish "Order of the Blood." But I thought if anyone could help me get over my stubbornly held aversion to vampire stories, it might be Zapledam. And that is just what happened.

It would be hard to forget John Grissom. In him, Zapledam has created a courtly, clean-living, God-fearing vampire character who has been "turned," but not completely. For whatever reason, when he himself was attacked by a vampire, he did not acquire all the superhuman strengths that normally go along with the resulting condition. He suffers from poor eyesight. His skin can handle strong sunlight, which burns the skin of "normal" vampires. He does rely on blood—and nothing else—for sustenance now, but he has thus far been able to fight the temptation to drink the blood of humans. He considers vampirism a disease; luckily, he is a bacteriologist by profession, and he spends countless hours toiling feverishly in his lab, trying to find a cure.

There are passages in this well-written and well-researched period drama that were hard for me to get

through: the descriptions of John Grissom ingesting cow's blood by the bucket and feeling it infuse every cell in his body with energy, for instance, or any scenes that include the uber-scary vampire, Lord Waite, who is the personification of evil. It's all a bit dark and creepy...but what book about vampires wouldn't be? Thankfully, there are patches of bright light in the darkness: there is a lot of playful Austen-style banter between John and his spunky new lab assistant, Henrietta Isherwood, whose father is also a "good" vampire hoping for a cure from the "affliction"; there are also many witty exchanges between John and Gerhardt Van Helsing, a renowned vampire hunter with whom he teams up to thwart Waite's dastardly plans to turn the tides of the war in which England is embroiled.

This book is not just about the vampire condition and how a good man like John fights against the temptation to adopt its sinful practices; it's really about the human condition, and how we are all inherently weak and prone to temptation and sin. In a nutshell, Zapledam's novel is about the war between the forces of good and evil in the world. The fact that there are vampires on either side of the battle in this book is just...well, it's a bit strange, but not nearly as disturbing as I thought it would be.

In fact, I was actually sorry to reach the end of "Order of the Blood," because it left me wanting more. (Why won't John tell Henrietta about the attack that left him afflicted? I must know the details now! And will John find a cure, and ride off into the sunset with his beloved?) When the sequel comes out, I'm going to have to read it to see what is in store for this intriguing character Zapledam has created.

I'm giving this book four out of five stars, but only because I would have enjoyed it more if John Grissom was just a charming, run-of-the-mill, human Regency gentleman, a hero without fangs. But that's just me.

Nancy Hammons says

Not the normal vampire

This was a pretty good story, not too bloody or creepy. I'll probably read it again and maybe the next one.
