



## Legion

*William Peter Blatty*

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One by one the bizarre murders frustrate and torment Lt. Kinderman , the homicide detective from *The Exorcist*. A boy, crucified; a priest, decapitated; another priest slain; a nurse, slaughtered — all bear the Zodiac mark of the Gemini Killer.

BUT ... the Gemini Killer has been dead for 12 years — Lt. Kinderman stalks the brutal and elusive killer down the dark streets. Until ,finally, in desperation he dares to cross the boundary that separates the living from the dead.

## Legion Details

Date : Published 1983 by Simon & Schuster

ISBN : 9780671470456

Author : William Peter Blatty

Format : Hardcover 269 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Mystery, Thriller, Fantasy, Paranormal

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## From Reader Review Legion for online ebook

### Charlie Collins says

I had high hopes because I liked The Exorcist so much but this one wasn't the same quality.

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### Levi Walls says

4 to 4.5 stars. I love Blatty's prose and his existential ponderings through the beloved Detective Lieutenant Kinderman. A sarcastic, yet deeply compassionate character that you can't help but love through all of his blustering, or schmaltz as he likes to call it. A fun, yet beautiful character who refers to one man that had passed on as "a poem," and another lady who went insane over lost love as, "A giant, in a world where love doesn't last, she was a giant." He says all this while constantly ruffling the feathers of his coworkers, at one point telling his Sergeant partner, "Please be silent when you're talking to me!" ?

Overall, very well written. Although the supernatural aspect was a little overdone in this book, I still like it better than The Exorcist.

The book begins and ends with a mention of 'Hurrah for Karamazov!' Which Kinderman explains at the end. He tells his partner that in the book The Brothers Karamazov, the brother Alyosha speaks to his friends about holding on to memories that help you keep your faith and belief in the goodness of the world. He then tells them, 'First, and above all, be kind,' to which they all shout, 'Hurrah for Karamazov.' A beautiful end after all of the struggle and pain of the more horrifying element of this story, to see that the detective makes it through with his belief still intact.

P.s. The idea at the very end about Lucifer was my favorite since Memnoch the Devil. This will only mean something to a select few, but I love interesting ideas about the beginning of the world.

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### Leslie Chivers says

This novel scared the beans out of me. It had me questioning myself, faith, society, everything. Not many books have had that type of impact on me.

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### Jorge says

"Legion" is a more successful work than the "The Exorcist III," the film adaptation of this book that author William Peter Blatty also directed.

Studio meddling had something to do with the sloppiness of the film, but reading this novel reveals some of the faults lie in the source material. This supernatural murder mystery starts strong, but Blatty seems to rush his way through the end. The last third of the novel struck me as disjointed and less than satisfying.

That said, Blatty expertly juggles theological ponderings with horror and suspense for most of the novel. Some of Blatty's musings on the nature of good, evil, God and the universe have stuck with me long after I read "Legion."

I sure can't say the same for most fright novels I've read.

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## **Benjamin Stahl says**

### **After First Reading - (4 Stars)**

William Peter Blatty is my favourite author, even though I've only read three of his books and liked merely two of them. He just has such a brilliant talent for evoking terrifying impulses whilst captivating you into believing every word of his writing. He writes like an established poet and he understands "scary" even more than Stephen King. *The Exorcist* is his masterpiece but *Legion*, the belated sequel, is still a very scary, very dark, very memorable story.

### **After Second Reading - (3 Stars)**

I'm wondering how to go about this. I was honestly surprised and very disappointed that I did not enjoy this as much the second time around. I found re-reading *The Exorcist* a very rewarding experience, affirming even further my love for that book. But with *Legion* - (incidentally I originally read this before the first novel) - I found myself mostly surprised that I had loved it so much the first time. I mean, don't think for a second that the novel is bad. That is definitely not the case. Blatty has written this sequel with admirable imagination and restraint, being sure to make it unique and not feel like a cynical cash-in and means of reminding people of his original classic. The narration of this book has a very distinct voice that, for better or worse, makes this story its own thing. While the prose is not quite as wonderful as Blatty's best work, there are still some very sleek moments of writing. But I just feel that the story as a whole does not live up to the reputation set by *The Exorcist*. The premise is more or less a common serial killer thriller. The deaths mount up, the victim's killed in increasingly imaginative and disgusting ways. The detective protagonist is at a complete loss as to how to find the culprit. Pretty standard though workable fare. Except Blatty gives the concept his own spin, and unfortunately I just don't think he hits the mark this time around. Kinderman was, even in *The Exorcist*, slightly annoying with his meandering dialogue. But as he was only a minor character he didn't have time to grate on the nerves. In this book, however, he is the focal point of the entire narrative. And it really tried my patience having to tolerate his constant ramblings which - (to steal a phrase my buddy reader Aileene used) - places speed bumps throughout the story. Every now and then, things do start getting interesting and exciting - (occasionally, though not often enough, even scary) - but Blatty unceasingly halts these moments with completely unnecessary philosophical speculations which hardly make sense to a reader approaching this book with expectations implanted from the spellbinding first novel.

In the end I still would say I liked this novel. But I admit to being biased. I just love Blatty's writing style as well as the Georgetown setting he evokes in these two novels. I do not, however, expect my friend Aileene - (whom I encouraged to read this novel with me) - to be as forgiving. And so at the end of the day, I have to admit that I was still, for the most part, disappointed that I did not enjoy this half as much on reading it a second time. On top of that, I now have to put up with Aileene's wrath for choosing, yet again, a horror novel that did not end up being very scary :P

## Wyrmm says

Parts of this book are incredible, parts rambling nonsense. In the first half of the book there is 1 page of story for every 5 pages of commentary on God, Evolution, Pain Therapy, "Modern Science", Metaphysics, Causality, Etc. all from the perspective of good old 1983.

It's written strongly and laced with undertones of an exhausted father who's children just refuse to see the light, despite all of the "facts" to the contrary. Many times the book makes a point of how "facts" confuse the truth which seems to be almost blatantly retarded to your average modern atheist with 27 years of additional scientific evidence for everything posited as one of these truth confusing "facts".

The storyline is entertaining but obvious. The book is well written and the transitions from the rabbit trails (which seem to be the reason for this book) to the main storyline are cohesive and often times so rapid it's startlingly subtle. You suddenly realize you're reading something you care about.

This seems to be more of a very loose tie in than a direct sequel to the Exorcist. The writing style is a vast departure, the detail paid to the story is much more minimal, nearly back-burner to the platform for expounding his theories on the universe. Even IF this book had picked up the day after The Exorcist and continued the exact same story, just due to the way it's written, it wouldn't feel the same. Let me go all William Peter Blatty and explain: What if Peter Jackson had directed Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, then suddenly died of an embolism and Return of the King was done under the exclusive creative control of Michael Bay. Wouldn't be the same.

I do not want to be wholly negative about this piece, it's just disappointing if you're expecting what's promised on the cover. This man clearly has a talent for writing and using minimal words to convey vivid imagery. Do not expect to be scared by this book, or if it starts to get uncomfortable, at least know it's very likely the next five pages will be so senselessly unrelated to the story that any suspense you were feeling will be replaced by a quiet sigh and the question of when you can return to the book you thought you had purchased.

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## Andres Garzon says

William P. Blatty lo tenía todo para hacer de esta LA secuela perfecta de "El Exorcista" pero no se que ocurrió.

De casi 300 páginas que tiene el libro las 175 primeras se hacen eternas...suceden cosas interesantes, sí, las descripciones de los asesinatos son brutales, sí, Kinderman es un muy buen personaje, sí, peroooooo queremos acción, queremos saber mas, queremos demonios y no nos los dan hasta despues de las 175 primeras páginas...ocurrió algo bastante gracioso y era que me encontraba realizando una exposición para la Universidad sobre el "Psicoanálisis" y de repente nuestro querido Kinderman comienza hablar de psicología, del inconsciente, del psicoanálisis y fue GENIAL!!! esas coincidencias que te da la vida son lo maximo y me emocio muchisimo con eso, pero luego simplemente la lectura volvió a decaer, no pasaba nada LITERALMENTE...y estaba pensando en que lo que quedaba de lectura iba a ser igual pero no fue asi.

Aquí viene la parte buena del libro y es cuando volvemos a todo lo sucedido en "El Exorcista", leer otra vez sobre aquellos personajes memorables fue EPICO y me emocionó mucho (DE NUEVO) desde este punto, te emocionas, te sorprendes, hay ciertos momentos que te dejan como :O OMG NO PUEDE SER CIERTO y eso fue muy muy bueno, pero a lo que iban pasando las páginas no podía dejar de preguntarme ¿Como iba acabar?, ¿Como iba a acabar? quedaban pocas páginas y sentía que faltaba mucho por suceder cuando PUM se termina. Y el epílogo tampoco me terminó por satisfacer :(

Como dije al principio, la trama tenía mucho potencial pero el inicio es muyyyy largo y denso, se demora en "despegar" por asi decirlo y luego cuando la cosa se pone bastante interesantes y quieres mas, se acaba. Te

odio WPB T\_T

En fin...si ya leyeron el exorcista o tienen pensado leerlo, denle su oportunidad a LEGIÓN, independientemente de todo pienso que valió la pena y que no fue una pérdida de tiempo pero pudo ser mucho mejor.

Para terminar dejo un fragmento de uno de los varios momentos mas OMG a mi parecer.

*-Llamame Legión pues somos muchos.*

*Un escalofrío irrazonable pasó por el cuerpo de Kinderman.*

*Deseaba estar fuera de esa habitación. No podía moverse.*

*Bruscamente, sunlight echó hacia atrás la cabeza y cantó como un gallo; despues relincho como un caballo.*

*Los sonidos eran auténticos, no como imitaciones y, en su interior, Kinderman se maravilló por la representación.*

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## Paul says

A polished supernatural mystery with an easy reading style that keep the pages turning. I would have given this five stars except for segments of introspection and Jungian philosophy filler. This is concentrated at the start though, and can be easily avoided (unless it's your thing).

This was also the basis for the movie, The Exorcist III, starring George C Scott heading an all-star cast, with an especially memorable appearance by the always creepy Brad Dourif. It has some terrifying scenes, including a jaw-dropping hallway clip that I still remember vividly.

Those who like their mysteries with a world weary detective, a bit of supernatural, and a grimdark tone, I highly recommend Legion.

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## Johann (jobis89) says

"Every man that ever lived craved perfect happiness, the detective poignantly reflected. But how can we have it when we know we're going to die? Each joy was clouded by the knowledge it would end. And so nature had implanted in us a desire for something unattainable? No. It couldn't be. It makes no sense. Why this exception? the detective reasoned. It was nature making hunger when there wasn't any food. We continue. We go on. Thus death proved life."

A young boy is found murdered and crucified on a pair of rowing oars, a priest is decapitated in his confessional box... Mutilations performed at these crime scenes suggest a serial killer from years before, who had been previously shot and presumed dead (although the body had never been recovered). A police detective, Lieutenant Kinderman, investigates these crimes and ends up visiting a mental asylum, where

there are a couple of possible suspects and some connections to the exorcism of a certain Regan MacNeil began to form...

First of all, William Peter Blatty is now one of my favourite authors. The Exorcist is probably my favourite horror movie of all time (alongside The Evil Dead and Sinister) and is also one of my top books. So when my buddy Cam (Instagram handle is @skipbassman - you should follow him, cos he's awesome) told me that I should read these other Blatty books, I was on board! I've noticed that an underlying theme of all these Blatty books has been good vs evil, the presence (or absence) of God, and what this means for humanity. This is a topic that I've always found very intriguing and one that I probably think a lot about myself. I guess such a topic isn't for everyone, but you can enjoy both The Exorcist and Legion even if that's not your style.

Having previously watched The Exorcist 3 and having LOVED it, I went into this book with a general idea of what I was getting into (The Exorcist 3 is, of course, based on Legion), but that in no way dampened my reading experience. Blatty's writing style is effortless, easy to read, but it packs a punch. He likes to make you think. As someone who loves serial killers and murder mysteries, the storyline of Legion was a page-turner for me. He writes with such wit and humour, Blatty has such an intelligent and unique voice. And Kinderman himself... \*slow claps\* great character. Just generally likeable and he's really cute with his wife, which warms this girl's black heart.

The links and tie-ins to The Exorcist were pretty great, it makes me want to reread that one again. But on its own, as a standalone novel, Legion is brilliant. I'm struggling to think of a negative about this novel... the only thing that comes to mind is a couple of dream sequences involving Kinderman, but as a general rule of thumb, dream sequences annoy me. I get what they're trying to convey but often it feels like wasted pages to me. I looked at other reviews on Goodreads, which I always do when I finish a book, and one of the major complaints was that it wasn't scary. WELL, sorry that Blatty can deliver something other than horror!!! \*severe eye roll\* I hate when people go into a book by an author they've read before, expecting more of the same... NO, that's not how it works. That's like listening to a band and expecting the same song over and over again... DUMB DUMB.

Anyway, this girl is now a big fan of William Peter Blatty, and I'm now on the lookout for some more of his books. Legion gets 5 stars out of 5 from me! July was an epic reading month!

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## Aileene says

### PRE-READ

When Ben asked me if I wanted to buddy read this scary as f\*ck story, naturally, I said,

*... I think I may have ran to the wrong direction...*

Commencing on the 25th of August.

\*looks at Ben and mouths\*

If I lose night sleepS, you're in big trouble, Stahl

### POST - READ

Yes. I have indeed ran to the wrong direction.

But not because the story spooked me.

**No.**

**And that is why I was very disappointed and aggravated.**

Background.

I was excited to read this. Very excited actually because I have read The Exorcist many years ago.

I have read it because my brother was a clown to give it to me.

I was barely in my teens and enjoying Mills and Boons stories when he gave it to me and said this is a better read {side note: why does everyone seem to pick on my reads?}

Anyways, my epic of a brother kept feeding me all these scary sh\*t info whilst reading that I ~~felt~~ was truly traumatized.

I had no choice but to finish the damn book coz I know I'm going to cop it if I drop it midway. Siblings are cruel like that and my brother? He's relentlessly infuriating.

Little did he know that I held (still holding) the ultimate card one can have. I played the "I'm-the-youngest-in-the-family card. And boy did I enjoy the results.

Back to the review.

**I WAS BLOODY DISAPPOINTED.**

The Exorcist was amazing and deserves lots of applaude as it's really one the finest and best horror stories of all time. Watching the movie was an epic experience too.

And this?

I WANTED TO DNF IT.

What kept me going were:

1. I was BR'ing it with Ben
2. The short burst moments of "Oh it's starting to pick up...and then...NOT!"

*Speed bumps everywhere.*

Kinderman, the Homicide Detective was just....uhm, lets just say I didn't connect with this character and his inner ramblings. Though, I must say that he was very sweet with his other half. The name calling, the tone of his voice when he talks to her, warmth feeling cloaked me.

This book started off when Kinderman was called in to solve who killed a 12 year old mute black kid that delivers newspapers. Then followed by different killings and all these pointed to the works of a serial killer called Gemini. The catch was, he's been dead for many years.

I've been waiting and waiting

for some mind numbing scary scenes but what I got was measly bouts of random letters being scrawled and some not too scary voices.

I didn't shake in my boots at all and to think I have f\*n great imagination that gets the best of me all the time but no.



"I devoured Legion in one terrified gulp. It even manages to out spook The Exorcist."- Los Angeles Times

"Heartbeat-skipping horror. Read Legion only on a sunny day."- Cosmopolitan

"Ten times better than The Exorcist ... The suspense is breathtaking, and the ideas dark, deadly, and fascinating." The Cleveland Plain Dealer

So what the fuck was I reading? These blurbs are full of lies lies lies! Lies I say.

This book is not scary, not terrifying and didn't really make much sense.

The story centers on Detective Kinderman, a real mensch, he reads books like Waiting for Godot, he questions the nature of God and why evil exists he loves old movies. He's Jewish liberally uses Yiddish loves his family and he's friends with Catholic priests. He's just all around swell, well read and smart. He gets assigned to a murder of a young boy who was crucified onto boat paddles then he has to deal with the murder of two priests. The suspects are a long dead serial killer a near catatonic old lady a dying neurologist and a chauvinistic asshole of a psychiatrist.

I guess what makes this book so terrifying is that some evil force took possession of a dead priest who ended up in a psych ward as a John Doe bided its time then somehow manipulates these people into murdering people for it. The reason for these murders is because the long dead killer, the Gemini killer, has daddy issues and wants revenge and the evil force has scores to settle.

This book left me bored and scratching my head, I felt a disconnect with the characters, especially the dying neurologist and his experiments with EVP and the sudden appearance of his "double". I really failed to see the point of that subplot. I felt the last few chapters were nothing more than a slapdash clusterfuck pieced together for the sole purpose to tie these characters and subplots together.

Don't believe the blurbs on the back of this book and pick up something else to read.

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## **Erin ? \*Proud Book Hoarder\* says**

**“We have every indication that he died of fright.”**

As a coincidence, I finally re-read The Exorcist after more than 15 years in December. I followed this up in January with a re-read (been more than 10 years) of Legion, the sequel that inspired the third flick. Strangely William Peter Blatty took his last breath three days later. RIP for the author, he dished out some chilling stories.

We all remember the bizarre and relentless Lieutenant Kinderman from the original story. He kept up his friendship with a priest who was a close friend of Damien Karras and who the lieutenant walked off with when that story closed its horrors. Suddenly entrenched in a bizarre series of truly nauseating deaths, he finds that the blueprints are linked to the Zodiac killer who was executed years ago. As he follows the crime, he runs into a truly unsettling shock.

It's funny that the strength of philosophy in Kinderman's character and the storyline both upped and downed it. Playing off its strengths to continue intellectual pondering when introducing something so flighty as possession, but it was overdone to where it lost its luster and gave some downright dull moments. Still

Kinderman is an intriguing detective and we do get some emotional scenes. Part of me greatly enjoyed his strange ponderings, but sometimes it grew too much to where I wanted to skim a few dialogue exchanges and weird mental philosophies. Obviously Blatty would work religion into this book.

There's a sad death here to hated to hear about, and the poor soul was offed in a horrible way. The book doesn't hold back on the violence level seen after the fact. The movie is actually much creepier, and I do wish the author would have done a particular reveal earlier on, but the pacing was still strong and hard to put down. The book takes forever to get to its twist with the cell inmate, while the movie smartly started earlier in the mystery.

Bleak and grim, it was easy to lose myself in the story. Blatty's writing style was more personal than the original Exorcist. Unfortunately the story is a little cheesy in some ways, and the Exorcist is more original (in its time), but this was a worthy follow-up that deserves a read.

Oh, and love the stepback

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### **Tony Gleeson says**

"The Exorcist" scared the bejeebers out of me when I read it many years ago. "Legion" was Blatty's sequel (as opposed to the nonsensical theatrical sequel with Richard Burton) and it haunted me for slightly different reasons. The protagonist might well be going through some kind of brain malignancy, and Blatty describes some odd neural phenomena as well as introducing the necessary supernatural stuff. I actually think this was a much better structured and composed book than "Exorcist." Also, being a Georgetown alumnus, I got a kick out of the real-life ubiquitous Hoya booster and tavernkeeper Richard McCooey being a suspect in the killings.

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### **Sud666 says**

Well I must say this was underwhelming. Perhaps disappointing is a better word? The original book was excellent and deserves mention as one of the finest horror stories of all time. This? Well don't let the abnormally high score on GR fool you, it's not good. At all. The only reason I gave this 2 star instead of the more appropriate 1 is that I did finish the book (though I almost quit three times) and there were a few brief moments of "Wait it's getting better....aannndddd no...no it's not".

#### **Stupid Plot Summary:**

Annoying Jewish Homicide Detective (AJHD) Kinderman (K), the cryptic, rambling, tangential Homicide detective from the first novel (friend of Father Karas) is the central figure this time. Yes, yes...I know you thought it would be about a demon...and it sorta is..but mostly (90%) it's about AJHD- K.

So years after the events of the first book, AJHD K is brought in to figure out who nailed a mute 12 year old black kid to some rowing oars. The death marks are reminiscent of an old serial killer called the Gemini, who has been dead for a dozen years. The police also find close by an elderly woman from a mental institution. A few more people die. Same signs in the manner of death. AJHD-K finally traces it back to a hospital and finds that the demon from the first book (Pazuzu if I recall) made a deal with the Gemini killer's soul. There are a few more twists and turns, some random letters being scrawled, eerie voices, unexpected meetings, etc.... apparently the demon had daddy issues and once the dad was solved..the demon goes it's merry way.

There...that was the stupid plot.

#### WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT:

In a brief explanation- a LOT. This isn't so much of a horror story but a cheap way for a devout Catholic writer to use AJHD-K to spoon feed us religious claptrap and pooh-pooh all that "science crap". Ever read a Michael Crichton book? The way in which he seamlessly melds complicated scientific terms with a great, cogent story is amazing. Blatty attempts the same thing here. Only one teeny tiny problem as Blatty's surrogate (AJHD K) attempts to fill us with God's eternal love whilst cowering behind scientific terms- Blatty doesn't have the background. What do I mean? DR. Crichton had a B.S. and M.D. from Harvard, was a Post-Doc Fellow at the Salk Institute..getting the picture? A REAL science guy. Mr. Blatty- B.A. from Georgetown and an M.A. in English Lit from George Washington Univ. So most certainly NOT a real science guy, also a far inferior student/intellect than the late Dr. Crichton. Why is this important? Well because Blatty uses his fictional surrogate to make points about the "mysteries" of science from the formation of the eyeball, to evolutionary leaps, to the development of air breathing animals from the fishes to point out that it is SO mysterious and amazing- there was a Creator. Um no..no there wasn't. Blatty like the vast majority of people DOES NOT UNDERSTAND SCIENCE. Harsh statement I know...well I have a BA, 2 MA's and PhD...but they are all in social sciences. Want to know what I know about science? JACK SHIT really. I mean "know". Not a laymans understanding..but to KNOW a thing. We may all, ok we ALL do not but most of us, know about Relativity theory...but how many of us can use mathematical proofs to figure it out and prove it? That's the problem here... Blatty tries really hard to downplay science, using certain scientific principles but then says things like "How does the eye manage to isolate a single image? I don't know...but it points to a creator"...well a REAL Doctor, Opthamologist, Biologist, etc..does know. It is NOT mysterious at all. Blatty just lacks the education to explain it. But he uses his AJHD K to do it for him. The vast majority of people who liked this book are religiously disposed. One reviewer, whom I shall not name, said he could build a Linux server, but there is a learning curve. But he saw a Creator in how a titlark (a bird mentioned in the book-and its nesting habits used as an example by AJHD K) built a highly complex nest with a teeny tiny brain and no experience. \*sigh\* This is why this book has such a high rating.

#### What Else is wrong with it:

God (no pun intended)..where shall I go? The vast majority of the story (75%) is AJHD K ruminating about how there MUST be a God since he doesn't have the Science background to explain why there ISN'T. Then after this beauteous look at the rapture of Christ (oh did I mention Kinderman was a Jew? so I'm not sure his fascination with Catholic religion/dogma-no wait I do since the author is a devout Catholic)..we then plod along in a story where the demons are kicking the crap out of God and his minions. Just in this book alone- 2 priests die (never mind all the other innocents)..add that to the two from the first book AND the fact that the demon Pazuzzu is alive and well..then uhhhh that means Satan- 4 God-0...

Those parts of the musings of AJHD K are liberally littered with Jewish sayings, banal ramblings and utterly obscure mumblings of AJHD K as he tries to convince the reader that he really does have a modicum of true intellect. This book is a mess...in fact I am now stopping my review since I've wasted more time on it than it deserves..if you want to read this book- have fun. If you are deeply religious-you'll like it. If you are like me...you'll roll your eyes and wait for something to happen...and then wait some more...and then....finish with the Big Bang= Lucifer's fall...and we all are small pieces of Lucifer trying to get back to a single being that can then go hang out with God again and be pals. Think I'm making this up? Waste your time and read this book.

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#### Lauren Mann says

I loved this book. The philosophical questions about good and evil and God's role in both was wonderfully laid out. Kinderman is such stellar character. Although I did not like it as much as The Exorcist, I was

pleasantly surprised by how well it held up in comparison. It's a mixture between a supernatural/possession novel and a murder/crime novel. Worth the read!!

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