



Awakening

John O'Brien

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Awareness grows...

The gathering commences....

The world has changed. Jack Walker and the other survivors must adjust with it if they are to have a chance. They've managed to stay one step ahead so far but the gap is narrowing. The night runners are growing and adapting. The rules are changing.

The deadliest threats

Are those that build unseen...

Awakening Details

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Author : John O'Brien

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From Reader Review Awakening for online ebook

Zack Adamson says

This has been a solid "zombie" series.

Brian says

[During his 2 week coma? (hide spoiler)]

Jett Cat says

Rabid Fan, can't go wrong with these!

I know it is repetitive to say the same thing, but I really just enjoy these! Keep it coming! On the edge here!

I love this series! Normal people, okay maybe they are far more witty than I am, but I wish I had their smarmy come-backs!

Anyways, way fun, emotional, sorta zombie infected / omega man type ragers who make life hell for our heroes!

I recommend this series for anyone who likes witty, well written post apocalypse, zombie, or adventure stories!

AudioBookReviewer says

My original Awakening audiobook review and many others can be found at Audiobook Reviewer.

For me, there has been time in between Taken and Awakening. For Jack and the crew, very little time has passed.

Right from the get go O'Brien explores the area I wanted so much more if in the previous books. I wanted more of the "thinking" zombie-like night runners. I wanted to know more about the strange connection that Jack now has to these creatures. While nothing was truly explained, much was revealed about both areas. Such as the night runners do not necessarily need to eat flesh to survive. And they are getting smarter and smarter. I have a feeling that there will be much more revealed about Jack's connection as well. Then there is the issue of the unexpected discovery of a mystery survivor right at the end.

O'Brien was able to make his characters so much more. By exploring their backstories, revealing what makes them who they are. Sure, sometimes this approach can be a tad drab and uninteresting. This. Is. Not. So. The depth of the characters that he is able to create, simply make the book so much more. Also it helps get me vested in their survival.

Because of all of the character development, the action that I became accustomed to was there but mostly near the end of this story. It was worth the wait! Jack and the crew decide to invade a secure facility. You will want to know how they did it, all I will say is that it involves an airplane, as so much of these stories do. Vicious action sequences and very descriptive gore.

I always love it when a crazy cultish group is found in these types of books. Ever reminding me that humans are quite capable of going completely loony tunes within a short period of time. And with that they tend to become so much easier to manipulate.

If I wasn't hooked yet, I would be after listening to Awakening. I feel utterly invested in the survival of all of the individuals in the group. Needing to know more about how they survive and rebuild a semblance of society.

I may have said this before but. This is the best book in the series so far. Leaves me wanting to get into the next book as soon as possible.

Mark Gagliardi continues, through this series, to grow and polish his narration skills. He has been able to accomplish something that I would think many narrators strive for. To make the story their's. He has made this a reality. I could imagine no one else making the night runners and Jack and his crew come alive. His characterizations are getting better and better. Pacing changes are spot on. Very hard to find a flaw.

Audiobook was provided for review by the author.

Amanda Davies says

John has done it again, he has captivated me and I just don't want to put the book down, great book, a must read

Annie says

This series gets better and better each book...in this one Jack and the crew go on more of a search and rescue kind of mission looking for survivors....and start to learn that the Night Runners are becoming smarter, and some may even be recovering! Jack also admits he can sense and communicate with the Night Runners..and they discover more and more that humanity is fading fast..and people are becoming more and more of a threat! On to book 6!!

Lynne says

This series really could go on forever. On the plus side, the author has come up with a great concept. You do have to suspend belief when (SPOILER).....some of the night runners seem to change back to normal and back into night runners again. Cellular changes occurring that rapidly? Quite the stretch. I find it pretty boring to read again and again how amazed the lead character is at seeing his kids outfitted in fatigues and rifles. I also find no interest in reading the path of a bullet through a body over and over and over again. I wish more of the spelling/grammar mistakes were caught and fixed. But overall the story has been interesting enough to keep going. The shame is that there are \$2.99 Kindle books in the same genre that are so much

better than this and this series costs almost \$5 per book.

John says

Oh no! Have to wait for more in the series! Darn!

Santana says

Just keeps getting better and better. Gotta say I was kind of iffy on the first one...but as the story progressed, I just couldn't put it down! I can't wait for book 6 to come out! I am hooked! This series has definitely been added to my list of favorites.

Jessica Kayuha says

My favorite of the series so far.

This book had much less of what I haven't enjoyed in the first few books (and enjoy is a relative term here, as I've technically enjoyed everything about these books, just some aspects to a lesser extent). And then even more of what I've loved about them.

I am loving the addition of more POVs to the story and getting "more of the story" so to say.

With this book, the plot in this one was crazy good. I love that there's no dicking around. They make a plan, they get it done. Some of my favorite moments are when they find crazy bands of survivors that want to threaten groups of armed soldiers in armored vehicles. The crazy is taken care of swiftly, and it's quite refreshing.

The action is again wonderfully realistic and very obviously written by someone that has been there/done that or researched it all and then some. Even the craziest of crazy plans (view spoiler) still manages to come off as possible. O'Brien thinks both big and small in this new world, spending time on the day-to-day mundane and planning ahead for the future.

And I think I've realized with this book a big reason why I love them so much. The female characters in these books are so amazingly written. They are the perfect blend of strong, emotional, snarky & smart that I have to imagine a successful military woman should be. But none of these facets of them ever feel forced. I remember being surprised in the first book or two that some of the soldiers were women. I had forgotten about that fact, which is a good thing. They were deep into some serious shite, and never did gender play a role in what they were doing.

But outside of combat, they are "allowed" to be more of what a woman is expected to be. They are more emotional than most of the men around them, but that's never shown as a weakness. Gonzalez (possibly my second favorite character in the series) even tells Bri to embrace those emotions and her womanhood, and to use it to "temper her steel" and make her even stronger. Their scenes together in both this book and the next (I've finished it at this point as well) make me happy.

I am noticing a trend in my zombie/apocalypse book reading that my favorites always tend to gravitate towards those with stronger female characters. But my reading in general has always been that way. I have never read *The Walking Dead*, Book One, but in reading the reviews and such for it, much criticism seems to come from that author's treatment of women, always relegating them to "woman's work" type roles or worse. That never happens in these books. Everybody shares in all of the duties (even in the nightrunner packs it seems), which seems like a division of labor much more likely to succeed.

I am both upset and happy that I didn't find this series earlier. Upset because it is so good and I have been missing out, but happy since it has meant that I got to read them all in quick succession and only now will have a wait for a new book to come out!

RJ says

"Awakening" does this refer to the awakening of the Night Runners to their self-consciousness, or to Jack's budding enlightenment? Maybe both eh? If I am not mistaken the reconnaissance helicopter Jack is flying is pronounced Kiowa (like the Indian tribe) "long i" verses "long e" as Mark Gagliardi pronounces it. Nitpicking I know, but it jumps out at you, especially when it happens a dozen times. The gang that's been terrorizing the area is holed up at a nearby deserted prison. Our survivors decide to remove this threat from their rear and release the captives held there; 80 more survivors. Our heroes have also come upon an AC-130 gunship. This no doubt will come in very handy in the near future. Meanwhile, the Night Runners with their leader Michael (he remembered his name from past life) are beginning to prepare for "the gathering". I can imagine what that entails. It appears that some/one of the Night Runners are recalling some of their past memories as though awakening from a horrible dream. The one in particular remembers only laying down on his couch some time ago and then waking up in a dark building surrounded by Night Runners before his escape. Our survivors plans keep changing as the Night Runners evolve.

Brandon says

Better than the previous one. Nice to see that he had a little more going on in this one, as well as ending the book with some better action, as opposed to finishing after a low trough. Having the AC-130 Spectre do its thing at the end was a nice touch as well.

Peter Hansen says

The first books was good - but the story gets more and more boring...

J.R. says

Book 5 of O'Brien's *New World* series opens with the group now living inside the fortified Cabela's in the

Pacific Northwest. Jack, recovering from the loss of his daughter Nicole and injuries he received from an encounter with a Night Runner now has to deal with something new. His injuries have now apparently given him a limited ability to 'connect' with the Night Runners. Wanting to keep this secret for obvious reasons, he and the rest of the survivors focus on the task of locating more supplies, survivors, fuel, ammunition, and what to do about the Night Runners in the immediate area.

Its decided that a small group will head to New Mexico to acquire an AC130 gunship, fly it back to McChord and then use that aircraft's sophisticated electronics, sensors and weapons to eradicate the Night Runners around their fortified home.

Along the way they make a few stops and encounter other survivors who after initial contact are very interested in joining Jack's group. At two of these stops, the team makes a side trip to locate some relatives of Walker's group. One stop is not productive as they are too late to save a family member who has already become a Night Runner. However, at that same stop other members of the same family are reunited and a group of survivors Walker encounters shows an interest in joining his growing force. A small problem I had with this encounter is that it was very similar to the season 1 episode of the AMC show The Walking Dead 'Vatos'.

As Walker's force moves to their next stop, one that will hopefully reunite a mother and father with their daughter who is part of the group, the news is not as bad as the previous stop but not all that good either. Prisoners from the local prison have formed a looter gang and have taken several people as captives or worse. Jack and a small group recon the prison and determine the only way in is to HALO. HALO for those not familiar with that term means High Altitude- Low Opening. It's a parachute method where the ferrying aircraft stays at the height of a regular commercial aircraft, 30,000 feet and the jumpers exit the aircraft in insulated jumpsuits breathing oxygen and freefall for about 28,000 feet deploying their chutes between 5000 to 2000 feet off the deck. It's far more dangerous as all kinds of factors come into play like hypoxia and frostbite not to mention terminal velocity. But, this is the only course of action available to the team based on the conditions of the area, the amount of hostiles present and the terrain.

Jack and Greg, while gathering the needed equipment for the jump, make a startling discovery that the Night Runners are somehow evolving. They exhibit an ability that they might not have had previously or maybe didn't use which now makes them way more unpredictable and far more dangerous than was actually thought.

The two jumpers make it into the prison, infiltrate the objective and neutralize those that need neutralization while rescuing hostages. Jack is still coming to terms with his new found abilities and dealing with some family issues from one of his children who understandably are experiencing an urge to engage the Night Runners to avenge the death of their sister.

The team makes it back to Cabela's after making good use of the newly acquired AC130 to clean out Night Runner nests in the area only to have a radio message come across from what could possibly be the last US Navy asset still in operation.

Book 5 of this incredible series is yet another action packed, page turner that keeps the reader glued to the story. We finally get to see some background on how Jack and Lynn first met and we get more background on Jack's adventures in Special Forces.

If you haven't read this series yet, get out there and start reading. This is one of the few books in this genre that puts realistic military details into a novel as can only be told by someone who has been there and done that.

