



Sycamore Bluff

Jude Hardin

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Somewhere west of Kokomo, Indiana, in a contained and isolated area, NASA is conducting a secret study on human behavior. Given a set of rules and the promise of a generous compensation package at the end, can several hundred people govern themselves and live in relative harmony for six years?

The experiment, designed to mimic future colonization on a distant planet, appears to be a huge success.

Until something goes terribly wrong...

Two undercover operatives from an ultra-clandestine government agency called The Circle are sent to investigate. When Diana Dawkins and Nicholas Colt discover the shocking truth, it's clear the experiment must be stopped.

What isn't clear is if they'll make it out alive.

Sycamore Bluff Details

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From Reader Review *Sycamore Bluff* for online ebook

Lyndon says

If you like the "Doc Savage" style of adventure, this pulp fiction thriller by Jude Hardin will satisfy your yearning for a quick-paced, edge-of-your-seat story with a ripped-from-headlines contemporary plot. A secret government experiment has been hijacked by private interests and has gone terribly awry. Operative Diana Dawkins and her partner PI Nicholas Colt infiltrate a hidden compound run by NASA only to discover a complex and twisted conspiracy...that puts them both in danger of their lives. Of course, the mark of a Doc Savage pulp novel is that the heroes continually get in and out of trouble as the action mounts toward a fateful climax. In this regard, *Sycamore Bluff* does not disappoint. If this style of storytelling appeals to you, you won't be disappointed either.

Carole D Hutchison says

Totally exciting read

This story made me think of the TV show *Wayward Pines*. You begin to wonder if there could possibly be experimenting going on we don't know about.

Beverly E. McWhirk says

Really Exciting!

Wow! I just finished reading *Sycamore Bluff* and the adrenaline is still coursing through my body. Talk about a thriller, this story keeps you on edge from beginning to end. I can't wait for the sequel to come out. This is a highly recommended read for Colt fans and anyone who enjoys thrills.

Mrs Mary Curd says

Bit disappointed with the ending

Bob says

This was really a spy novel rather than a mystery, and a very bad one at that. I felt like i was reading some high-schooler's idea of a great adventure novel. The good guys worked for a secret government agency that was sooooo secret that if you find out about it, they have to kill you. The bad guys had acronyms for names and revelled in torturing the good guys. The good guys had implants in their toes which tingle when their bosses want to contact them. The bad guys have a secret town where they are testing nasty drugs on people that turn some of them into zombies. And yes, this book is every bit as bad as it sounds. It's kind of like the

old Matt Helm or In Like Flint movies of the sixties or like Austin Powers, only without any sense of humor and without any sense of how outrageously bad it really is. The only reason it got 2 stars instead of one is because the story was told in an understandable manner and there weren't a lot of spelling errors.

Riki Solanen says

This was an odd one. Both a page turner and an eye roller. I wanted to know what was going on, but I kept exclaiming "Come on! Really?"

Clinton Lopez says

Review

Great story. Only disappointment is there isn't a part two with both lead characters. I suppose I'll have to wait with anticipation.

Satrajit Sanyal says

Fast-paced, with many plot twists. I was looking for anything pertaining to Jack Reacher when I stumbled across Nicholas Colt. While recovering from surgery I've recently read every Colt adventure, in the recommended sequence. While some of the stories are better than others, Jude references some of the characters, particularly the evil ones, in subsequent books, and I sensed that being familiar with them enhanced my reading pleasure. Hence, I enjoyed Sycamore Bluffs immensely. I found this one and Snuff Tag 9 to be the best of Jude's Nicholas Colt's adventures. However, as aforementioned, I'd recommend reading them in the prescribed sequence. I'm looking forward to the next book whenever it becomes available!

Sandeep says

1 for the effort

It takes time effort and commitment to finish a book and publish it. That is why this book gets a star. Other than that there is nothing good I can say about it. It's like the author watched a lot of bad Hollywood movies and then consolidated all of them into a book. Exaggeration, inconsistencies, plot holes, unbelievable situations and characters, the flaws in this book are so plentiful that I can't recommend spending time reading it.

April Farina`` says

The circle

Really a great read. Poor Nicholas., the things he went. Can't wait to read the rest. Can't wait to read why happens next.

Dee Arr says

There is a redeeming quality to this book, as it should (and obviously does) appeal to readers who seek an escapism when searching for books to read. If you are not concerned about characterization, believable plots, or realistic description and dialogue, you will like this book. It is pure entertainment, similar to Quentin Tarantino's movie Grindhouse (just for the record, I loved the zombie movie in Grindhouse, but Tarantino told his fans upfront what to expect). If you expect anything more from this book, you will be disappointed.

Some of the writing is cliched and painful. "He was the kind of pilot who could walk into a bar anywhere in the world and have his pick of the hottest chicks in the joint" or when Colt puts a cartridge in his pocket, Diana says, "Is that a nine millimeter cartridge, or are you just happy to see me?" If this was an effort to build sexual tension with humor, it failed. The two pages dealing with a horror in the next room turns out to be one queen-sized bed instead of two doubles, which could have effectively been handled with a sentence or two. Diana's thoughts: "It was one of the worst things she'd ever been forced to witness as a government agent."

Most of the characters are flat or given one character trait. All of the villains are evil, and no matter who they are, all have no conscience when it comes to killing another person. Studies show people aren't wired that way, and to imagine that the only people associated with this pharmaceutical project are sociopaths is a bit hard to believe. Nicholas Colt is the hero, a man in love with his comatose wife but who takes the first chance he has to attempt to bed his Diana, his female partner from the organization Circle. Colt's and Diana's bantering is uninteresting, and when they aren't talking about nothing, they fight. While I could appreciate the attempt to build more tension between the two, the word battles are out of character with who the author has somewhat established them to be. The end result is dissatisfying.

There are also instances where the action makes no sense. At one point, Diana goes outside and "It was about ten degrees outside, and Diana was practically naked." After ramming the car into the garage door and shattering it, she explains to the neighbors who came out to see what was happening in the middle of the night "I put the car in drive when I meant to put it in reverse. Now look what I've done. What a mess." No one has a reaction at all to Diana's attire, or to why she would be dressed in that manner on a cold night and moving her car.

The premise -- pharmaceutical creator and investors covering up a creation gone bad -- is tired and been done. Turning people into zombies is another cliché. Having many people turn into zombies at the same time our heroes are attempting to escape is a misused plot device. There are many other unbelievable pieces in this plot, but I hesitate to list everything. My goal is not to ruin the book for those who want to read it by detailing spoilers, but to let those who expect something different to know what this book is all about.

Congratulations are in order, for author Jude Hardin has accomplished this without any lurid sexual references and there are no vulgarities of any kind. This is not the normal path many of today's writers take, and I commend him for his choice.

Bottom line -- this is an exciting pulp novel for those willing to suspend disbelief. The author is attempting to create a spy/adventure/thriller/horror story and he pulls out all the stops. For those readers who seek more

realism in their novels, you will wish to search elsewhere. Three stars.

Mary Rowe says

Worth The Time

Action, pacing, characters all good, solid story telling, did not notice any grammatical gaffes (which I find inordinately distracting). I would like to read more by this author, especially his take on Lee Childs' Jack Reacher. A teaser chapter was included at the end of this book.

Cheryl Wieromiej says

Violence, Blood and Zombies!!

Considering how violent this book is, how much blood and shooting it contains, I am surprised I even finished it. But it did keep my interest. There was enough weird science-fictiony stuff (and the zombies) that I was able to ignore the distressing parts (or skip right over them). I enjoyed the book but do not plan to read the sequel.

Jillian Higham says

A bit over the top

I liked the premise of this story - a town specially created to imitate what it would be like to live on Mars for several years. Something goes wrong and government agents have to go in to make sure it is only an isolated incident. But I think the author got a bit carried away with the gruesome stuff. Less is more and makes a story more believable.

Kat says

Excellent, quick read.
