



Dead Religion

David Beers

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A hotel explodes in Mexico City, killing thousands, and all available evidence points to an American citizen: Alex Valdez. The FBI desperately needs to find him, or if he's dead, the reasons behind his attack before the Mexican government can.

Agent James Allison is tasked with finding Alex Valdez, wherever that may lead.

What Allison can't know, what the FBI doesn't understand, is Valdez's past.

Alex Valdez was raised by parents convinced their religion, their God--discarded by European conquerors--needed to return. Convinced that their God's rightful place was in charge of this world just as it had been the Aztec civilization. From this, a small child turned into a haunted man. Married now, unable to distinguish if the God exists, and if it does, does it mean to kill him and all that he loves? Alex Valdez is a man that can no longer tell reality from dreams, with a wife who has watched her husband cut himself to shreds from that terror.

Dead Religion follows both Alex Valdez and James Allison in their searches for truth. Valdez believes he knows how to stop this God while James only wants to make it home alive.

In a time when miracles and Gods have been pushed to a past age, Agent Allison must walk the fine line between insanity and reality, trying to uncover the facts behind the terrific loss of life in Mexico City before the same torments find their way into his own life.

Dead Religion Details

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From Reader Review Dead Religion for online ebook

Marvin says

One of the things about young writers of horror that bother me is that they think horror has a formula. Pick a monster, throw in some scares and gore, have hero save heroine (or vice versa), and end with a shocker. Many people that don't understand horror fiction tell me that it is because it is full of cliches and not original and I am afraid that they are often right. A avid horror reader like me has to read a lot of crap to find the gems...or so it seems.

Well...here's a gem. David Beers digs into mythology a bit and finds a rich vein of horror south of the border. Ancient religion, Aztec gods and such mixed with a modern tale of suspected terrorism. I don't know if this is his first novel but, if it is, it bodes well for a new talent. If it isn't, it is still damn good. An FBI agent is sent to Mexico to investigate a hotel bombing. But the suspected terrorist, Alex Valdez, may have an unusual and terrifying reason for his actions. Beers follows the actions of both investigator and bomber and lifts the layers off of the tale superbly. Much of it, especially toward the end, has a nice Castaneda hallucinogenic feel to it. In fact, much of the fun in figuring how what is fantasy and what is reality. There's some minor issues about narration. The switch between timelines and viewpoints doesn't always run as smooth as I would have liked. But it is a nice original addition to the horror genre. Highly recommended to all horror fans. This is a writer that will only get better.

Jay Williams says

The re-animation of an ancient god, Maux, has a painful and deadly effect on quite a few among the living. The story is clearly written, and forces the belief in gods that pre-existed our universe. Worshipped and respected by the early Aztecs, the god is brought back to the world with blood sacrifice, and once it is back, the sacrifices must continue. If this was a movie, it would be a 5 star, and the story itself is sufficient to create the mental images that will return at night to keep you awake.

Crystal says

Was a bit confusing at the beginning, but once I got into the book more it all started coming together a bit more. Although I am still confused as to what the entity was. Whether it be the devil, a God, or just some "Thing", I am not quite sure. The story was full of suspense, gore, and enough spine tingling horror that kept me on the edge of my seat, wondering what was going to happen next. I really felt sorry for Brittany in the story, I wish she would have lived. The ending was a bit abrupt leaving me wanting more. Overall it was a great read.

Lisa Mccarty says

I won this book in a good reads first read giveaway. I would like to start out by saying this was one of the weirdest books I have ever read. Not a bad weird but a good weird. At first it started out kind of boring but

definitely picked up, so if you start reading it give it a chance past the first 15 pages. It bounced back and forth between different characters in the book, but that was what made it so interesting, you couldn't put it down because you wanted to know what was happening with the other people. It was about a dead religion that a family brought back and it hunted them down with a vengeance... Cannot say to much more because it would give away too many details. It is something you have to read to understand. I enjoyed the book and found it to be very odd and a bit creepy at times. Kind of like a Stephen King novel but weirder. It is definitely worth a first read, so definitely give it a try!!

Kathryn Hogan says

Dead Religion is told from two perspectives. The first is set in the past and chronicles the terrifying events leading up to the destruction of a big hotel in Mexico City, ostensibly by the character we are following, Alex. The second perspective is in the present, where an American FBI agent is trying to figure out what happened to make the hotel blow up, and whether Alex (who is also American) is to blame. He has to find out what happened before the Mexican authorities do.

Already, as a reader, that premise had me DESPERATE to find out what happened to Alex. I mean, did he blow up the hotel, or what? Why would he do that? Does that mean he's going to be dead at the end of the book? Am I reading about the last days of a crazy person, or about the escape of a non-crazy person from an evil supernatural being?

At the same time, watching Alex fight the Evil Supernatural Possibly-Green God of Destruction as It becomes more and more powerful is painful, because we know that Alex loses. He has to, right? Because otherwise, why would the hotel blow up? I mean, Alex is a nice guy! He wouldn't blow a hotel up! The Bad Green Guy does that, right?

RIGHT?!

(Desperately turns on Kindle and starts reading again, even in social situations that require a person NOT to be reading, especially if that person is reading something that causes them to make lots of noises and loud comments)

And what IS this terribly evil dream-inhabiting, long scary teeth having, eye-of-sauron typed bad guy, anyways? (I keep saying guy, but I'm pretty sure it's genderless. As a side note.) Well, as it turns out, It is NOT what I expected. Which was very cool. Unlike so many other thrillers that end up actually being about vampires or mass-murderers or what-not, this was something totally unexpected and unique.

As I reflect on this novel, I'm becoming more aware of the underlying themes of choice and desire that fuelled the crazy violence. It wasn't gratuitous, even though it may appear that way. There was a point, in the story. Lots of points, actually. Lots of questions. Is the Bad Green Glob God Thing causing people to commit acts of violence that they wouldn't do otherwise? Or is It encouraging bloodlust and callousness that are already present, latent, waiting... just like the God itself is?

I'm also fascinated by the theme of sacrifice as the goal of violence, instead of the violent act as its own goal. I hear rhetoric about violence as a release - the satisfaction of a need (like on Dexter or in other portrayals of serial killers), or as an inexplicable act with no real goal or purpose, like throwing a cake against a wall for no reason. Senseless destruction, the news-anchor tells us.

But what if it's not?

Scary thoughts.

If you like a book that draws you in, and still has you thinking weeks after you've finished it, then you will love Dead Religion!

This review was originally published at: <http://kathrynhogan.ca/writersblog/bo...>

Daniel J. Weber says

Review originally posted at Daniel J. Weber Creates

A horrific tale of a man going crazy and a once Dead Religion

Mature Content Rating: R (excessive profanity, violence, mature themes, and disturbing sexual scenes)

Who is God to you? Hocus pocus cloud-dweller? Miracle worker? Evil smiter? Creator of all things? Maybe he is some dude with a long beard (and it's probably white, because if we can agree on anything it would be that God is old)? Does God even exist? None of these are questions that I can answer for you, just like the parents of our protagonist (Alex Valdez) in Dead Religion couldn't tell him who God is.

David Beers tells the story of a long dead God coming back to life, a man going insane, and a hotel being blown sky-high while the police pick up the pieces. Who is responsible for this thrilling ride of destruction and death (other than David Beers, of course)? Is it Alex Valdez, some long-dead deity, or so much more?

The Good:

Maybe I am crazy, but it intrigues me to live inside the head of crazy people. (If I was inside their head, I guess that would make me them... thus making me crazy...) Beers does a good job of showing us what makes Alex Valdez tick (or maybe not tick. Take your pick). He lives a happy (or not so much) life with his wife who has been with him through some heart-wrenching times, and takes such vows as "til death do us part" seriously. Entering the mind of a crazy person is not necessarily beautiful (though I like to describe many things with that word), but it brings a sense of intrigue and insanity (rightfully so) to this wild ride.

Again, I must say that the imagery is magnificent. I say "again" not because I have mentioned it in this review, but it is what drew me into the book initially (as it does with many other books I have enjoyed and reviewed here). Being inside the head of a crazy person might do that to you. As the reader is exposed to the mares of day and night that David Beers portrays, they speak to more than Alex Valdez and others. The reader can almost feel what is happening, that sense of dread leaking through the pages.

Along the way, the reader not only gets to see inside Alex's head, but almost every other character in Dead Religion gets a spotlight of their own (including the antagonist). Every character has a motivation for what they are doing. The past informs the present and thus the future. This is, however, not a case of so much POV jumping that the reader is left scratching their head for a lot of the book. There is a fair amount of back-story integrated into the book, but it is not just thrown at the reader like a storm of drops to be caught in a shot glass. Back-stories are revealed at appropriate times in the book where they will inform the reader in greater

detail about what is happening in the present. They add some needed flavour like a garnish on top of a meal, or the cherry on your ice cream sundae.

Sometimes a scene will take longer to happen than it would in some other books you might have read, but this is not a detriment. Quick POV jumping within a scene will inform the reader of what is happening in every character's head as every inch of a blade sinks slowly into some dying man's flesh, or a storm envelopes the sky, one cloud at a time. Horrific scenes will effect the perpetrator, victim, and onlookers in different ways, but the reader will be able to feel the horror in all its tangible might from within the dark corners of every character's mind(s).

The Bad:

If you are one who is bothered by profanity (especially the "F" word) this is not a book for you. There is a lot of swearing in Dead Religion, to the point where I thought it was unnecessary. I realise that there are some people out there that speak between a slew of profanity, using it like the "um" in their sentences, but does every character have to swear so much? If it added to their character in some way, that would make sense, but almost every character in Dead Religion seems to need profanity like their morning coffee. Even the characters who apparently "don't swear" or at least "not a lot" use strong profanity (or think it) more than you would find in a lot of books.

I will admit, I was drawn in by the characters at the beginning, but it was a little hard to follow. For the most part, it works, but there is the odd time where something was happening, and I was not sure whether this was past, present, or future. The most prominent time this happens is when the back-story of Alex Valdez is being told. In the middle of a conversation there is a cut to the past (and a lengthy one) just to return to the dialogue as if nothing had happened. A little bit of re-organization in the first quarter of the book would have enhanced the appeal immensely. The beginning doesn't flow like a story, but rather a bunch of events that the reader must piece together to makes sense of what is going on.

If the beginning and the end are what defines a good book, Dead Religion missed the mark. More focus at the beginning would have been nice, and some pre-plot build up/character development would have made the horror to ensue in said character's lives more relateable. Though the character and plot are good, I never felt like I was the character, instead having that out-of-book experience where I was looking down on the action like a bystander. The ending is also not as strong as I would have liked. Don't get me wrong, the book has a definite ending and not much more could have been said to wrap it up, but I was left scratching my head a bit when turning the final page. A few things about the "dead religion" that the book is named after were poorly explained so that I wasn't totally sure why certain things were (or weren't) happening. However, nothing major is left hanging, and the book still has a satisfactory conclusion.

Conclusion:

Dead Religion is a book that will draw you in with the psychological insanity of a supposed killer, describing his nightmares in such detail that you will almost feel his pain. After a rocky start, this book will guide you through the mind and lives of many individuals who are all working toward the same thing: sanity. If you don't mind profanity and some disturbing scenes, and like to see how someone's past can effect their future (and they psyche), this book is for you.

Jamie says

David Beers is an incredibly talented writer. There isn't much that I can say that will do this story justice.

I love Stephen King novels, as well as the horror and dark fantasy genres, which is why I picked David Beers' book up when a friend suggested it to me, and I have to say that I was so impressed!

David Beers has one of the most unique writing styles out there. He manages to entertain you, while scaring the crap out of you, while also making you think. This novel has something for everyone. You will love the interplay between the characters! You will also love the way the fast paced plot develops. It will keep you addicted! I will definitely go on and buy the next book David Beers releases! Standing ovation for Dead Religion by David Beers!!!

iamjenai says

The story started out great. Past the 50+ pages I stopped reading due to some paperwork I had to finish. Reading Dead Religion the second time, I found myself confused and lost with the story and characters. It was hard to remember things.

I have to admit that I rarely finish a book in one sitting since I work full time, school, kids, hobbies, etc. So I need a book that I can easily connect with, without refreshing my memory every time I picked it up. You know something like a tv series. And sadly, Dead Religion is not that book. It was annoying that I can't tell who's who and I end up flipping back to the earlier pages to be connected with the characters and story again. I soon lost interest reading only 5-10 pages a day. I couldn't even recognize the main characters anymore and I think it was mainly because of the alternating point of views of all the characters in the story.

Overall, story/plot wise, it's something original for me, Dead Religion tells the story about ancient Aztec gods, how the "new people" are connected with these ancient gods. If you are into those ancient history things and do not mind the alternating POV's, then you might want to read this.

Lucinda says

This spinechilling, creepy novel will have you glued to the page for hours with such feverish intensity, as you fall prey to a powerful hypnotizing narrative!!

This remarkable, truly original story is just incredible and which has totally blown me away hence I am so excited by an author whose writing style is truly distinctive, that you could not compare to anything else. This bloodcurdling, graphic horror/ thriller story is so intense that you will find yourself unable to avert your gaze, as unnerving thoughts on the real essence and meaning of life fill your mind as you plunge into this disturbing tale. Unsettling and yet totally mesmerizing I found myself captivated by the horrors and nightmares, the blood sacrifices and the never-ending screams. Each page was filled with a poison that slowly takes hold of you until your mind is plucked from your body, by such a strong narrative that remains within your mind long afterwards. Flitting between reality and insanity this is a book that explores religion by posing the question if there really is a God (very subtly as the author creates his own 'God' or evil symbol), in addition to shocking the reader with such strange occurrences that make you cling even more

onto the individualistic characters within the tale. As someone who is not normally a huge fan or reader of this genre I was so impressed, as I was surprised by how much I dared to love whilst being pre-prepared to hate this story.

(SPOILERS – In the next section)

Hotel Indigo explodes in Mexico City, killing thousands of human beings and at its centre is Mexican-American Alex Valdez, who was for 2 years prior to the significant event being treated for mental illness. Before the Government gets involved the FBI is keen to find out what really happened and so agent James Allison is sent to trace the ‘supposed’ murderer’s steps, although he has no idea about Alex’s life nor the darkness that infringed it. Alex’s parents Julianne and Lucas spent their lives running from an Aztec God (Maux) whose intent on draining all life and bending humans to his will, not only on Earth but in other universes and galaxies throughout the world as it desires supremacy & dominance over all. His mother wrote down everything, trying to explain this remarkable ‘thing’ and how it eventually took hold so that they committed suicide within a hotel room.

Alex as a man is haunted by dark, terrifying dreams and the question of whether a ‘God’ exists at all. He is a man who is unable to tell what reality is and what isn’t, as his wife Brittany witnesses such atrocities that he commits to his own flesh...going backwards in time one looks at what happened to Alex Valdez in the last few days before the Hotel’s collapse, when James looks into the truth that threatens to also unhinge his own mind, cloud his judgment (if he is not careful) and threaten to take away his brother Brandon from him; as the nightmares spread and the teeth appear. Valdez believes that he can stop this demon. James focuses on getting home alive to see his brother and Doctor Daniel Nayek soon succumbs to the overwhelming power of Maux...possessed by this God death and the sacrifice of suicide rises as to does the tension and drama, for the great ending of the human race is imminent unless one man who is strong enough in mind and spirit can carry out his parents final wish and defeat the evil...

(NO Spoilers – from here onwards)

This extraordinary, chilling and totally terrifying narrative is similar to a horror film that is so fantastic & yet gruesome you are unable to tear your eyes away although a tiny part of you almost wants to (for the sake of sanity). The intricate details such as each chapter being named ‘falling, fallen or standing’ and the twists in the plot that keep you constantly guessing, sat in suspense not knowing what is going to happen is so clever and inspired and which makes this not just a good read but something great! Ending on such a dramatic, exciting and astounding climax takes your breath away, and which certainly had me sat on the edge of my seat, reading furiously through the nail-biting narrative. The cliffhanger is just spine-tingling and hair-raising, leaving you speechless...something so gruesome that you hate but totally love?!

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the author for letting me have the opportunity of reading his work.

Regina says

An interesting premise of a man whose parents awoke an ancient god who would bring on the destruction of mankind through murder and sacrifice, and his need to stop it from happening. This could stand to have a bit of editing and fleshing out a couple of the main characters some more.

Michael Fierce says

Review coming soon

TC says

Alex Valdez has spent most of his life trying to get away from a nightmare that has haunted him and destroyed his parents. When Alex is linked to a terrorist attack on a hotel in Mexico City FBI Agent James Allison is despatched to find out what happened and why, before the incident becomes a major diplomatic issue. He uncovers a history of mental illness, which started when his parents held an ancient blood rite to awaken a forgotten God. This is part thriller part horror, told from several viewpoints as the Aztec God finds himself growing in strength once more.

In the early part of the book we discover plenty of Alex's recent past and a little of his early life with parents haunted and hunted before they met an early death. Although his supportive wife and a therapist at one point persuade him that his nightmares are nothing more than that over time he begins to doubt once more and descends back into terror. It had the definite air of a thriller about it, but as events began to pick up pace the story telling moved more firmly into the realm of horror with plenty of blood and gore, and a vengeful God who is now hunting more and more people associated with Alex. I really felt his growing unease, and eventual terror. He was definitely the most well rounded of the characters, and although Allison plays quite a key role there were other characters that featured less but struck more of a chord with me.

On the whole the book was well written and nicely paced. The foundations were well laid early on with a gradual addition of more and more information to really put flesh on the bones of the story. Some of the descriptions made me flinch and I liked that this was a horror with a decent back story rather than the protagonists facing some vague, ill defined malevolence. However there were a few typos that should have been picked up and I felt the epilogue left too much unresolved for my liking. However as an entirety I really enjoyed this read.

Julie Dismukes says

I got so confused reading this book that I decided fictional Gods could do a better job of it. Please welcome the Dread Cthulhu and Nyarlathotep.

I received this book as an ARC. That in no way influenced my review. The book has promise, but I got so confused at the end I had to summon imaginary Gods to talk about it. Take that as the best recommendation I can honestly give.

Cthulhu: (at the bar of the Gods, where even fictional Gods hang out): "Hey, Huitzliopochitli, I decided to buy you a drink. Come over here and talk with us. Can I call you Huitzlio?

Huitzliopochitli: "You bought me a beer? Yeah, I guess I could tolerate your company as long as you're giving me things. What are you, anyway? You look like a cross between an octopus gone through the meat

shredder, a man, and a--what the X0@*^!! is it with all your tentacles?"

Nyarlathotep: "Got to love your charismatic approach, baby. This beer is from Belgium. It was invented by these monks who would only allow themselves to drink it for weeks on end and then they would record their visions. Sweet, isn't it?"

Huizlio: (Spitting out the drink in revulsion) "WHERE IS THE CORN?"

Cthulhu (leaning over to Nyarlathotep) "He's one of 'those' Gods. Maybe we should have invented something with corn?"

Nyarlathotep: "Tentacled corn with eyes?"

Cthulhu: "Yeah, that sounds promising. Still, corn gods are so snobbish."

Huizlio: "I didn't have to make corn, you dimwit. I can make war on you. I can end the frigging world if I want to."

Cthulhu: "Just because I'm imaginary doesn't mean...oh, forget it. More people pray to me than you!"

Just dropping off a book for you. Written by David Beers. I cannot believe ancient people actually worshiped you after you give them nothing but pain and misery? I mean, I have to sell off cute dolls of myself and listen to repugnant children say, 'I love you, Cthulhu' every day of my life. And I have more followers than you do nowadays!"

Huizlio: "It was more of a matter of them hoping if they offered up enough sacrifices, I wouldn't visit at all. Spoiler alert: More sacrifices. No, that's not enough. More. Fooled you! You killed off your loved ones for nothing. Bye, bye, suckers."

Nyarlathotep: "I kind of admire that."

Cthulhu: "I think the doll method is better."

Huizlio: "You have no pride."

Cthulhu: "How many comic books have been written about you, lately? Star in any comic books with 'Hello Kitty'? I have secret cultists now! How many people try to do magic spells thinking of you?"

Huizlio: "Well, um, at least I have this book by David Beers!"

Cthulhu: "But I don't understand it! I get that there was this ceremony in which a baby was offered to become your 'second coming' but face it, it's just gross. I at least gave my audiences something they could imagine. You, on the other hand, are just incomprehensible."

Nyarlathotep sniggers, handing Huzlio another beer.

Cthulhu, standing up to intimidate Huzlio, who has ordered a third beer despite its lack of corn: "You have no followers. That I know of, anyway. That makes you are as fictional as I am. Even this stupid book does not make sense. First I get psyched up about making Alex mad and eating him and his woman, then I have to

switch points to these brothers, one of whom is a CIA agent, then I get totally lost. Is there a point to this book? Is it a musical? I mean, what do you intend to do as Alex, anyway?"

Nyarlethotep sighed. "Human beings are just so fragile. And small. At least you could take the form of a giant poisonous lizard? I mean, you see this random guy with a dead wife and what? Who the hell cares? At least the video game 'Lollipop Chainsaw' had a protagonist who was very cute and had a talking head as a companion."

Huizlio tapped the table, feeling slightly drunk. A strange emotion filled his heart: regret. He looked at the two imaginary gods thoughtfully. Maybe I should listen to their advice, he thought to himself: "Maybe I should get a doll. Maybe one that makes children bleed?"

Cthulhu: "Would never pass the security measures in place by governments."

Huizlio: "Rats."

Cthulhu: "I think you should make a cutesy doll of yourself. And have somebody explain to us what the *&(^*&!! happened in this book."

Huizlio: "At least my doll will have corn."

Tony says

What happens to a god when the last of its believers are long dead? And what if that god were a demon? It may just wait, growing ever hungry. Dead Religion is about such a god and those who would see it rise again to power and those who would stand in its way.

If apocalyptic could describe a writing style (never mind theme) then reading David Beers' Dead Religion would be the template. Every chapter, every event, every moment is world shattering and soul destroying. It's amazing the characters can even manage getting out of bed in the morning--but of course, the poor, sleep-deprived souls in this brand of horror novel are only allowed to ever dream in the blackest of blacks and reddest of reds. The adjectives and descriptions are so intense and final (e.g., "endless pits", "endless green depth", "the seemingly endless amount") one routinely feels caught in a climactic moment, only to discover another chapter of bottomless horror. The impression that things are forgone and hopeless suggests the author is most interested in his readers enduring a book-length thought experiment in real-time eschatology. So this is the way Beers' world ends: not with a bang but a whimper...from the collective mouth of countless decapitated heads.

Johnny says

This book was oozing unique. There aren't too many authors out there that can do what David Beers did in dead religion. It was scary, funny, filled with suspense, and drama, but it smoothly transitioned between them and as a reader I felt like I was fully connected with the characters, and it was easy for me to follow this book. David Beers leaves plenty of room for the reader to use his or her own imagination, and that

imagination is what he will then use to scare the hell out of you. Pick this book up if you like horror and dark fantasy novels and you will not be disappointed! 5-stars! This was a freaking awesome read!
