



## Darkblade Assassin

*Andy Peloquin*

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## **Darkblade Assassin** Andy Peloquin

Dexter meets the Punisher. Durzo Blint meets Ezio Auditore da Firenze. An epic fantasy novel of betrayal, death, violence, and vengeance readers are calling "fearless, unique, and above all dangerous!"

2017 Readers' Award Finalist

2016 RONE Awards Finalist

The best assassin in the world doesn't come cheap. Betraying him will cost your soul.

The Hunter is a name feared by all in Voramis. He is an outcast, driven by a cursed dagger with an unquenchable thirst for blood and death.

Yet he follows one simple code: kill those who truly deserve to die. His creed is put to the test when, deceived by a shadowy employer, he unknowingly slaughters an innocent man.

With the most powerful criminal organization in the city after his head, the Hunter must fight for his life and find a way to atone for his mistake. When his enemies harm the people under his protection, it will take much more than an army of criminals to stand in the way of his revenge.

If you love anti-heroes like the Punisher or Dexter in a breathtaking fantasy realm, then immerse yourself in Hero of Darkness today! Andy Peloquin delivers an epic tale of one man's struggle to survive in a world of magic, blood, and death.

## Darkblade Assassin Details

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Author : Andy Peloquin

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## From Reader Review Darkblade Assassin for online ebook

### Dustin says

I hardly think the premise does the book justice; here's a review that does:

<https://weatherwaxreport.blog/2018/08...>

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### Michael says

I received Blade Of The Destroyer in exchange for an honest review and I have to admit that I didn't realize that it was a fantasy novel. I'm more of a horror/bizarro guy so I was a bit worried. I can't even tell you the last time I read a fantasy novel. I do have an open mind though and have been known to genre hop from time to time. I'm the kind of reader that likes a good story regardless of what genre it's in. It's quite nice to sometimes step outside of your comfort zone and see what other books are out there. As I started this I was instantly hooked. Blade is an often violent novel about a guy called the Hunter. This is one bad ass dude but unlike a lot of other novels Andy gives this guy some depth and it's the Hunter himself that fuels this novel.

Blade is the start of a new series and what I like is that the story moves quickly and unlike a lot of other novels you aren't mired into a lot of set up. It all runs smoothly and as the story progresses so you learn exactly who and what the Hunter is and the blood shed and violence balance out the tale nicely. As a horror fan I wasn't sure what to expect but what I enjoyed here is Andy's eye for detail. You almost feel as if you're right there with these characters and not just observing. This a book that you instantly become absorbed in and it becomes impossible to put down.

The one thing I can't do is compare it to other fantasy novels. This is not a genre that I read, but as I finished Destroyer I knew that I would read the next book in the series just to see how the story evolves. Andy is a talented writer and you can tell that he put a lot of effort into this novel to make it flow as well as it does. This is a book that not only grabs your attention, but holds it hostage. Fantasy fans will enjoy the hell out of this and even non fantasy fans should check this one out for the simple fact that it's a great story. I couldn't help but imagine this huge power metal soundtrack playing during the battle scenes. As I write this I have Sinbreed playing and it fits this novel well. Death to false metal, and hail Blood Hunger!!!

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### Esmerelda Weatherwax says

The title definitely lets you know what this story is going to be about, so if you like assassins you may want to check this one out.

The main character is simply known as "The Hunter", he's an immortal being that works as an assassin for all sorts of clientele – the only thing that matters to The Hunter is if the client has the money. He has many lifelike masks he uses, never wanting anyone to see his real face to keep his identity a secret – and he can also adopt multiple personality types to go along with those masks. He carries something called Soulhunger, a dagger he uses while on the job and it literally takes his victim's soul, transferring it to the blade. It's both

sentient and telepathic and mostly uses their link to beg The Hunter to kill everyone around them. The Hunter has no sense of remorse, he doesn't feel anything but pleasure when he kills, mostly thanks to Soulhunger. After killing someone he gets a brief reprieve where Soulhunger goes dormant for a few days, and instead of enjoying the silence where he's not constantly bombarded by the dagger begging for blood, he feels empty and alone. He would go into fits where he couldn't sleep, or he slept all the time and still woke up exhausted. It seems that while Soulhunger sleeps, so do his powers. He has extremely shakey and disjointed memories of his life before he came to the city of Voramis, he doesn't remember his real name, doesn't know where he came from, and doesn't know how he came to have Soulhunger. It's been so long though he doesn't care anymore, he's lived in Voramis for hundreds of years and has given up on trying to discover his past.

The first half of the book focuses on what The Hunter's daily life is like, how he takes jobs and gets new clients etc. He gets into a lot of sticky situations, one of which almost killing him. He gets on the wrong side of the Bloody Hand, which is a group of 5 people who run most of Voramis. They don't like the fact that The Hunter is working in their territory and want him gone. The Hunter is immortal and this was put to the test when he was captured by the Bloody Hand, they spent a lot of time slicing and dicing him, even stabbing him in the heart to see if there was a way to kill him. He manages to escape and then falls into the hands of a priest of the Beggar God. This is about 50% through the book and where things pick up. The priest knows much more about The Hunter's life and backstory than he does, he knows where he lives, what he's done with his life, who he was before his memory went blank etc. I won't go into that since it's spoilery – but it's revealed that this priest works for a group that helps keep the demons out of Einan. The Gods once went to war, and they called demons from other realms to help fight in their wars, it left humans devastated and a few demons stayed on Einan after the wars. The priest belongs to an order that makes sure the banished demons don't make it back to Einan and he needs The Hunter's help to keep them at bay.

The Hunter is a very grey character, more anti-hero than a villain but it could be argued either way. Although he doesn't feel remorse when he kills, he does mostly kill assholes, and there are people he feels a need to protect and keep safe. He has lines he won't cross, he doesn't approve of the slave trade or sexual assault, so it's clear he has at least some baseline of common morals but in other areas, he's far from what you'd call a good person. It took me a while to warm up to this guy though, in the beginning of the book I was worried about what kind of depth could be achieved with the way the story was going, but there were glimpses of layers under the psychotic serial killer persona. The Hunter lives in an abandoned building surrounded by the homeless and beggars, he deliberately makes his home unattractive to people so no one comes in. He says he hates every single human around him, but he contradicts himself by watching after the homeless, he sees himself as their protector and although he doesn't interact with them, he likes the company. He went so far as to leave them bundles of food & clothing and he tried to find medicine for a sick old lady. He has a lot of contrasting character traits that may or may not work for you – they mostly worked for me.

This was a pretty dark book, the character does a lot of objectionable things, a lot of people die, there are demons and torture scenes. If you're not a fan of grimdark I wouldn't read this book.

This was extremely fast paced, there was almost always something going on. For some people, it may be a little too fast-paced, maybe a little rushed in a few places but nothing that was so rushed I was left feeling confused. Many things were spelled out for the reader, particularly when we were introduced to this priest who knew everything about the character, so there was a bit of info dumping in those scenes. The writing style was pretty straightforward, it was told in the third person mostly from a single POV. There are minor POV's throughout the book, but many times those characters meet up with The Hunter so it's all related and easy to follow. There isn't a ton of cursing in this, there were only two fucks through the whole book – so if you're okay with light cursing, this is that.

I definitely see the appeal in this book, it's done very well for itself over on Goodreads with a 4.11 average with ~450 ratings. It took me a while to get into though, as the first 30 – 40% or so didn't catch me, but I'll also point out I'm not typically one for darker characters. However, I wanted to read all my books front to back and I'm glad I kept going because I got more into it as the layers of the main character were pulled back a bit.

Audience:

For people who like:

- \* assassins
- \* sentient weapons
- \* mysterious magic
- \* darker tone
- \* grey/anti hero characters
- \* demons
- \* mystic/ancient orders
- \* Gods
- \* nonhuman pov's

Ratings:

Plot: 11/15

Characters: 12.75/15

World Building: 12/15

Writing: 10.5/15

Pacing: 12/15

Originality: 11/15

Personal Enjoyment: 6.25/10

Final Score: 75/100 or 3.75/5 on Goodreads

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## **Michael says**

I had heard great things about Andy Peloquin's work and I always love finding prolific authors, so delving into Darkblade Assassin to begin the massive epic tale of The Hunter Of Voramis had me intrigued and full of anticipation.

The Hunter is an assassin, and at the novel's beginning, more or less a lone wolf. From the start, we learn that he has little knowledge of his past, and that despite being a feared killer by criminals, he is actually quite a defender of social justice and protects street beggars in his home, and has a reputation in the city of Voramis as a protector. He also possesses an ability to heal quickly, making him virtually immortal, as well as a mysterious sentient dagger known as Soulhunger, that urges The Hunter to kill, steals the souls of its victims and endows him with greater power.

Much of the novel deals with setting up exactly who The Hunter is. He is sent on a mission to murder the

supposed rapist of a nobleman's granddaughter, only to find himself swept up in a web of mistaken identity, and torture that ultimately leads not only to a new mission, one that likely sets the foundation for the entire series, but to the shocking comprehension of who he is, and why he possesses his unique gifts.

Peloquin spends a great deal of the novel inside the mind of its protagonist. The Hunter is a conflicted character, constantly at war with his desire to help those less fortunate and his addiction to killing partially due to the influence of Soulhunger. I've stated before that his character contains elements of Robin Hood and Venom, and despite some extremely violent scenes, Peloquin never lets us forget that at the core, he has heroic intent.

Peloquin's prose, while not overly complex, reads well and his technique of switching from the main narrative to The Hunter's own inner monologue keep the novel engaging despite the great deal of setup that occurs.

With seven books in the series already in print, it was clear that this was only the beginning and that Peloquin had barely scratched the surface. I am

Invested in The Hunter as a tortured hero. I am definitely planning on continuing the series as I suspect the world of Voramis will expand with new and interesting characters, more intense action, and more internal conflict, as this very real and three dimensional hero continues on his mission. A fantastic series debut from a great voice in Epic Fantasy.

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### **Alyssia Cooke says**

I'm torn here because whilst this is undoubtedly a well written book, it relies on the shock factor of exceptionally heavy violence to pull it through the narrative and that just doesn't quite work for me. That said, if you like your novels to be full of cut tendons and almost torture porn scenes, then this will probably be right up your alley. There is certainly a market for that type of writing and if you are within that, then this is likely going to easily be a four star novel.

For me however, the violence felt gratuitous and rather unnecessary by the time I got half way through the novel. It starts strongly with The Hunter tracking his latest prey and the sense of mystery is exceptionally well portrayed. You want to find out more about this deadly assassin and yet his own lack of memory means that details are slow to emerge. I really enjoyed this first section where you follow the hunter through assignations and unravel at least some of his character.

The part where it starts to fall a little flat for me however is once the tension of the cloak and dagger starts to die and the blood-frenzy begins. So many people die, are mutilated or otherwise maimed that it loses any of the shock value that it had to start with. Most noticeably of all however, some of the deaths are clearly meant to have a greater impact than others on the reader and yet because they are lost within the bodies so to speak, you simply don't feel the emotional resonance.

The character building of The Hunter is undeniably strong; he is a dark and brooding figure who seems to be constantly at war with his own morality and conscience. The author teases details out about him, until the moment when all the secrets become unravelled. Along with the world-building and mythology that is built around him, the author clearly shows promise. However, the characterisations of many side characters falls flat; you simply get one or two instances with them and you are somehow meant to care when they get killed.

Essentially, all this needed was a little bit of tidying for my four star rating. At 300 pages, it's a short novel and yet too much of it was concerned with the slashing of muscles and the smashing of joints. Some of it is necessary, after all, The Hunter is an assassin with a blade that drinks its victims very souls. His entire life revolves around the act of killing. Where the victims are carefully chosen and stalked, this adds a layer of tension to the telling, particularly when you can feel yet not quite see the politics building up behind it. The descent into blood-lust however just got a little bit silly at the end.

At the same time, non-central characters were not developed to their full potential which is a shame as the author is clearly a skilled writer and with a little more development, this would be a stunning novel. There also seemed to be too many names of the cast of characters and it didn't really matter whether you managed to keep them straight or not. I think if the author had made an effort to properly flesh out five of the minor characters, putting some meat on their bones, it would have made a much fuller tale with its potential realised.

All in all, not a bad book at all and in fair it isn't that far off a four star novel. Personally, I'd have preferred more characterisation of lesser players in the tale and less gratuitous violence. I'd quite happily take 100 pages of additional characterisation though regardless and that would actually work to dilute the blood-frenzy more evenly throughout the novel.

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### **Dianne says**

**For Fantasy lovers from Andy Peloquin, to announce the release of CHILD OF THE GUILD, enter to win one of FIVE eCopies of BLADE OF THE DESTROYER - Book 1 of The Last Bucelarii Series (Another 5 Star Tome Tender Read!) International - Click on Banner to Enter!**

The Hunter is a cursed and immortal killing machine, his blade thirsty for blood, tormenting him until it is fed. For a price he will do anyone's bidding, no questions asked, but will one assignment put him in the position of the prey? Dark and haunting, we are introduced to The Hunter, a murderer for hire, dark, mysterious and seemingly pure evil, but is it a façade to hide a man tortured by a lack of a past? Prepare for the dark side of life, where death is easily purchased and a reputation may be the difference between life and death. Welcome to the amazing talent of Andy Peloquin and **Blade of the Destroyer**.

How does Mr. Peloquin give us an anti-hero the likes of which we have not seen? Pure creative genius, wonderfully detailed scenes, boldly drawn characters with more than one obvious side, feel the streets, smell the air, the sweat and the greed. The Hunter has a human side, one who cares for the poor and homeless, who defends the weak against evil, yet lives at the mercy of his blade, no longer able to remember his past, who he once was and why he is as he is now, trapped in a bloody world of immortality and pain. Imagine the thought process by the author to so gravely conflict his "hero." Imagine a world so bleak and foreboding, the underbelly of society, then imagine the light of truth on the path to destruction. That is great writing, a twisted plot, unique hero and the feeling that we are there to share in his moments and his true nature. You may want to bring hand sanitizer and your own pillows, as we witness a dark history unfold brilliantly!

I received this copy from Andy Peloquin in exchange for my honest review.

Series: The Last Bucelarii - Book 1

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Genre: Dark Adult Fantasy  
Print Length: 299 pages  
Available from: Amazon | Barnes & Noble  
For Reviews & More: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

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### **Amy says**

Actual Rating: 3.5 Stars!

Blade of the Destroyer follows the story of Hunter. He is the perfect assassin. He is ruthless and hungers for blood. However his services come with a price. His newest job will prove to be his undoing. Everything that could go wrong will and it will leave him questioning everything that he thought he knew.

I'm going to be honest, I wasn't sure what I was getting myself into when I read the synopsis of this book. It sounded much darker than what I typically read. That being said, I was intrigued and had to know more. Blade of the Destroyer is a dark and gritty tale. It is captivating and will pull you into this darker side of fantasy. The story is creative, imaginative and unique. Hunter is a killer. The anti-hero. He is the guy you want to hate, but you can't because you're intrigued by him; his story, why he is the way that he is.

Overall, I found this book to be a very enjoyable read. I thought the story-line was refreshing and intriguing. I think this series is off to really promising start. You can tell that the author really put a lot of thought and planning into his story and the world that he created. He is not afraid to pull you out of your comfort zone. Andy Peloquin is a new author to me and has definitely peaked my interest. I can't wait to see what lies ahead next in this series.

\*I was provided an ARC copy of this book via the author, in exchange for an honest review\*

My review can also be seen at: [http://onceuponabookblog.com/2015/08/...](http://onceuponabookblog.com/2015/08/)

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### **Amanda Lyons says**

The Hunter is neither man nor monster and yet is both at once. He knows no life before this and cannot remember a great deal of the time that has passed since he began hunting. He does not let these things trouble him, living each day with his many masks, some cruel, some kind, slaying some while he saves others. He is true neutral and about to discover there is more to the life he lives whether he wants to or not.

I liked this book, we find ourselves pulled into the world of an anti-hero who wields a blade he does not fully understand or like but which offers him protection from death and serious injury. He does a great deal of killing with it, and make no mistake, it is something he enjoys, but he is also offering help to many people in need where he lives. It's a life he is satisfied with, if a little frustrated when it comes to memories he can't quite place, that is until he begins to pulled into the goings on of two major groups that overshadow Voramis. It is in these two groups that he begins to uncover answers about himself and the life he has been living,

unfortunately, it also costs him a great deal and he is left with many decisions, decisions he absolutely does not want to make.

This will definitely appeal to Weeks fans, but I think will also be appealing to fans of Mark Lawrence, who does The Broken Empire books which features another antihero with a sense of humor and lack of interest in being just what everyone expects. Definitely of interest to readers who like the darker side of fantasy and characters who ride the line between good and evil.

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### **Emma says**

In the city of Voramis, a dark presence stalks his prey. He is the Hunter; an assassin of great skill and an unknown past. Who is he? Even he's not sure, but it matters little as long as the contracts keep coming and the blood of the guilty continues to feed the insatiable blade Soulhunger which he carries. But there are other things at work in the city, rumours of cults and gangs of thugs who he finds himself tangled up with. And of course, like his alchemical masks, these rumours are barely scratching the surface of the dank underground of Voramis that is so much worse than organised crime...

The book starts strongly. The Hunter is dark and dangerous, skulking in the shadows and carrying out his hits. The city is an intriguingly dank and dismal place, sketched out in true grimdark fashion; gutters full of trash, whores on every street corner, beggars and thieves aplenty, nobles with plenty of gold and a desire to bump each other off. But then I felt the story meandered a little.

Suddenly our ruthless assassin spent time musing about flowers and thinking on how he'd helped his poor neighbors. OK, so he has a nice side, but we're told rather than shown this. The Hunter is also a tad inconsistent in other ways - for example, he only ants to punish the wicked, but insists on not knowing the details of why he's been hired. A bit odd? If I'm honest, I found the book begin to drag because we spent a lot of time being told things by the Hunter's internal monologue about his character. He doesn't know who he is, and somehow he... doesn't care? He can also be unusually naive given his experience (view spoiler) Side characters weren't really present beyond the Hunter's musings, so it felt hard to care about any of them. Interesting to note the antagonists have a penchant for soliloquy.

This book is very violent. I'm not going to say it's a problem exactly, as being a grimdark fantasy about an assassin what else would you expect? However, I did feel that during various killing sprees and torture scenes, it all just went on too long and some scenes felt like unnecessary repeats of earlier events. There was also a lot of repetition; words used close together, concepts and/or conversation topics, and then whole sections happening again (the Hunter has a "ritual").

It's also quite heavy on the fantasy lore, which is a good thing, but it could be delivered in heavy chunks that were hard to take in. I did find that some elements were alluded to early on but not explained until much later (view spoiler). This could be quite jarring, not understanding why a character would think or say that, as it's usually quite specific.

It's an interesting tale, but one which could do with a little extra polish. Perhaps I expected more having seen that it's a reworking of an earlier story. It's by no means a bad book, but the main character's inconsistency and the writing style (repetitions repetitions) did leave me frustrated at times. Still, the narrative wraps up nicely at the end (view spoiler) and leaves plenty for further exploration as the Hunter undertakes his mission. There's a huge amount of scope for how this could happen and so much opportunity for world building.

I'm not certain that this series is really going to appeal to me. However, if you're looking for some grimdark grime with an ambiguous protagonist and more lore than you can shake an enchanted dagger at, this could be a series for you.

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### **Melissa Bryan says**

In Process. Coming your way soon. I did love the book but I want to do it justice with a great review.

This book is like nothing else I have read. A new world, new people, new gods, and new villains. Set in a world of hunger, abuse, and violence.

It is about a sword for hire. He is known as The Hunter.

Everyone knows him, everyone fears him because he always gets his target. He has magical swords that not only help him find his prey but needs the blood of the victims.

The book has a lot of fighting, sword play and bloody deaths. It is put together so well I didn't want to put the book down. It also has gruesome violence for everyone and some sex just to spice it up.

It is a wonderful action packed story about a man trying to find out who and where he has come from.

I would recommend this book to everyone, from Teen to Senior. It is a fantastic ride and I for one am glad I took it.

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### **Tim The Enchanter says**

Gavel Award Winner for Best Indie Novel

Posted to The Literary Lawyer

#### **A Promising Start - 3.5 Stars**

This series is by "new to me" author Andy Peloquin. Having followed the author's blog for some time and reading about his experiences and thoughts on writing, I was interested to see how his writing translated into a novel. I was pleasantly surprised with the first installment in this new fantasy series. While it billed as dark fantasy, I am not sure that is entirely apt. While there are a few dark elements, the main character displayed characteristics of light and darkness and the plot rarely ventured too far into dark content.

#### **Plot Summary**

The story focuses on and is told from the perspective of "The Hunter". The Hunter is an assassin for hire but he is no ordinary killer. For reasons unknown to himself, he possesses the ability to quickly heal from most any injury and possesses an innate ability to track his victims. He wields a mysterious blade to which he is bonded and from which he gains extraordinary strength. In the course of his work, he kill with regard only to his pay but The Hunter's work thrusts him into the midst of political maneuverings and a questionable murder exposes him to danger he did not anticipate. Through the dangerous series of events, The Hunter

learns the source of his power and his mysterious past.

## **Plot Summary**

The novel was a mixed bag. Throughout the first two thirds of the book, I was quite engaged. I found The Hunter to be both intriguing and confounding. On one hand, he was dark, brooding and mysterious yet he was often unsure of himself and troubled with a nagging sense of morality. While his often conflicting self made The Hunter difficult to understand, it made him an interesting and compelling character.

Overall, the writing was quite good. The characterization was strong and up until the last quarter or so, the dialogue was strong. As the book raced toward an explosive finish, the pace of the dialogue quickened and became clipped. It felt as if in the writing of the final scenes, the author was rushed and the quality took a hit. While I was satisfied with the resolution, there were some bumps along the way.

The author goes to great lengths to create a mythology and world for his character. Overall, this was skillfully done. There is specific care to building a complex system of religion and myth that colors the views and actions of the characters. On this note, after finishing the book, I headed over to the authors page on Goodreads to see his favorite authors and books. It was no surprise that he is a fan of and influenced by Scott Lynch. The entire religious system in this book was strikingly similar to the system found in The Lies of Locke Lamora. Readers who are familiar with Lynch with either see this as an homage to a great series or a simple knockoff. You decide for yourself.

## **Final Thoughts**

On the whole, the book is enjoyable with an interesting "herovillan". While I see the author has self published a previous book, this is the first that has been commercially published. As a first novel, it is a success and leaves me interested in the future happenings of The Hunter. I always expect growth in both writing skill and character development. If these both remain on an upward trajectory, I will continue to follow this series and this author.

Note on Adult Content:

While reading, I made specific note that the sexual content was mild. There were certainly adult situations, they were by no means graphic which lends this book to a wider audience.

This book is a new release and can be found [here](#) at Amazon

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## **Michelle Murray says**

This was a good story, but I found it confusing at times. There were a lot of minor characters and it was hard to remember who was who and why they were important. The storyline itself reminded me of an old show I used to watch, Highlander. I liked the character of the Hunter, and found him interesting. I would have liked more background on him, as one minute he's a mysterious character, and the next we find out he is half demon. If I could give this book 2.5 stars, I would.

At times, I had to put the book down as it got bogged down with the minor characters and I found it hard to get through. I did like the fighting scenes, however.

Overall, an interesting tale though I feel it could use some improvement in making the story flow better and

less players to the tale.

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### **Patrick Hedges says**

Two things you can always count on when you pick up an Andy Peloquin novel: strong, well-written characters with enough demons (literal and figurative) to fill an entire circle of Hell, and people getting killed in nasty ways. (Brave brave brave Sir Robin....)

The Hunter prowls the streets of Voramis, a crime-ridden city filled with corruptions, gangsters, and murderers. He's the best assassin money can buy, a master of disguise, and possesses a blade that is ... well, possessed. This blade, Soulhunger, cries out for blood, and if the Hunter doesn't feed it regularly, the voice in his head get louder and louder.

One day, The Hunter is hired to kill a man who turns out to not be what he appears. And there begins a chain of events that will show the Hunter not only who and what he truly is, but where he came from. In the coming war, he has to choose a side, which is not nearly as easy as one might think.

This book is filled with gore, violence, pain, and heartbreak. So, yeah, typical Peloquin. But it's also enticing, endearing, and impossible to put down.

Bring on Book Two.

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### **Garrison Kelly says**

The Hunter is a ruthless contract killer who always finishes his assignments and demands his payment right away. His methods are as mysterious as his actual birth name. He does everything on his own terms. Those who double-cross him will find themselves brutalized in the worst possible way. Rumors of his deadliness have spread far and wide, creating the illusion that he is invincible. But when he finishes an assassination of a high-ranking lord, he finds out that the aristocrat is involved with a criminal empire known as the Bloody Hand. Only through dealing with these merciless thugs will The Hunter's invincibility be truly tested.

The reason this book gets a passing grade (four stars if you're on Good Reads) is because of how well-constructed it is. Everything is so intricately researched to where the author himself feels like an authority on contract killings and stealth trickery. Whenever The Hunter needs a disguise, he not only puts on the right clothing, but he also puts plaster on his face to match the physical description of that character. When he needs an entry point into a castle or a fortress, he sneaks to the tippy-top of that building and eases his way inside with no problems. When he fights his opponents, they not only go down, they stay that way either through brutal incapacitation or death itself. The Hunter does everything he possibly can to keep his identity a secret while successfully going in for the kill.

As cold and calculating as he is, The Hunter is not without personal feelings. Every once and a while, he'll meet with a small child or a lonely beggar that he feels so much sympathy for that he'll pay them a little extra money and attention when walking by. He even allows beggars outside of his home, mostly to maintain subterfuge, but also because they have nowhere else to go. And whenever The Hunter sees a pretty woman, he's not without his primal urges to get in bed with her and do the nasty. This goes to show that no matter

how much you push your feelings down for the sake of your profession, they will always come back stronger than ever. It's what makes us human, and though people think of The Hunter as godlike, he is human.

But if there's one part about this novel that really had my attention, it's The Hunter's weapon of choice, the Bloodhunger. It's a jagged dagger that not only rips flesh and shatters bones, but also drains the spiritual essence out of those it penetrates. When Bloodhunger wants blood, he'll get it one way or another. Did I say he? That's because the dagger actually communicates with The Hunter in a schizophrenic fashion whenever it's time to kill someone. The hungrier the dagger is, the louder the head voices become. Sometimes The Hunter will have witty banter or a philosophical discussion in his own head about oligarchies, romance, and such, and Bloodhunger will completely interrupt his train of thought with violent words. Not only is this a creepy and frightening part of the story, but it's also quite original. Any form of against the grain creativity will always strike a chord with not just me, but also other readers.

Andy Peloquin may be an independent author, but he's no rookie. If he is, he doesn't write like one. His descriptions paint a vivid image in the reader's mind just like any piece of writing should. Blade of the Destroyer is no exception to that rule. You should also follow his blogs on Good Reads since his words of wisdom will ring true with any aspiring author. I follow him on Good Reads and we've actually become good friends over time. This passing grade I'm giving his book isn't because we're good friends. It's because he's a damn good writer with infinite potential and a creative mind. He can get the job done come hell or high water.

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### **Jessica says**

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

The Blade of the Destroyer was a fast and enthralling read for me (2 days). I usually take longer but this was really hard to put down. I absolutely love finding a book that pulls me in like this. I know why, too. Right from the opening this tale surged forward at a thrilling pace. The author's writing flowed wonderfully, making it an easy and fun read.

The setting (the city of Voramis) was fully realized and the main character (the Hunter) was immediately intriguing. The mystery surrounding The Hunter really hooked me. When this Hunter is first introduced, he's a less than a noble character, simply killing for coin, but we quickly find out there is much more to this man than just a notorious killer for hire. He is a man missing a past—he can't remember anything before arriving at Voramis's gates. His missing memory is not his only problem however, his other problem is sharp and deadly one—the dagger, Soulhunger. Layers of complexity are revealed and I became more and more engaged in the character's struggle.

This book has plenty of action. Oh the carnage! Fantastic bloodthirsty carnage! The fight scenes in this book were fast-paced, detailed and thrilling. I love a good sword fight and there is plenty of that here.

This story was mostly told from the Hunter's POV, but occasionally that did change to different characters. These careful switches were flawlessly done, allowing the story to continue to flow beautifully. There was the occasional instance where I felt there was some unnecessary repetition of certain information, but that didn't dampen my enjoyment of the story at all.

All I can say about the climax (because I don't want to spoil anything) is that it was awesome, and satisfying. The overall plot was well crafted from beginning to end. There were moments where my jaw dropped in shock and other moments where I nodded and said "aha! I knew it!" I love being that engaged in a story. So now I have to wait for the next book \*fidgets in frustration\* please don't make us wait too long. So I highly recommend this series, Andy Peloquin is an author to watch and I can't wait to see where he takes the Hunter next.

