



The Faceless One

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From a brilliant new voice in horror comes a riveting nightmare of ancient evil unleashed—and the bravery and sacrifice of those called to combat it.

In 1948, when he was just a boy, Jimmy Kalmaku trained with his uncle to be the shaman of his Tlingit village in Alaska. There he learned the old legends, the old myths, the old secrets. Chief among them was that of a mask locked in a prison of ice, and of the faceless god imprisoned within: a cruel and vengeful god called T'Nathluk, dedicated to the infliction of pain and suffering.

Now all but forgotten in a Seattle retirement home, Jimmy finds his life turned upside down. For when an unwitting archaeologist pries the mask free of its icy tomb, he frees T'Nathluk as well. Stuck in spirit form, the Faceless One seeks a human to serve as a portal through which he can enter our reality. The Faceless One can control—and mercilessly torture—anyone who touches the mask, which means there is no shortage of slaves to ferry it across the country to its chosen host.

Yet the Faceless One has foes as well: Stan Roberts, a tough New York cop whose pursuit of justice will lead him into a dark abyss of the soul; Steven, Liz, and Bobby, the family of the doomed archaeologist; and Jimmy Kalmaku, who must at last become the shaman of his boyhood dreams.

The Faceless One Details

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From Reader Review The Faceless One for online ebook

Patrice Hoffman says

The Faceless One is the debut novel by Mark Ospaugh that I will not soon forget. Jimmy Kalmaku is 7 years old when he first learns of The Faceless One. His Uncle Will is a shaman for their village in the lowlands along the Gulf of Alaska and is passing on his knowledge to Jimmy. The reason for this visit is to teach Jimmy the ways of the Tlingit people and how to fight this powerful evil entity should it escape the mask. For the sake of all humanity The Faceless One must remain imprisoned if there's any hope of surviving the chaos it can bring.

Like any good horror novel, the story must go on. What fun is it if this evil stayed holed up in some Alaskan cave? Over 65 years later a string of events leads Jimmy to believe that the power of the god inside the mask has escaped. He's been visited by Raven in his dreams and is sure that since he's the last resort of an extinct shaman lineage, he's on a mission to rid the world of this evil force.

The Faceless One includes a small host of characters who are all linked to each other. Although its obvious that all involved will at some point meet, Ospaugh brilliantly makes these characters real and worth taking the journey with. The conversations were real, the connections were real, and their reactions to situations were real. I can only remember one moment that I thought what is this guy thinking... no novel is complete without someone having their falling down when running moment.

Mark Ospaugh combines horror and native mythicism seamlessly. Eventually I found myself searching where the truth in the stories of Raven ended and Ospaugh's imagination began. The Faceless One manages to dodge every give away that it's a debut effort with great pacing, a fine attention to detail, and interesting plot without holes.

Overall, I loved reading The Faceless One and believe that lovers of horror and paranormal fiction will want to read this. Mark Ospaugh is a refreshing new voice in a genre that can seem so full of guts but no glory. I look forward to reading more by this author.

Carl Alves says

The Faceless One is a horror novel that is steeped in Native American legend, most of it surrounding old gods, one of which is The Faceless One, an evil entity that is seeking a human to enter the world and wreak havoc and destruction. When Jimmy Kalamaku was a boy he had an encounter with the Faceless One. Now that he is an old man, he is being called by the Raven, a trickster god who has humanity's best interest in his heart, to defeat the Faceless One. The mask that was holding this ancient deity was found in a geological expedition. It is up to Jimmy, his friend George from his retirement home, Stan Roberts, a New York detective who falls captive to the Faceless One, and the family of the archaeologist who uncovered the mask to defeat him and send him permanently into remission.

In Mark Ospaugh's debut novel, he showed the skills and talents of a seasoned veteran. He did a good of creating mood, starting with the setting of a small village in Alaska. I don't often read much fiction centered around Native American mythos, so this was a refreshing trope. There was some good horrific stuff in this novel, although most of the violence happens off screen, so even the squeamish shouldn't have a problem

reading this. The characters were strong and well-developed. My only complaint was that there were some slow spots in the novel. All in all this was a delightful horror novel that I would recommend reading.

Carl Alves - author of Blood Street

Ms J Linney says

A real Joy to read

What a pleasure, heroes who are neither young nor supernatural. Jimmy and George are a couple of old friends living out their latter years in a retirement home, that is until one of the oldest Gods rises. Only Jimmy, with George's help can put The Faceless One back where it belongs. More of this pair please.

Kai says

The Faceless One starts with Jimmy Kalmaku when he was seven years old. His favorite uncle who is a shaman took him to a cave. In the cave, there is a mask that was fashioned by the gods to trap a cruel and vengeful god called T'Nathluk. His uncle wanted Jimmy to know the Faceless One and the danger that this entity posed to the world.

When the archaeologist dug up the mask, he freed T'Nathluk into the world. Anyone who touches the mask becomes a slave to T'Nathluk or dies. There are three stories going concurrently in the same time frame. Stan Roberts, a New York cop, was assigned to a string of murders in New York when the victims' skin was flayed whole. Steven, Liz, and Bobby, the family of the deceased archaeologist, are also being manipulated by T'Nathluk into entering from the spirit world to man and Jimmy Kalmaku, who must confront and imprison T'Nathluk into the mask.

I'm not one for Horror Story but I saw the book cover (It did remind me of the Raven) which caught my attention and decided to give this book a try. I found that The Faceless One is a very well-written book and quite glad I gave it a chance to impress me. I also love reading stories of ancient gods which made this story interesting to read. There are a few gods that do show up to aid the characters against the Faceless One indirectly just when the situation seemed hopeless. Yes, I was getting depressed during those situations. As with any stories that go against a supernatural entity, there are characters that become likable that won't make it to the end of the story.

The story does end with an indication that there might be a second book with Jimmy Kalmaku and his friend and sidekick George. I do wonder what is next for Jimmy and George.

I received this book from the publisher to write an honest review.

M says

Mild to Moderate Horror

I would describe this book as a combination of dark fantasy and horror, so if you're looking for full-frontal horror, this is not the book for you. Yes, there are several horrific post-murder scenes, but I've read bloodier in books about serial murderers.

I chose "Faceless One" for a new-to-me writer and a not-my-usual genre to challenge me. The plot and subplots are singular, because the author draws upon myths & ancient gods of the indigenous peoples of Alaska, not to mention gods of other world religious traditions.

At heart, this story is about a ragtag group of ordinary, good people uniting to fight an ancient but powerful evil god/being. The characters are well-developed, interesting and believable, and they range from young children to senior citizens. The protagonists and important secondary characters are introduced in the early chapters, which slows the beginning. The characters have roles to play, and sometimes mythical allies or enemies aid and/or threaten them in nightmares as well as in the real-world.

There are some information dumps that were necessary, because of the unfamiliar mythic background. The pacing was uneven and occasionally faltered, so I skimmed pages a few times until I sensed forward momentum again.

Julian Froment says

I was intrigued by the description for this book and requested a copy to review. I have to confess that I found the cover to be a little dark and indistinct. The description drew me in, the cover did not.

I initially had quite a bit of trouble getting into this book. It seemed to start off quite slowly, and drag. This is not one of the usual genres that I read frequently, but that being said, I rather enjoyed this book. There did, however, seem to be something lacking, perhaps a certain momentum, that I felt it required. This could have been the result of the multiple viewpoints employed, breaking up the narrative, but more likely was just a matter of personal taste.

I very much liked the main character Jimmy Kalmaku, and in particular the fun and easy relationship that he enjoyed with his fellow retirement home resident and friend, George. The way that Jimmy trusted George and introduced him to the secrets of his culture and the world of the shaman was well handled. This provided an interesting view of the shaman's relationship with nature and magic, and gave the reader a good insight into the world view of the Tlingit, and their Gods.

The character of Stan Roberts was, I felt, indicative of the nature of this story. The internal struggle fought in the mind of Stan Roberts, with the faceless one, T'Nathluk, echoes the overarching theme of this story, that of the age old battle of good versus evil. The faceless one's sporadic control of Stan Roberts and Stan's indomitable desire to protect even a small piece of his mind, along with his readiness to carry out an unthinkable act, in order to foil the faceless one's plans, was for me, one of the most interesting threads of this story.

I would recommend this book to anyone interested in reading horror, albeit rather tame horror, in my opinion. It was an interesting story built around an intense struggle of good versus evil, fought in the present, but ultimately dependent upon the shamanistic power and skills of the last real survivor of the almost extinct

Tlingit tribe.

This review is based on an ARC provided by Netgalley and the publisher.

A Book Vacation says

To see my full review:

<http://bookvacations.wordpress.com/20...>

I'm sorry to say that this novel didn't captivate me as I had hoped it would. A new release just in time for Halloween, hailed as a "riveting nightmare of ancient evil," I was sad to find that *The Faceless One* fell a bit short in this category, for me personally.

The story itself jumped around from character to characters too much for my tastes, making it difficult for me to follow along with much clarity. While I felt the synopsis pointed to a story about Jimmy Kalmaku and his knowledge and attempt to defeat the Faceless One, the novel itself spends much time focusing on the lives of seemingly unimportant and random characters. The story introduces a huge cast of characters, some of which play a rather small part in aiding the mask in its search, and I, personally, could have done with them. There is only so much back and forth that I can stomach in a novel, and jumping from one side character to the next, then to Jimmy and off to another character without much connection between them all made for a hard read, especially in the very beginning when I was trying to make headway with the novel.

The novel itself is a bit long and, by a quarter of the way through, I found that, for me, it still hadn't taken off. Jimmy was still an inconsequential background character, as were many of those I'd met and watched die or otherwise aide the mask, and the pieces just seemed to be taking too long to put together without throwing me anything to really keep my interest. The novel did get better as it went on, but I personally found this one just a tad too long, lacking the scare factor I really wanted it to have, and confusing me in terms of characters. Overall, this is a great premise, but it's just not the book for me.

Leila C. Belcher says

Exciting book worth reading

I've just discovered this Author and will now soak up everything I can find written by him. Excellent character development. I laughed at, cried, cared and worried for the characters. Was fascinated by the story and Lore. You will live and breathe this book until the end. And then you will quickly buy the next book in the Series. Wonderful read!!

Pamela says

Wow. Bravo, Mark Onspaugh.

Too often it seems that thrillers or horror stories based on a set of beliefs can come off as capitalizing on one culture or group's way of life. Some authors even give the appearance of reveling in mocking others' beliefs (*cough*Dan Brown*coughcough*). However, in *The Faceless One*, I felt that Onspaugh managed to walk a fine line in creating a page-turning (well, Kindle-clicking) horror novel that is based on Tlingit tradition. Whenever a character in the book discusses his/her religion, it's done in a very open way, which is refreshing. Characters are willing to accept that their beliefs might not be the whole picture, which is kind of unusual in a thriller-type book.

Aside from that, this stuff is creepy, but in a smart way. It reminded me a tiny tiny bit of *The Stand*, what with the whole cross-country traveling-to-meet-with-the-Very Bad Guy-thing, plus the whole child-is-powerful-and-the-key thing. It's a common trope, but it works here. I didn't mind it. There were a couple of plot twists along the way that gave me a little whiplash, too!

Surprisingly, the characters were all really well done, particularly Jimmy, George (who is an absolute hoot and I want him to be my friend), and Stan. Stan's probably the most complex character.

I would highly recommend this to fans of the X-Files (which Onspaugh name-checks a few times--he owes Fox Mulder and knows it!), Stephen King, or anyone looking for something beyond the normal thriller/police-procedural. I hope the library buys this, because it's quite well done. The ending is open, so ... what next, trickster Raven?

Note I received a free ARC of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for my honest review. All opinions provided here are my own.

Beth Cato says

I received a gratis ebook from the publisher via NetGalley.

I don't usually read horror, but I requested this because it utilizes Tlingit mythology. I read a lot of dark fantasy, and it's unusual for a book to deviate from the usual Irish/Anglo/Nordic pantheons, or from Navajo among American native traditions. I went on an Alaskan cruise earlier this year and I had hopes to learn more about the Tlingit people.

The book has a lot going for it, but some negatives as well.

It starts slowly because the perspective head hops a lot. As a reader, this was downright infuriating at times and I almost stopped reading. It felt like the book was trying to be a movie by focusing on people just long enough for them to meet a horrific death. This happened repeatedly. I didn't like the intensity of the gore and violence in the deaths, but I won't downgrade the book for that--I knew to expect horror, and it delivered.

Once those killings stopped at about halfway through, the book picked up pace considerably and became a riveting read. The family of Steven, Liz, and Bobby is nice enough, and a lot of tension is increased because six-year-old Bobby is the obvious goal of the Faceless One and it's not clear why. Stan feels like a generic NYPD detective but he grows more nuanced as he endures hell; I especially liked how things developed with his partner.

However, the real reason I read on was the character of Jimmy and his best bud from the old folks' home. I ADORED them. Paranormal books need more senior heroes! I loved their constant banter, racial slurs and all, because it felt so grounded and real.

The plot contained twists up through the ending. I did indeed learn more about Tlingit mythology and history, as I hoped. It's made clear that the Faceless One is a "hidden" element of their shamanic tradition (i.e. likely an invention), but Onspaugh does draw on the importance of ravens, otters, and the power of the bond between uncle and nephew.

I am by no means converted to read more horror, but this ended up being a good enough book in the end, with the highlights being the "old farts" as heroes and Tlingit cultur

Cat says

Didn't exactly finish reading, but love this authors stories! I need to get a new copy as my Kindle copy was deleted by accident. So sad! But I so enjoyed what I read!

Julie says

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

This book was well written but it is not one of the normal genres I read. Also when I get stuck or unhappy with a story I will put it down for awhile and just read a few pages here or there. This being an advanced copy I was unsure about putting it down and coming back to it later.

I have a hard time with the concept of possession. I do not like the idea of not being able to control my own actions. Yes, I have done stupid things or things that are not right within my lifetime, but they are mine to claim. I guess the idea is just one of those things I find really creepy and uncomfortable to contemplate.

My imagination is good enough that all the many fowl smells were nauseating.

There were a lot of deaths. I began to wonder who is the next one to die and if five pages without a death came I would think huh, someone should really die soon. Then within the next few paragraphs it would happen and I would again wonder who would be next. This made the impact of the killings less. By the end I did not really care who lived or died. With the exception of George, he was the best friend of one of the main characters. I liked George.

Timothy Hilgenberg says

A rich and famous anthropologist is hauled up in his apartment in New York, fearing for his life. The door and windows are sealed, supplies reach him through a secure contraption, his windows are adorned with fetishes to ward of evil and yet it reaches and kills him.

His attorney collecting his belonging to be sent to his only living relative discovers an ancient artefact

amongst the anthropologist's belonging and falls under its spell which in short order leads him to his death... An ancient evil bent on bringing chaos to the world, has been released and only an elderly Native American living out his twilight years in a retirement home - the last of his tribe, is the last to know of "The Faceless One" having come across it as an apprentice to his shaman uncle as a child.

The Faceless One is a story that mixes genres from crime, horror, fantasy, ancient ways, replaying the age old battle of good versus evil. Tightly written with believable characters, the yarn weaves together the story sub-plots including the detectives investigating what seems a series of heinous crimes, the escape of elderly Native American and his friend from the retirement home to follow signs to find this evil to defeat it and the story of the anthropologists younger brother and his family dealing with his death and the aftermath of his discovery.

The story is a page turner, once picked up, difficult to put down.

? Irena ? says

3.5

It took me a while to get through this book. Not the book's fault, though. The timing was wrong. *The Faceless One* is a great story of an ancient evil god who finally gets its chance to be free. The being is trapped in a mask so it uses anyone who gets close to it to move a step closer to its destination.

Every story has its heroes so this one is no different. Only, these heroes are not common ones.

Too often in horror stories featuring people with families you have one or both people cheating or being unhappy in their marriage. Even worse, you get a feeling that it's quite normal for people acting like that. Such stories make you feel outdated, not normal, old even if it doesn't feel right to you. Definitely not the case here. It's one of the best features of this book.

Next, not a single character is just mentioned. You get a lot of background info for the main ones, of course, but even the victims of this evil don't just get their sad ending, which makes it even sadder when they die. You learn about their families, jobs, loves, life.

I'm definitely reading the next one too.

Rachel says

There have been very few books that have been able to illicit emotion like this one did. As you are reading you feel the fear and coldness seeping in but you also feel the love and pride. Taking the stories of a lost Eskimo tribe and making non-believers believe to stop a horrid evil that could take over the world, this novel leaves you on the edge of your seat with each gripping page. The many individual stories slowly evolve into one and work together to overcome. Although I've not read anything by this author before, I will read his

next novel. This was amazing and on par with Stephen King and the Douglas Preston/Lincoln Child team, if you like those authors you will LOVE this book. Amazing!

I received an advance copy from Netgalley via the Random House Publishing Group-Hydra.
