



The Fall of Billy Hitchings

Kirkus MacGowan

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The John Reeves Creed: "Kill them with kindness. Unless you have a gun."

Book Description:

John Reeves drives to Myrtle Beach to confront his fiancée, hoping to repair their damaged relationship. Instead, he finds her unconscious in the local hospital, the victim of an unexplained explosion at a local restaurant.

During his investigation, Reeves meets Billy Hitchings, a teenager who knows more about the explosion than he should. Their questions lead to an ancient legacy best left alone.

Pulled into yet another crossfire, John Reeves fights to protect his friends and keep a primeval power from falling into the wrong hands.

The Fall of Billy Hitchings Details

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Author : Kirkus MacGowan

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From Reader Review The Fall of Billy Hitchings for online ebook

Phil says

Bit of a weird one this, think 24 crossed with Outer Limits by way of X-files and you'll be somewhere close. What starts out as a thriller featuring an ex-Marine cum gun for hire cum bodyguard getting caught in a firefight, cheating on his girlfriend, then going to attempt forgiveness from said girlfriend so enters into a fantastic situation people with grey characters, secrets, legends and action.

Some of the dialogue is heavy going but this doesn't detract from the overall enjoyment of the book.

Ashley Fontaine says

This book was one of the most interesting and creative ventures I have read in a long time. Mr. MacGowan has written a story that is not only a page-turner, but incorporated with many underlying messages that everyone can relate with.

The hero, Billy Hitchings, is the quintessential young adult that is struggling to find his place in this world. Unsure of what his future holds and really what he really wants his direction to be, he is a symbolic character of that difficult transition from childhood to adulthood. His true character and depth of moral fortitude is tested in a way that is truly a literary masterpiece.

Relationships are tested, loyalties and odd alliances formed and the ending! You will never see it coming.

This is a difficult book to review since saying too much would reveal plots and segments that you must read on your own. I will say that the characters are superbly written, their intertwined relationships riveting and the actual source of Billy's "fall" is nothing short of creative genius.

The book is written in a style that will keep you glued to the pages as the suspense and action lead up to an epic ending that leaves you feeling breathless and stunned. I found myself thinking "is this it? No!"

If you enjoy a highly suspenseful read that incorporates action, adventure, a touch of the paranormal and characters you won't soon forget, then I highly recommend this book!

Becky says

OUTSTANDING story!! Fast paced, awesome characters, great storyline. I had to force myself to slow down so I could savour the story. I recommend it wholeheartedly! I am so ready to read anything else that Kirkus writes. Thanks !!!

J. Sharp says

This debut novel by Kirkus MacGowan is filled with more twist and turns than a pretzel.

Billy Hitchings is a normal 19 year old kid, with normal 19 year old ambitions. Until he discovers something that might just be the undoing of everything that he knows and everything that he is.

What does Mr MacGowan do right?

He has filled the novel with characters that you care about. This is his strength. He has also created dialogue that the reader can believe in. These are difficult for a debut author to pull off. But, Mr. MacGowan does this with flair! I found myself, literally, on the edge of my seat hoping that one of my favorite characters did not just bite the big one.

There is one thing. The end came so fast, it left me wanting more.

You can bet that this author's next book, due this summer, cannot come fast enough. I will be watching out for it!

Altogether, this book is well worth the read and Kirkus MacGowan is a writer to watch for!

Shawn Wickersheim says

As I've mentioned before, I don't often review books because I'd much rather have a discussion with another person about the books I've read. Blame it on the day job, I suppose.

Overall, I enjoyed this book. It took me a while to finish it, not because of anything wrong with it, but rather because I read it on the 'family' computer (someday, I really must get my own ereader!)

The novels pacing is extremely quick, especially the first chapter. The action scenes are crisp and the three main characters are fleshed out well. I would have liked to see more from the female character - after a while, her role seemed unimportant.

Without giving any spoilers away (I hope), I was intrigued by the mystical/magical element of the story, though I must admit, I was surprised by some of the characters responses to these elements and ultimately how the novel ended. I did not see the end coming.

The writing was solid, the story was entertaining, and the dialogue was realistic. I look forward to reading more from this author.

T.L. Gray says

The Fall of Billy Hitching started off with a bang. It was full of action and intrigue, and written in a style that I very much appreciated - Active/Showing. But about half way through the adventure, the story began to stall and lose some of it's energy, right when it should have increased, and then the ending just ...never ended.

****Spoilers beyond this point.**

John's relationship with Kelly was a central part of the majority of this story, but then just fizzled and disappeared when the plates showed up. It didn't set up a reasonable response for Kelly to place her job, and possibly her life, on the line at the end of the story to help Billy in the hospital. Is she afraid of Jarrett or not?

Does she care for John or not? She's never met Billy, since their time in Billy Borks, so why should she help him? For John, who's she not speaking to, or Amfar, who she's also not speaking to, or for Jarrett, who she has no reason to support or oppose? The Kelly character was never fully developed to support where or why she should stand.

Billy talked about how much he cared for his best friend, Eric, but his actions never showed the expressed emotions, except one part of a scene at the end. I'd like to have seen more examples of this relationship sprinkled more throughout the book. We only have the two partying together, and spying for John, but anytime anything big happens, Billy goes at it on his own, and Eric isn't even a second thought. I don't even want to try to figure out what happened at the end. We go from Billy not knowing how to control the power he receives from the plates, to finding out that his ability works when he's defending someone else (which doesn't explain why he downed a plane?) to being able to miraculously heal everyone who had cancer in the hospital. Was Eric one of the people walking around on the lawn with Jarrett's daughter? How did Billy come to the conclusion of what he could do? How did he learn to use the plates, and know what he was doing? This is implied that he could do it, just not HOW he came up with that solution. One minute he's blaming himself for killing a plane full of people, to saying goodbye to this best friend, to then saying he'll see his best friend again, to healing a hospital full of people, to disappearing into the ether.

Amfar, placed as a romantic contender, got pushed to the side in order to advance the Cherokee & Sheriff Scott storyline, which it in itself was only inserted in the story toward the end in small bits. I'd like to have seen small hints to this storyline appear closer to the front of the story, and give more of an insight into their legends. Perhaps spent some time in Scott's POV. I'm not sure if I'm for or against these Cherokee protectors.

The antagonist, Jarrett, was vilified throughout the whole story as a merciless, cold-hearted, stingy, murderer (a man who hired thugs, corrupt cops, and sent them after a kid), in a merciless pursuit of the supernatural plates, though we never were exposed to this character except in the background of a very rude phone call, and then at the end of the story, with a new redeemable personality as a man on a mission to save his child. Those are contradictory personalities. Which is he? Mercenary or missionary?

I really liked the writing style of McGowan, but feel this story still needed a lot of development. I didn't hate it. On the contrary, I liked it very much, and that's why I'm frustrated that there just wasn't enough.

Rick Gillispie says

Billy Hitchings is a lost young man. He works at a dead end job called Billy Borks in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He has no luck with girls and lives with his Grams. That is all about to change!

Kirkus MacGowan takes you for a ride in "The Fall of Billy Hitchings". You will meet John Reeves, one badass bodyguard who is thrust into Billy's life. Crazy things just keep happening to Billy.

This story is an easy read from start to finish. MacGowan has written a five star story here with great characters. Highly recommended this book.

Carmen DeSousa says

If you like Indiana Jones meets Jason Bourne, this is your book.

I know the title is `Billy Hitchings', but John Reeves stole the show. He's not perfect, but what man is. But he was a mysterious man with a past who I wanted to know more about. So, Kirkus, get busy and give us a novel about John Reeves.

Now back to Billy Hitchings. The story was different, and I'm having a difficult time classifying what genre it would fall under, but that's okay; I like almost all genres. It had action, adventure, thrills, mystery, and paranormal elements, but somehow, Mr. MacGowan brought them all together to make for an interesting read.

The ending came as a surprise, and I found myself wanting more---again with that John guy. Anyway, if you like Indiana Jones meets Jason Bourne, this is your book. And since it's Kirkus' debut novel, I'll be expecting bigger and better things in the future.

Marilou George says

Kirkus MacGowan skillfully weaves together a complex and intriguing story that had me captivated from beginning to end. The characters are artfully crafted and each play a significant role as their lives are woven together to tell a story that will keep you wanting more.

John Reeves is a part-time bodyguard and risk taker. Billy Hutchings has lived with his Grandmother since the death of his parents and works at a burger joint. These two characters, and a cast of others, come together to solve the mystery surrounding an explosion at Billy Borks Burger Palace that the police are eager to sweep under the rug.

The story is structured in a way that enables the characters to reveal their stories and inner struggles throughout. The dialogue is realistic and engaging which allowed me to feel a sense of compassion for the characters and their involvement in the story.

The story is filled with action, intelligently written and thought provoking. It is woven in such a fashion that the suspense keeps building and the clues to solving the mystery are subtle and intense.

I highly recommend this book and eagerly look forward to reading more from Kirkus MacGowan.

Katy says

I love Myrtle Beach. I want to live in the Myrtle Beach the rest of my days. I will read anything remotely linked to Myrtle Beach. But I'm not exactly sure why the author set the novel in Myrtle Beach, which is why I read it. There wasn't much to link into the town, the local life, or anything other than two of the characters ended up spending time at a beach.

But on to the story. I really, really liked the story. There are lots of stories dealing with the mystical and paranormal. This story though does have a mystical element, but it combined the folklore of the Cherokee from the Appalachians* region of Kentucky. It was a good twist to the run-of-the-mill vampire, witch, fairy, fey thing many novels have. John Reeves, our flawed hero, and the other characters try to find out the intensity of the mystical artifacts, but it's young and pure-of-heart Billing Hitchings who actually has the power. He just doesn't know it, nor would he know what to do with it.

*I'll read almost anything set in the Appalachians or anything remotely linked to it. Another good setting for me.

I want to read more about John Reeves. I want to know how Billy grows into his power and what he will do with it. And...I want to know about Billy's Grandma and Kelly Amfar and....well, the other characters in the story. All of them have been touched by the goodness in Billy.

Gemma Wilford says

This was an interesting storyline, where the characters get tangled in a web of excitement and adventure, at an enjoyable pace.

I loved how the book was written from different character's viewpoints throughout; which was easily followed by the characters names used as headings.

It was made interesting by this clever technique as, particularly in the beginning of the book, the different characters and the different scenarios intertwining made for compelling reading.

Congrats to Kirkus MacGowan as well for being a Best Indie Book Finalist.

Glenajo says

Crazy with Action

John Reeves is not exactly a stand-up kind of a guy, but in a dangerous situation, he is definitely, one you want on your side. When Reeves follows his fiancée to Myrtle Beach to attempt to repair their relationship that he screwed up, little does he know that he is walking into a hot situation. Reeves finds his fiancée in the hospital after an explosion and decides that the least he can do is investigate the explosion. That decision puts him in touch with Billy Hitchings, and things go crazy from there.

This book is full of interesting characters that make bad decisions. Reeves is a likeable guy, except that he was unfaithful to his fiancée and Billy Hitchings is a young man that has never put much effort into his life, still living with his grandmother. When they cross paths, Reeves feels sorry for Billy, and afraid that someone is out to get him. The action pops so quickly, making the story a wild ride, then after multiple twists and turns, it hits a super surprise ending. I recommend this for lovers of action, especially with a James Bond (minus the girls) atmosphere.

Eric says

This book had everything I enjoy about a mystery. Several plot twists, varied sub plots, and plenty of small cliff hangers that made me want to see what would unfold in the next chapter. In addition to the aforementioned, I also enjoyed the smattering of the supernatural which increasingly became integral to the story. The book begins with more or less ordinary people just trying to find their way through life and gradually sends you in multiple directions filled with intrigue and action. Billy, the young man at the center of it all, struggles throughout most of the narrative to find direction in his life. We can all relate to that central theme with ease. I feel as though the author did a fantastic job of providing depth to all of the principal characters and made me interested in reading the resolutions to the many sub plots.

All sorts of action, interesting, and very fast paced. Further, the ending of the book left me wanting more, but not in a negative way. It concluded on a positive note and I would very much enjoy reading the follow up to this novel.

G.A. says

For those who like quick, fun and quirky reads, *The Fall of Billy Hitchings* is for you. Neither high or low brow, but somewhere in between, this debut novel of indie author Kirkus MacGowan keeps up the pace and the guessing to the very end.

MacGowan's narrative is unpretentious, his characters fleshed out enough that you know by their own words who's speaking, and there's ample description of people and places to put you in the scene. Like a lot of fiction, there is a need to suspend reality and just let things flow, but the novel's own laws are never violated once a premise is established. That said, the characters do act in real life ways in accordance with their type, even if the circumstances wherein they find themselves is otherworldly.

While not heavy-handed with message, there is one, and it's about finding your calling and rising above society's place for you, with some soul-searching and desires for redemption thrown in. The main characters are not saints, but they are likable and believable, more everyman than anti-hero.

If there is a knock to *The Fall of Billy Hitchings*, it could be that it hurries just a little too much. There was a time or two where the narrative bounced ahead before I was ready for it, but then the next chapters either caught me up or distracted me enough to allow the story to tie things back up later.

Most readers will enjoy this book for what it is: a great first attempt at a novel, that's main purpose is to entertain in a well-worn genre, but with enough ingenuity and twists to keep things lively. If you want tried and true, staid and predictable, read something else. Otherwise, I wholeheartedly recommend this book to all those who like action thrillers and can embrace one with a paranormal archaeological bent.

Ricki Wilson says

The Fall of Billy Hitchings is a compelling read. Once you've begun, you have to find out what happens next. Billy, like most of us, is a flawed but well-meaning young man who is driven to find his destiny, a destiny entangled in a web of spiritual and ancient legends. Readers will find themselves caught up in the

ever increasing momentum of the story – racing alongside Billy to the utterly surprising finish.
