



Ashes to Ashes: The Dragon's Flame

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When library assistant Rebecca Morrison comes across a beautifully ornate cigarette lighter in the shape of a fire breathing dragon, she gives it to her cousin, unwittingly igniting an evil that can only originate from the terrifying Blackstone Asylum. This is third installment in "The Blackstone Chronicles", Saul's serial novel about the horrors that plague a small New England town.

Ashes to Ashes: The Dragon's Flame Details

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Author : John Saul

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Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

Lots of burning and religious fanaticism in this one. The general message is you'll burn from the Dragon's Flame and then you'll burn in Hell.

My favorite passages:

"Martha's a religious fanatic. You know she sees the hand of God in practically everything."

"Sometimes people like that decide they *are* the hand of God," Becker said pointedly. (chapter 8)

"The firemen were circling the wreckage of the house like a band of hunters warily inspecting fallen prey, knowing it was mortally wounded, but all too aware that it was still capable of inflicting damage upon anyone who ventured too close." (chapter 11)

Jennifer says

Just loving the series. The books are small and easy to read in between big novels. It's just great there is a connection to each article from past to present.

Sherri Smith says

This series is fantastic!!! Can't wait for the next book!

Joyce says

This one spooked me a little more. Maybe because I am reading it at bedtime. This is a series of small books, maybe at the most each has 90 pages but they have a lot of eerie stories.. Makes me think about spooks. Blessed Be !!

Dharia Scarab says

Since I don't normally write reviews unless I have something specific to say, here's the break down of how I

rate my books...

1 star... This book was bad, so bad I may have given up and skipped to the end. I will avoid this author like the plague in the future.

2 stars... This book was not very good, and I won't be reading any more from the author.

3 stars... This book was ok, but I won't go out of my way to read more, But if I find another book by the author for under a dollar I'd pick it up.

4 stars... I really enjoyed this book and will definitely be on the look out to pick up more from the series/author.

5 stars... I loved this book! It had earned a permanent home in my collection and I'll be picking up the rest of the series and other books from the author ASAP.

Erin *Proud Book Hoarder* says

None of these short serial novels are what I would call excellent books, but this is my favorite so far compared to the others. Written focusing on wimpy Rebecca and the horrid aunt that raised her, the daughter has come back into town to find herself gifted with a certain dragon lighter. Of course the lighter is evil, and of course we still don't know how these objects can affect people and what the whole purpose behind any of it either. Oliver is clearly a leading figure in the series as he keeps getting flashbacks and scenes in each book are told through his POV. I can't guess yet what it is, so I do applaud Saul for not making things obvious. The ending was especially sobering, but needed with the character.

Lana Hart says

One of the most tragic installments in the series, "The Dragon's Flame" delves deeper into the asylum's horrific history, painting us a portrait of a woman forced to believe she was insane when she wasn't, and the repercussions for that crime.

Not only that, but the direction the book takes toward the end really lets you know how dire the situation in Blackstone is getting. The mystery begins to unravel as to why these objects are being left for very specific residents and the bigger picture starts to come into focus. The tension is palpable now and I really felt like I was standing there at the end, beholding the horror unfolding in front of me. I cannot recommend this series enough.

CasualDebris says

From Casual Debris

The third part of John Saul's Blackstone Chronicles series is an improved entry over its pair of predecessors,

as its formulaic bits are more focused and intertwined.

The italicized introductory pages present a disturbing account of a young woman being ostracized by family and community as a result of an accidental pregnancy. This is followed by the horrific loss of the baby while mother is still locked away at the asylum. Though the sequence is brief, it is effective primarily due to its content. In addition, the brief narrative is directly linked to the plot of this novella, as opposed to the random connection in Part Two's "The Locket."

"The Dragon's Flame" introduces us to Andrea, Martha Ward's prodigal daughter, and cousin to heroine Rebecca Morrison. Her employer/partner has fired her from her job and tossed her out of their apartment. Pregnant and abandoned, Andrea returns to Blackstone and to her mother's home as she has nowhere else to go. Unlike the previous recipients of possessed asylum memorabilia, Andrea lives not the perfect life of the financially comfortable, but is already a victim of life prior to getting victimized by whatever vengeance-seeker is spreading the asylum toys throughout the town. Because of her situation and the reader's natural empathy, we care more about her than we did about the McGuires and the Hartwicks of the previous books. Moreover, since the likable cousin Rebecca is deeply involved in this plot, we have another layer of interest and empathy dropped onto us.

Because the characters, though fairly two-dimensional, are better developed than those in the "The Doll" and "The Locket," the reader is more invested in them, and Saul, by accruing this investment from the reader, has thereby taken on the responsibility of delivering a better book. If we invest and the author flops out at the end, our investment will fail and we will be less likely to trust in the author in the future. However, a good return on our investment will have us rushing over to part four of the series. The ending here is two-fold, with Andrea's expected fate occurring rather early, followed by a not-too-surprising additional climax that leaves Rebecca homeless and the series delivered directly into the story-line of Part Four.

Though I am using adjectives along the lines of expected and anticipated, as there are no surprises and the linear plot is all too linear, this entry is a slightly better read not only due to our own empathy, but in the further development of the overall story. The players Rebecca and Oliver, protagonists involved primarily on the periphery, have now climbed over the plot border in order to take part in the main story. This usurping of the narrative by Rebecca and Oliver places conscious emphasis on the fact that this novella is not a stand-alone work but a chapter of a novel. As a novella there is no real protagonist since Andrea, Rebecca and Oliver serve that role at different points. Though the book promises, with its initial focus and premise, to be about Andrea, she is conveniently cast aside so that the focus shifts over to the larger plot's protagonists.

Josephine (Jo) says

In this edition of the Blackstone Chronicles a young lady, Rebecca Morrison discovers a beautiful cigarette lighter in the shape of a dragon which gives the effect of the dragon breathing fire when it is used. Rebecca unwittingly buys it for her cousin Andrea Ward who is returning to her home town and to the house of her mother Martha. Rebecca is also living at Martha's house and wants to welcome her cousin back with a small gift. Little does Rebecca know that the lighter has been placed in the flea market for a specific reason, it comes from the old Blackstone Asylum and all the things that come from there are evil!

Martha is a martinet, a bully and obsessively religious, using God in a dreadful way to break the will of her daughter and to intimidate and rule her.

Andrea is in a desperate state when she has to come home, her employer was also her lover and he has turned her out of their flat and terminated her employment but worst of all she is pregnant. In the eyes of

unforgiving mother she is all that is bad and the local townsfolk look down on her also. When Rebecca gives Andrea the welcome home gift of the lighter she feels that at least someone cares for her. Of course the lighter can only bring sorrow and trouble for anyone who owns it.

There is a continuation of characters in the different Blackstone books and they are narrated by someone who has access to the Asylum and choses what item will be released into the world next and who will be the unfortunate recipient. All that we know about him is that he has a connection with the Asylum and that his name is Oliver!

Cathy says

Oooh, I liked this one! Onwards!

Oscar Maquito says

*4/5

Heather Boustead says

Part three delves more into Rebecca Morrison's life, we've met her in the previous books as "poor Rebecca" the woman whose parents died in a car accident when she was a teenager where she suffer severe head trauma leaving her in almost the same mental state as when she was a teenager. Rebecca then ends up being the ward of her religious fanatic aunt Martha, who drove away her own husband and child years prior. Unlike the other books where a "cursed" object is left at someone's home in this book Rebecca buys it as a welcome home present for her cousin Andrea who has finally come back to Blackstone after having nowhere else to go. I found this book focuses more on the main story line that ties the books together, which is not bad but left this part lacking in intensity though this is the first book to blatantly explain the connection between the memento and victim. All in all I really hope the books get better otherwise I have wasted my time for nothing.

As always if you have any requests or recommendations email me.

Be sure to check out my blogs at:

[http://reflectionsofabookworm.wordpress...](http://reflectionsofabookworm.wordpress.com/)

<http://bookwormrfects8.blogspot.com/>

Amy says

Rebecca Morrison bought a cigarette lighter in the shape of a dragon with ruby eyes from a flea market as a welcome home gift for her cousin Andrea Ward, who left Blackstone years ago after an argument with her mother, Rebecca's aunt Martha. Why has Andrea returned to Blackstone? Rebecca, who has lived with her

aunt Martha ever since her own parents died when she was very young, didn't know that the lighter would bring evil into the Ward home, evil that has been there once before.

Hope Willingham says

Book 3 of 6 to the Blackstone Chronicles. It was approximately 80 pages. I guess it is an okay story. Quick read for sure. Been reading John Saul books ALL YEAR. I am his biggest fan lately. Can't wait to change it up a bit. Go from horror to Amish books..lol

Gigi says

Can't wait to read the next one!
