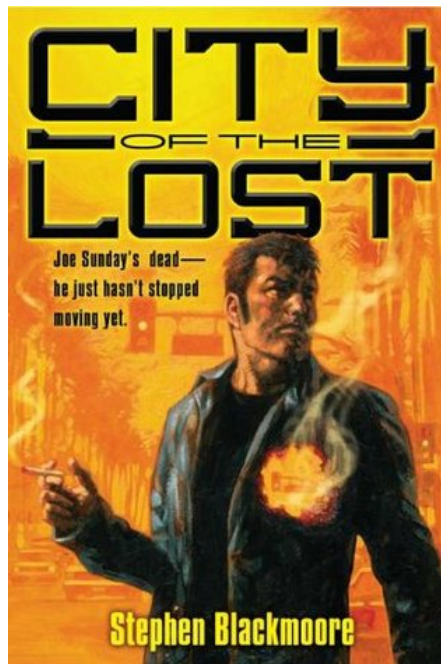




City of the Lost

Stephen Blackmoore

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Returning as a zombie after being bumped off by a rival crime boss, Joe Sunday tries to locate a talisman that can grant immortality before every other thug in Los Angeles can find it.

City of the Lost Details

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From Reader Review City of the Lost for online ebook

Ashley says

I started reading this book and then life got in the way after 30 or so pages and I didn't pick it up again for over a month. But that is nothing against the writing, that's just points against my crappy life. The most important thing here is that I picked it back up and finished. After finishing it, I tweeted to Mr. Blackmoore and told him that I need more Joe Sunday.

Joe Sunday is not your average zombie. Instead of brains, he eats hearts to survive and keep from falling apart. He'll help himself to all your other parts too but the heart is essential for him to carry on. This book kept me guessing through the entire thing. I was right there with Joe questioning who to trust and who to eat for supper.

He's a hired gun turned zombie and he needs to find this mystical stone that is supposed to make you live forever with the correct ritual. There are many magickal types of people trying to get their hands on the stone and they all make some sort of empty promise to Joe who's running around town trying to keep from falling apart and figure out who to trust. Even a cop can't be trusted in this book!

There was one scene with Samantha, the immortal vengeful beauty, where they get quite close to each other and I found myself wanting to be Samantha. I mean really, look at Joe on the cover of the book! Makes a girl weak in the knees (even with part of his chest missing). Joe isn't the only guy I found myself lusting after. I'm also quite fond of Darius, the demon bartender. He's snarky and big and well...a demon! I am heir to the throne in Hell after all, so of course I'm going to find myself fawning over the bad boys. Back to the story though...

This book was just fantastic. I was confused at times as to what was going on and who double-crossed who at what time and who attacked who. But it all came clear to me in the end. Stephen told me that I can tell him the truth if I didn't like the book but I'd be lying if I said I didn't like it. So Mr. Blackmoore, give me more Sunday!

Amanda says

Freaking fabulous!!!! I loved every minute of it, even when the main character goes all zombie badass!! I can't wait to see if the author decides to continue the saga of Joe Sunday. I want it, I need it, I gotta have more Joe Sunday.

I won this book via the Goodreads First Reads giveaway.

Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says

You may also read my review here: <http://www.mybookishways.com/2011/12/...>

Whew! Lemme tell ya, if you're in the mood for some down and dirty noir action with your supernatural fun, City of the Lost is where it's at! Joe Sunday is your all around tough-as-nails L. A. enforcer who knocks heads and makes a pretty good living at it. All of this comes to a rather abrupt halt when his main employer

hires him to knock off someone that is way off the normal meter. When he witnesses his best friend and co-worker kill himself (in a rather spectacular way), he knows things are a bit...off kilter. Sure enough, his newest mark is out for blood, and takes Joe out. But wait, Joe's not dead. Now, Joe is a zombie; not the rambling, rotting type, but if he doesn't do certain, er, things, the rotting definitely will commence, unless he gets his hands on a stone that may hold the key to immortality.

Told in Joe's wry voice, *City of the Lost* grabs you hard on page one and keeps you rapt until the last page. Backed by a supporting cast including a young bruja that counts a bar tending demon as a friend, and a cop with his own agenda, Joe must find the stone and figure out how to fix his little problem, before it fixes him. On his tail is an ancient man that's been chasing the stone's secret for hundreds of years, a beautiful woman that he may or may not be able to trust, a Nazi doctor that wants the stone for his own, and his henchmen, a skull cracker that has a sharp-toothed midget (we're not talking human here) on a leash. Stephen Blackmoore writes like an old pro, and doesn't flinch from some of the more violent characteristics of his anti-hero. He's really, really good at writing gray characters, and yet manages to infuse his creations with humanity, even if they aren't themselves human, which is a neat trick. *City of the Lost* is fast paced, funny, scary, at times, charming, and I couldn't put it down. If you love the novels of Richard Kadrey (Sandman Slim), Hank Schwaeble (Jake Hatcher series), and Steve Niles' Cal McDonald series, then you'll LOVE *City of the Lost*. What a way to start out the new year! This is a 2012 debut you won't want to miss!

Kathy (Kindle-aholic) says

Set in a gritty world populated by even grittier characters, I really enjoyed this read. Most of the zombie books I've read are from the perspective of the people fighting/running from/reporting on the shambling zombie hordes, but in those books I'm less interested in the zombies as characters, more the humans fighting to survive. There have been a few books I've read from the zombie's perspective and treading that fine line between grossing you out and making you sympathize and root for the character to triumph is a difficult job. Blackmoore succeeds here with Joe Sunday, a criminal used to doing bad things to other (mostly bad) people. Joe quickly winds up over his head and thrown into the supernatural side of LA. He has to do what he does best (kicking ass) to save himself and the rest of the magical underworld of LA.

Like the best noir stories, you aren't quite sure who to trust until the end, and even then it's an iffy proposition. Fast-paced, action-packed with sly humor, this zombie book is going on my favorites list. There is some gore (it IS a zombie book) but not so much that it took me out of the story. I got Joe. True, I would never hire him as a babysitter, but if I needed someone to take out a crazy-powerful sorcerer then Joe's a good fit for the job. I also liked the secondary characters, and for some of them, I liked their comeuppance even more. They all came together in this very dark world where vampires are junkies, demons abound, and you can't take anyone on face value.

City of the Lost is set in the same universe as the Eric Carter books, but it is not a part of that series. Some characters from this book do show up in both Eric Carter books. I think I can remember at least one. I sense a re-read of *Dead Things*. There are also two short stories, one that will be in *Fireside Magazine* later this year, and *Fix*, a free short story on Blackmoore's website.

Dan Schwent says

A job to steal a precious stone goes wrong and a thug named Joe Sunday is murdered. Now Joe's a zombie with a craving for human flesh and everyone in town is after the stone. Is there anyone Joe can trust and can

he find the stone before a centuries-old madman uses it to become immortal?

Right out of the box, I have to say that this book is pure fun. While I'm giving it the same rating as *Winter's Bone*, it in no way is as well written or powerful. That being said, here we go!

City of the Lost is an entertaining noir tale that just happens to star a zombie. The dialogue is hard boiled and in the present tense. It has moments of hilarity and not the lame attempts at humor other urban fantasy noir tales that shall remain nameless use. It also has a lot less misogyny than the tales about a certain unfunny wizard from Chicago normally display.

Joe Sunday wasn't a nice guy before being made a zombie and dying didn't help his manners. He kills and bludgeons his way through this tale, all in pursuit of a stone that may or may not be able to turn him back into a human and Giavetti, the man who covets it. The supporting cast are an interesting bunch: a Nazi sorcerer named Neumann, and his henchmen Archie and Jughead. Jughead's a little person with the teeth and demeanor of a pitbull. There's Samantha, the woman with a connection to the villain, the Bruja, an urban witch, and Frank Tanaka, a detective who's also investigating Giavetti.

There's a lot of dark humor in this book and I caught myself snickering a few times, from Joe using a dog to bludgeon someone, speculating on the ethics of eating hookers to keep from rotting, to Joe sneering and saying "I didn't want any part of that guy in my mouth." Funny stuff.

Any complaints? Not really. There were a lot of twists and only about half of them were predictable. I have a feeling it's meant to be the first book in the series but it was quite a satisfying read on it's own. For a fun zombie book, it's an easy four.

Katy says

Please note: Originally read in Dec. 2011; updating the review to add a disclosure

Disclosure: I received this book through the Goodreads First Reads program in exchange for a review.

My Synopsis: Joe Sunday is a henchman and a thug – he's worked for the same guy for 20 years and enjoys his work, for the most part. Then his friend and co-thug Julio has a breakdown – goes bughouse in a bar, leaving Joe to pick up the pieces of a job left undone. Joe has to go kill a man and steal a gem from him for his boss. However, things go a bit amiss when Joe ends up being killed himself. The problem is – he doesn't stay dead. What has happened to Joe? What's the deal with this gem? And who, exactly, is Sandro Giavetti?

My Thoughts: I really enjoyed this book – it is a different take on pretty much everything: zombies, vampires, demons, witches and wizards ... nothing is quite what you expect and Joe himself is right in the middle of everything. There is a great deal of dark humor in the book – Joe has a lot of great one-liners, and has a lot of great one-liners said to him as well. If you are looking for something distinctly different in the urban fantasy genre – something that reminds me a bit of a Guy Ritchie flick – then you will love *City of the Lost*. Don't miss this one!

Erica says

I'll start off by saying that I won this book through Goodreads First Reads and although it isn't for the light-

hearted or weak-stomached, it was definitely an interesting book to read. I've read other zombie books, but what I liked most about this one is that it is written through the eyes of the zombie. I'm sure there are other books out there that the point-of-view is the zombies; I just haven't read them. There are quite a lot (and I mean A LOT) of curse words, so if you're against cussing you might not want to read it.

I liked the characters quite a bit. A zombie thug with a sense of humor, a young Bruja that has even the gangsters frightened, a demon bartender, and immortals... What else can I say? That says it all.

The reason I gave the book 3 stars instead of 4 is because of the constant omittance of common words like who and what. I can picture Joe Sunday speaking this way. It fits him, but I think it should have stopped there. Not everybody states questions this way, "The f*** you doing, man?" or "The f*** happened to her?". Both questions posed by different people. If it was just Joe speaking this way, it probably would have endeared me to him more. As I said though, a lot of characters asked questions this way and it just started to grate on my nerves.

I would still recommend this to certain friends or acquaintances of mine. It's a quick read and holds your attention throughout.

Paul Ataua says

A zombie crime novel? Yep, and with just a little bit of the supernatural thrown in. The mildly entertaining and mildly humorous "City of the Lost" is nothing to text home about, but certainly fills a hole when you have a couple of hours to kill.

Joshua Palmatier says

This is the debut novel for Stephen Blackmoore and I dare say it won't be his last. **City of the Lost** is being described a detective noir with zombies by some. I haven't read much noir detective fiction, so I can't and won't on whether it fits that bill, but I can comment on it as an urban fantasy with a rather hardcore "detective" as the main character . . . who just happens to become a zombie.

The premise is that Joe Sunday is a thug, hired to break legs for his mobster/hoodster boss, Simon. Simon hires some croonies to steal a strange stone, but the croonies all end up dead, so Simon sends Joe to take out the man Simon thinks did it and stole the stone. Joe thinks its a run-of-the-mill job, until he ends up dead . . . and is brought back to life by the man he was supposed to kill using the stone. Now, in order to keep from rotting and eating people's hearts to rejuvenate himself, Joe needs the stone. With it, he won't need to kill to stay in one piece. All he has to do is find it and keep his hands on it, which is harder than it seems since it appears everyone with any magical talent whatsoever in the LA area is out to get it.

I like the idea of the book, and enjoyed the combination of urban fantasy and mystery elements. Joe Sunday isn't someone that you'd normally empathize with, but you do in the end. The novel is dark and brutal, which you'd expect from someone who is essentially a hitman. Joe doesn't waste time when violence is necessary, and he isn't afraid to hurt people to get what he wants. So the book is violent, with its fair share of blood and guts. In general, there is no blurring of the details for these scenes, although it isn't gratuitous in any way. (For example, when Joe's new urges for hearts rears its ugly head, the hardcore reality of what he's doing is skipped over and left to the imagination.) But it's still pretty dark.

There's a large slew of rather interesting characters after the stone as well, which certainly gave the book a unique flavor. A few of them were over-the-top. But you need a good cast of characters to keep the waters of the mystery itself muddy and Stephen Blackmoore does that well. By the time the real mystery begins to unravel and play out, you can see how all of the threads are coming together, including all of the things you should have noticed as you were reading (the answers to all the questions you should have asked along the way now obvious).

So, a good mystery novel wrapped around a believable zombie origin story. For those who cringe from blood and violence, this is not your book, although I didn't think what's in here was gratuitous or over-the-top. It's a dark novel, with dark characters, but certainly a novel I'd recommend for those who enjoy a good, bloody zombie book. I'm not certain there's a sequel planned, but I'd buy it when it comes out, just to see what Joe Sunday does now that he's undead.

Julia says

I didn't realize I had been waiting for this book- a fresh new take on Paranormal Noir. A zombie crime novel with fascinating characters and a brilliantly written plot. This plot jumps up and down- so action packed, there isn't a dull moment. I dove straight into this novel and didn't let up until I finished. So much fun. The quick, witty dialogue added to the awesomeness. This is a super fast read too at only 224 pages.

I love anti-hero Joe Sunday. Even his name sings to me. Joe is somewhat dry, but there is some definite dark humor going on here. Almost reminds me of movies such as Death Proof or Planet Terror- I can't remember who to give credit to for those movies... But I got the same vibe from this book. I don't know if this is going to be a series by the ending- maaaybe? I hope so!

Highly recommend this book to those that love Urban Fantasy but need a new twist, different feel. Not for the faint of heart, lots of swearing and violence. I find one or the other necessary in my fantasy action (zombie crime!) novels. This is one wild ride that I would love to take again- More please, Mr. Blackmoore?

David Ketelsen says

I had trouble sleeping and at 4am picked up this book and started reading it. I soon forgot all about sleeping. The noir-ish tone of the book is quite entertaining. I'm really looking forward to getting back to reading this when I get home from work.

I finished reading City of the Lost this morning before work. I loved the book. Through the use of short declarative sentences, often missing prepositions, Blackmoore conveys the atmosphere of desperation his main character, Joe Sunday, endures.

I'm not going to mention any plot spoilers here. It's revealed on the book cover that Sunday dies early in the book. It's what he does after he dies that really makes this book sing.

This is a book that written just a little differently could have failed in a big way but Blackmoore totally pulls it off. The action is non-stop as Sunday threads his way through the underbelly of LA searching for a way to survive his demise. There's blood and violence a plenty and it all serves a purpose: Joe Sunday is clawing his way back to life. Maybe.

Johnny says

It's not easy to do classic Chandler/Hammett hard-boiled in a contemporary setting. All the trappings are so familiar that if the author is not careful, it will fall into parody. That's not something CITY OF THE LOST has to worry about. While it plays out in classic form, Blackmoore is original enough to give it a much-needed twist.

And what a twist. The detective is essentially a zombie, there is a witch, vampires, and even a strange toothy little thing on a leash. Yet for all that lunacy, Blackmoore keeps the book grounded and doesn't let it get too out of control.

This is rare for me to say about anything, but I wish this book was a little longer. Usually I gripe that 95% of movies, books, plays, everything is too long, but I feel like there are places where he could have lingered a little more. I guess I'll have to wait for the next one.

This is a very confident and entertaining first novel. An author to look out for.

Qwill / The Qwillery says

Take a shot of noir, a shot of supernatural, a shot of mystery, add a dash of levity. Shake. Serve neat and you've got City of the Lost, Stephen Blackmoore's exciting debut novel.

I completely enjoyed City of the Lost. Joe Sunday, the 'hero' is a thug. No two ways about it. But he's a thug with a heart, more or less. When he gets caught up in supernatural shenanigans because of his boss, Simon, things really go sideways for him. He's turned into a sentient zombie...with an expiration date. He's got to figure out what's going on, who to trust, and how to save himself and Los Angeles at the same time.

I really like Joe. He's a bad guy who's easy to like, which continually amazed me. Despite his profession, he's got his own sense of honor. He'll often do the right thing... under the circumstances. Joe is a great noir anti-hero. You know, the bad guy who is also heroic.

While Joe is the central figure, Mr. Blackmoore does a great job fleshing out the rest of the cast of memorable characters in City of the Lost. It's quite a collection of characters too, some of whom I hope to see again in further novels. Stephen Blackmoore is particularly adept at writing dialog. He captures the back and forth conversational patter that I would expect to find in a noir-infused novel. It is a pleasure to read.

City of the Lost is fast-paced, sometimes gory (Joe is a zombie), sometimes amusing, and always well-written. It will keep you on your toes and you will enjoy being there. I suggest you set out a block of time for reading because once you start City of the Lost you are not going to want to put it down.

I give City of the Lost 5 Qwills.

Josh Stallings says

Zombies, noir, shades of Casa Blanca? How in the name of all that is holy can the this wild stew work. Well, quite well thank you very much. In the hands of Stephen Blackmoore not only does it work, it is a stunning novel. If this is Blackmoore's first novel, watch the hell out, and wait to see what he does next. I, a firm hater of all things zombie have found after reading City Of The Lost that I needed a fix, so whilst I await his next book I have taken up watching Walking Dead. So to sum up - damn good book, don't have to like zombies to love it, may cause you to want more zombies in your life.

Georgiann Hennelly says

Joe Sunday is a thug , an enforcer. When his partner is sent to kill a mysterious new business partner, and Julio his partner goes all bug house in a bar. After seeing Giovanni, Joe calls his boss to tell him what happened. Joe is murdered and brought back to a twisted half life. And he's stuck in the middle of a race to find the ancient stone that has the power to grant immortality. With the stone he may live forever without it he's just another rotting corpse. Everyone has a stake from a psycho Nazi wizard to a powerful witch who just wants to help her homeless vampires, and the one woman who might have all the answers if Sunday can only figure out her angle. Before the week is out he'll find out what lengths people will go to to live forever. And just how long someone can hold a grudge. If you love Zombies, Vampires, or just anything a little unexplained i highly recommend you read this book. captured my interest from page one. Stephen Blackmoore really is a fantastic writer look forward to reading more books by this author
