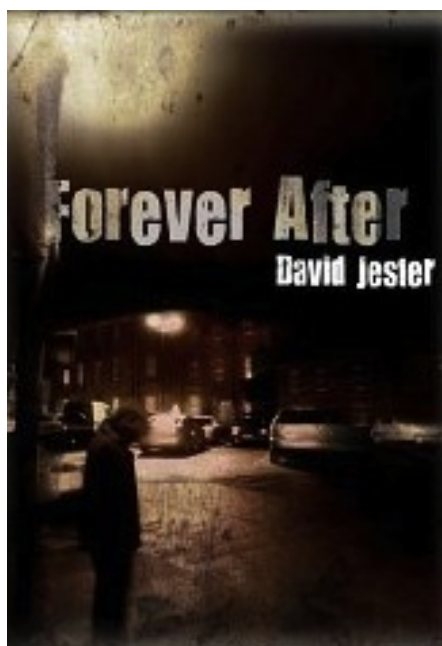




Forever After

David Jester

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Forever After follows Michael Holland, a grim reaper in a grim town. An embittered and melancholic man who struggles to grasp the purpose of his own existence, or lack thereof. He is a minuscule cog in a monumental machine and knows less of his role than those surrounding him -- from his boss, the mighty Angel of Death, to his friend and flatmate Chip: a grubby midget tooth fairy with an addiction to pot and procrastination.

Brittleside is a dank, dark and decrepit town, and Michael Holland is its reluctant reaper. From dealing with the drunks, the druggies and the wasters, to tracking an escaped demon who believes he is Santa Claus; Forever After follows his escapades over four dark and humorous tales.

A paranormal and comic romp through a fantasy world where the mythical, the fantastical, the insane and the typical combine. A mix of dystopia and comedy, if the works of Philip K. Dick and Terry Pratchett were to ever procreate, Forever After would be the bastard child of their creative communion.

Forever After Details

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Author : David Jester

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From Reader Review Forever After for online ebook

Rose says

Before I get further into this review, I would like to make it clear that I didn't rate this book higher not because it wasn't well written - it was, and not because I didn't like the characters - I did, and not because the story was boring - it wasn't. It was totally because of the layout of the plot...or in this case, plots.

This was the story of a grim reaper named Michael. Not 'the' grim reaper, but 'a' grim reaper. Turns out there are lots of them. They take the souls of the recently departed, turn them over to purgatory and collect their pay. He shares an apartment with a tooth fairy named Chip. They both live like pigs in a scummy town and aside from their work, all they do is drink.

Now I know this may not sound overly appealing based on what I just told you. It sounds very weird, and it was, but it was a surprisingly good story. My review will not do the story justice.

Michael agreed to become a grim reaper at his death, because who wouldn't jump at the offer for immortality when faced with their own death, but he has since grown to loath it. He doesn't understand what's going on and no one will tell him anything. He's lost in this existence. He is trying to understand things and also trying to regain some type of life for himself, but he seems to have lost almost all hope.

I wasn't sure what to expect from the story at this point. I thought maybe it would explore Michael slowly coming to understand what the grim reapers are for and more about the afterlife. Perhaps it would explore ways for a grim reaper to get back to real life again.

What did happen was someone came into the picture who was stealing souls before Michael had a chance to collect them. Ooh, getting exciting now. I like this storyline....but it also led me to why I didn't rate the book higher.

Clones were stealing souls of werewolves and they were controlled by a powerful immortal. Michael was given the job of finding them and the souls that were stolen, which he does but he doesn't meet the immortal who apparently knows who Michael is. While looking at a picture of Michael, the immortal says "You have made a powerful enemy".....then we hear nothing more about him.

This would have been a reasonable place to end the story since this is supposed to be a series. The second book could have continued answering the questions about who this immortal was, why he was stealing souls of werewolves, what he was doing with them. But this didn't happen. For whatever reason the author moved on to another storyline about some demon who thinks he's Santa Claus. Michael and friends help him out then turn him in. And that's where the book ends.

If the Santa Claus part hadn't been written and the first storyline continued, this would have been a great book. I can only assume it will continue in future installments. It just should have continued in this one or at least left off at a cliffhanger, the Santa Claus part took away from the book in my opinion.

Sylvette says

I really enjoyed this story... wished it had more. I had a good laugh, especially with Chip calling his tablet his "wank machine " Hilarious!!!

Thomas Duder says

Beyond the veil of Death lays...a pretty good story.

So. Forever After by Neil Gaiman.

Yeaaaaah, I know this is really you, Neil Gaiman. David Jester is just a nom de guerre for Neil Gaiman, hell it's even an anagram for David Jester!

'Cuz, dude...holy Hell, this is a great book. This is Shaun of the Dead as written by Neil Gaiman, save for the Horde-like zombies - y'know that opening song from Shaun of the Dead? Yeah, that "der-doo-doo-doo-dar-dar-der-der" sound?

Uh, like this....<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZmjsW...>

Suffice it to say, Purgatory has that sound.

So, outside of outright saying that David Jester is Neil Gaiman in disguise, suffice it to say Forever After is a great freakin' series of stories. It's not inexactly a book as it is exactly that - an anthology of novellas following a very Shaun-Of-The-Dead-Ish trio of mundane, kinda brokedown friends, each with a different kind of job. Naff, the more straight-laced seemin' one, is a secretarial type in Purgatory. The main character (Michael Holland) is a grim reaper with a penchant for angst, especially since no one in the afterlife is telling him how to really do his job, not even the "boss man" himself, Azrael, Angel of Death. It's up to Mike to note when his alarm goes off, find the soul (who's bound in a five or ten meter anchor to their body and are blissfully uncaring of their situation, being freed of their mortal coil) and help them report to Death's monotonous office.

Then there's Chip.

Well, really...he's Ed from Shaun of the Dead, save he's shorter, fatter, and nastier. Not, like, badass nastier, just considerably less hygiene to an extreme that I've never considered capable.

And he's a Tooth Fairy. Yeah.

Life isn't what it's cracked up to be after death, especially when you're immortal and undead. Faced with an eternity of mundane dreariness, the only hope is to experience relife as best as you can, the answers to existence coming in sparingly or not at all. With absolutely nothing but a timer that tells him where a fresh soul is in need of guidance and a sketchy sense of Death Sense (being able to foretell death before it happens), Mike literally has only the briefest of mentoring before he is thrust into the dark, Sin City-esque, depraved wasteland that is Brittleside. Drunks and junkies, skanky whores and crimes of passion (not even lust, just violence and people cheating on each other) are his standard fare, and after thirty years of it you can REALLY feel how it's just depressing the poor guy.

Despite it all, he's managed to carve out something of an afterlife for himself and, while it's far from perfect, it's passable. For now.

So long as Mike can keep stumbling forward, that's all that really matters to me as a reader.

So, with ALL THIS STATED, the misadventures of Mike and friends (including something of a prequel

story amongst the novellas, explaining year 1 for Mike as a Reaper) is fucking excellent. At first I was going to give him a solid 4/5, but y'know what?

5/5, m'man. Good job, great seller, would buy again.

Suffice it to say, as always with me it's the aftertaste that cinches it. Do I remember the story in a kind light? Do I like it a week, two weeks, a month later?

Does it stick with me?

In this case, hells yes it does! I'm sincerely looking forward to the sequel, and will hopefully get my grubby, dirty hands on THAT for review as well!

So yeah, you hearin' me Neil Gaiman? Call yourself Dave Jester, call yourself whatever you want you quaintly British-voiced writer you, just keep writing like this so the rest of us can enjoy!

~Thomas Duder, Author of the Things
<http://www.facebook.com/AuthorOfTheTh...>

P.S. - Did I mention that I can't freakin' WAIT for the sequel? Seriously, it's just...freakin' awesome~! :D

Mich says

Forever After is a dark/comedy fantasy about a grim reaper (just one in a world of thousands) who works the roughest town in the country. There are four stories in the book, all following around the reaper (Michael) and his friends Chip (a midget tooth fairy).

A very funny, very entertaining read from the first page to the last. The characters are believable and the world around them is very vivid.

Michikit says

Anyone that knows me also knows that I am crazy about Buffy and that I am constantly in search of books that remind me of the Tv show. "Forever After" by David Jester might be the closest in this case. It has the humor and action that Buffy had and smart dialogue that made me laugh (yeah, I don't do that very often).

It was a dark reading and to be honest my first book that had a reaper and I loved it. It was fun to watch Michael in his missions. As for the description, of the town and not only, was easy to read and very detailed. I enjoy reading books with this kind of description because is easier to imagine a place or a person.

The ending was not what I was expecting and then again that might be a good thing, this was not a predictable book.

Gidget says

Dark and hilariously unique take on the life of a reaper. The stories drew me in and wouldn't let me go. I was disappointed for this book to end and can't wait to read more from this talented writer.

Gaele says

Perfect for fans of Christopher Moore (*Lamb*, *Secondhand Souls* , *Practical Demonkeeping* and more) David Jester's *Forever After* introduces us to a Grim Reaper Michael and his housemate, a dwarf-sized Tooth Fairy Chip. A pretty good set up for a story, and then you add in the fact that Michael is bored and depressed, drinks too much and lives in squalor with his fast-talking, snarky roomie. Mix in a couple of side-threads as Michael chases a demon with Santa Claus aspirations, a city at the far end of respectable, and weather that won't allow any sunshine into his immortality, and Michael is not without scope for depressing elements.

Dialogue that feels plausible threads through the novel: well, plausible if your friends and overheard conversations are from those who have seen too much, or are stuck in ruts and grasping at anything that makes a change in their routine. Passages of description bring the city to life, easy to envision both place and action, and the action seems never ending. Michael becomes a character that is sympathetic and understandable: you can almost feel the ennui that pours from his pores as another day, much like those before it, are all that face this civil servant.

If you want something wholly different, are prepared to take the story as it comes to reveal itself to you, and don't mind the seemingly unconnected plots that do tie in with a wholly unexpected ending, this is certainly the book for you.

I received an eArc copy of the title from the publisher via Edelweiss for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Review first appeared at I am, Indeed

Michele says

Reluctant grimm reaper..."Dead like me" set in a bad part of town with some REALLY unsavory side characters.

Sean Randall says

I found this painfully British in its slang and tone, depressing to read and pretty pointless to boot. "Dark and funny" is obviously a very subjective term and given the excerpts of the author's other work at the end of the book I think I'll keep clear. Not my cup of tea.

Michael says

This is another brilliant novel by someone who will surely be, and one sincerely hopes so, the breakthrough writer of 2013. In Forever After, the author shows us his darkly humourous, fantastically creative and uniquely visionary side. The characters are developed very well, the scene setting so vivid you can't help but be transported right next to the characters and the story is fast and never dwindles, you'll soon find yourself half way through the book without knowing it. Three books now I've read by this author, all absolute crackers and each so diverse it just shows what a talented writer David is. I'm looking forward to many more!

Susan Davis says

Dark and funny? Hell yes. Reminded me of the later seasons of Buffy without the pesky UPN censorship. Few fantasy authors *really* cater to young adults and adults, but Mr. Jester hit it on the head with this one. Hilarious and inventive!

Selinalynn says

This book reminded me of the show Dead Like Me. A pissed off reaper living with a disgusting tooth fairy and an over worked pencil pusher for the data of the afterlife. I laughed so hard at the adventures of these folks in the run down town they rule over. I would highly suggest this book for a great laugh and an adult look at how immortality can suck!

Daphne Sleigh says

The writing is certainly funny, but the story arc is weirdly organized and it needs some serious editing. I was constantly being pulled out of the story by words that were misspelled, misused or just similar to the intended word, but completely wrong.

Nikki says

What a long, strange trip... this wasn't the worst book I've ever read but it was hard to follow any continuous thread of story. Rather it jumped all over with no apparent connection between events or any reason why the events weren't told in chronological order. It was a strange book indeed.

Erin Prunty says

this was ok, definitely felt like the work of a first type author. some simple typos, and sometimes a little clunky in the writing. but the story is good, characters are interesting. and the humour is darkly funny. overall a reasonable story, I don't regret reading
