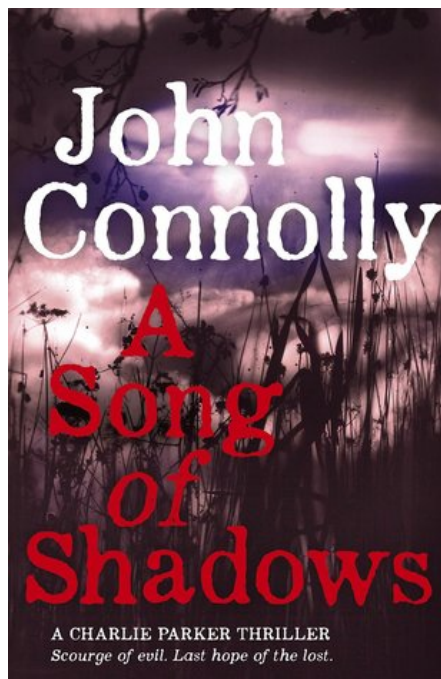




A Song of Shadows

John Connolly

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A Song of Shadows

John Connolly

A Song of Shadows John Connolly

Grievously wounded, private detective Charlie Parker investigates a case that has its origins in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War.

Broken, but undeterred, private detective Charlie Parker faces the darkest of dark forces in a case with its roots in the second world war, and a concentration camp unlike any other . . .

Recovering from a near-fatal shooting and tormented by memories of a world beyond this one, Parker has retreated to the small Maine town of Boreas to recover. There he befriends a widow named Ruth Winter and her young daughter, Amanda. But Ruth has her secrets. She is hiding from the past, and the forces that threaten her have their origins in the Second World War, in a town called Lubko and a concentration camp unlike any other. Old atrocities are about to be unearthed, and old sinners will kill to hide their sins. Now Parker is about to risk his life to defend a woman he barely knows, one who fears him almost as much as she fears those who are coming for her.

His enemies believe him to be vulnerable. Fearful. Solitary.

But they are wrong. Parker is far from afraid, and far from alone.

For something is emerging from the shadows . . .

A Song of Shadows Details

Date : Published April 9th 2015 by Hodder & Stoughton

ISBN :

Author : John Connolly

Format : Kindle Edition 449 pages

Genre : Thriller, Mystery, Crime, Horror, Fiction

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From Reader Review A Song of Shadows for online ebook

Paul Nelson says

'You don't have to stay,' she told the dead daughter. 'I'm here now. I'll keep him safe.'

A Song of Shadows is the thirteenth in the Charlie Parker series which has long been my favourite and a new release is in my eyes a prominent day in any literary calendar.

Now the series as a whole generally comes down to two types of books, you have the ones that bounce ahead in Charlie's story arc and you have the ones that step sideways, usually a highly entertaining break but doesn't really progress toward where we all want to get to. More recently The Burning Soul and The Whisperers spring to mind.

So which does A Song of Shadows fit into, well I'd have to say for the main part it's a step sideways but there's a couple of extremely significant events regarding Charlie's family, specifically his daughters. Yes both of them, the start of an absolutely chilling relationship that adds another major plot line, not that this series is in dire need of more darkness and shadow but its more intrigue on top of everything else. Past friends like Epstein the rabbi and his beautiful guardian, The Collector and Cambion the Leper all make brief but substantial appearances, it's all here and those players are not even the primary source of danger.

The story well it's all about recovery and rehabilitation as Charlie fights to get back to his former self after the injuries sustained in the last outing. He picks Boreas to anchor down in and Charlie is of course a gravitational pull to all that is dark and evil in this world and that's what makes him immensely popular with anyone able to pass breath and delve into his completely enslaving life. It's not all darkness, of course there is the usual humour around the Fulci's, Angel and Louis all mixed with considerable menace. Take the slow driving Louis and the exasperated Angel.

'You want me to get out and walk in front with a red flag?' 'Yeah, would you? Then I could run you over.' 'You couldn't accelerate fast enough to run me over. By the time you got up to speed, I'd have died of old age.'

Charlie befriends a widow in the house next door and a new case practically jumps out of the closet at him, one with its origins going all the way back to the Second World War and the atrocities surrounding a particularly horrific concentration camp. This did result in excessive information dumps about the Nazi's, their ill-gotten gains and fight to stay hidden under the radar, which diverted focus away from where you really want to be. You can easily live with that, however because the stories are exceptional.

This is all about Charlie and his daughters though, an excitingly dark twist to his future, tense, fraught with trepidation, and hats off to the direction John Connolly's now taking us in. Dark and Malevolent as ever but the ghosts of his past combine furtively with the things most precious in his life and its gripping.

'The detective's relationship with his daughter was a construct of great complexity, of nuance and shadow. He could never see as much of her as he might have wished, and yet curiously he did not miss her as deeply as he might have done under other circumstances, for she was always with him. In that, he thought, she was like his first daughter, his dead daughter.'

Looking forward to the next already, hopefully this series never ends because it is that good and the last five lines just blew me away, absolutely chilling. I could easily give every book of this series five stars but in terms of enjoyment and the fact that the last two books were top draw this one I think is almost a reluctant

four.

Also posted at <http://paulnelson.booklikes.com/post/...>

Nev Murray says

A lot of my reviews recently have been of books written by people I have never heard of. I absolutely love finding new authors and being able to share what they do. Every year though, in April, I look forward to one thing happening. The next Charlie Parker instalment. A Song of Shadows is John Connolly's 13th (some, including me, would argue 14th) book about the life of ex-cop / ex private investigator / ex loads of other things, Charlie Parker. I always look forward to it coming out. I've just finished it. Now I'm depressed again because I've probably got another year to wait on the next one. The highs and lows of being in total awe of this man's writing!

Charlie Parker is recovering from his near fatal shooting in his own home. He is recuperating in a rented house in the small Maine town of Boreas. He befriends his troubled neighbour Ruth Winter and her daughter Amanda. Ruth is frightened. Parker doesn't know why but he has a feeling it has something to do with a body that has just washed up on a beach.

The body has some interesting connections. It looks like the man was a hunter. A hunter of Nazi war criminals. A series of events that follow once again entrap Parker in a situation he just can't let go of. While trying to recover from his injuries and deal with ghosts of his past and present, he sets out to help figure out decades old connections and get to the bottom of what actually happened in a place called Lubsco during WWII and more importantly, who can answer for the crimes.

Now before I start in earnest, I will confess, the Charlie Parker series is probably my all-time favourite. Ever. Period. The End. To which end my review could probably read like this – Loved it. Buy it. The end. Now that I am a “blogger” (is that how you say it? Bloggite? Bloggist?) and reviewer, my true objective self must come out. OK then, honesty rules.

If you are looking for an old school Parker novel where he runs all over the country in a high energy show that is full of high octane chases and huge blockbuster explosions, this is not it. Is that a disappointment? In a way it is yes but you got to remember, the man is recovering after nearly being killed.

What do we have then? It's beautiful. Ab-so-lutely beautiful.

A Wolf in Winter was super powerful. When it ended, I think everyone knew that times were going to change for Parker. He was going to change as a person. His priorities, lifestyle and commitments would change. A Song of Shadows doesn't possess the same type of “power” that Wolf did but it is immensely powerful in its own unique way. Not so much of the supernatural but, reading between the lines, it sets us up perfectly for the continuing story. Very moving at times and also quite harrowing this is definitely slower paced but in a way it's a welcome break.

Most stories that are in a series where the “hero” has been badly injured in the last book, start the following

book where he or she is fully recovered and raring to complete three triathlons in a week and save the world while he is tightrope walking across the Grand Canyon eating doughnuts. This doesn't. Parker's injuries still have him mostly incapacitated. I loved this. It slows the whole pace of the story right down and makes us realise that he isn't super human or immortal after all. Or is he? Connolly's writing just sucks you in. From page one the book just makes you feel like you're wrapped in your favourite jumper, snuggled on your favourite seat with not a care in the world and no desire to do anything other than finish the book in one sitting. It is virtually impossible to put down.

As for the rest of the characters in this one – a lot of old favourites come back. It wouldn't be the same without Angel and Louie. Thankfully they haven't changed one bit. Louie is still as cool, calm and collected as he was before. Angel is.....well he is Angel. They are characters that should never ever be excluded from Connolly's books. FBI agent Ross is back as is MCU man Walsh. You will also recognise other faces as well that Parker has met on his extensive travels including two that will make you laugh out loud when they appear.

You may have noticed I haven't told you about the story? I don't want to. I don't want to spoil it for you.

OK then. When a body is found on a beach it looks like suicide. Some more bodies show up and all of a sudden it looks like they could be connected. Parker gets drawn into it as normal and is soon into it up to his neck. It centres on the German community in and around Boreas and particularly some individuals who may or may not have been involved with war crimes in WWII. Once again Connolly shows he isn't scared to write about events or storylines that have proved controversial or painful in the past, present or future.

I could go onnnnnnn and onnnnnnnnn. This is what I would call a "link" book. A Wolf in Winter was a Powerball of a story that could have gone either way in the end. A Song of Shadows slows the pace and I suppose could sort of stand by itself. Until the end. What Mr Connolly does to us in the last chapter verges on the criminal. You will read the last paragraph in this book with your jaw trailing the floor. You will close the book and your jaw will still be trailing the floor. When you gather yourself again, you will curse Mr Connolly for leaving you hanging. You will be unbelievably excited at the prospect of what could be coming next in the story. You will probably join me, rocking in the corner, totally depressed that you have to wait probably another year for the next part.

If you haven't read any in this series then I triple urge you to get started with Every Dead Thing and join the millions of us in the John Connolly fan club. If you have been following the series then you must must must get A Song of Shadows. You will not be disappointed

Come one John! Get writing!!

Emma says

4.5 stars

After putting down number 12, I immediately downloaded number 13 and began to read...

The multiple POV in the beginning third of the book made me fear that I was going to be disappointed again. It was then that I realised my main issue with some of the books in this series stems from my relationship with Parker. I guard my time with him like a jealous lover, begrudging those who demand my attention when it could be with him. I want to know what he's thinking and what he's doing. He is more than just the nucleus of the story or of the series, he's the question to which I need an answer. What are you Parker? Not only that,

who are you now? These recent events have changed you, I can see it. Your friends have noticed, so I am not alone. I very much think your enemies will be the ones to feel the consequences very soon. The answer I seek seems on the verge of being discovered, but i'm less sure of what it will be, or even was I hope it to be.

The sense of convergence that was so stark in *A Wolf in Winter* is further developed in this novel. It seethes with the unhuman, the many shadows. The Hollow men, Jennifer, the ghostly victims of Nazi brutality- all reach into the human world with the power to influence real events. Little by little, loose ends are being tied up. Tidy and satisfactory ends presented with a little bow and a lot of blood. Some brief appearances from old friends and adversaries rattle the very bones of the story. Yet if there is a sense of moving forward to a conclusion, it is because lesser evil is being revealed to have much greater behind it. In these most recent books, Connolly seems to manage a perfect blending of old and new, interlinking the major people and events in Parker's life to form a complex, but purposeful narrative that gives the series even more direction and hints at an intriguing future.

Charlie Parker moves in a world where the darkness that surrounds him is deeper and more dangerous than he ever could have imagined. But now he is no longer satisfied with being lost within it. The next book, out in April 2016, is called *A Time of Torment*. It makes me wonder whose torment is coming? Wherever and whenever he arrives, Parker will not be there as a beacon of shining light in the darkness. Like a brutally efficient surgeon, his solution to malignancy is simply to remove it. Connolly keeps developing his character in ways that make Charlie as intriguing as the man we met in *Every Dead Thing*. I cannot wait to see what comes next.

Liz Barnsley says

Pretty unbelievable that Charlie Parker is on his 13th outing, seems like only yesterday I picked up “*Every Dead Thing*” rather randomly and became an immediate and lifelong fan of this author and of this series in particular. 13 may be unlucky for some but not in this case because “*A Song of Shadows*” has a beautiful quality about it, following as it does the emotional and traumatic events of “*A Wolf in Winter*”, a book that had me distraught for weeks. In a good way.

A bit of background for anyone who has not yet started these... Charlie Parker is a private investigator, who lost his family to the serial killer known as The Travelling Man. Each book takes Charlie one step closer to the end game (sob, I feel it coming now I really do, one time in my reading life I hope I'm wrong and there are another 20 books on the way) whilst each one also has its own self contained storyline. Even so I would highly recommend that you read these in order without missing a step – the richness and depth of the mythology that John Connolly has created here is pitch perfect both in construction and prose, with each novel leading you slowly towards something I still cannot yet imagine – as such the complete experience is better served as a sequence of events.

Looking at “*A Song of Shadows*” then, here we find Charlie recuperating from the violent attack he suffered, watched over as ever by the elusive Louis and Angel, he moves to a small town to take the time to heal. Living next door is Ruth Winter and her daughter Amanda – Ruth hides a dark secret with its roots firmly in the past. Of course Charlie gets involved. It is who he is.

I read this in a day, such is the addictive quality of the writing and the story unfolding – often taking time out to take a step back, I'm not sure why exactly but these stories always get right to the heart of me. It may be crime fiction with a twist but it is also poetic, haunting and highly emotional. Always. The sheer wonder of Charlie Parker's world ends up giving me just as much pain as pleasure emotionally speaking, I am wrung out by the end of them, this one was no different. It is why I love them and will read to the bitter end (please

don't end) because books that touch the soul are rare – and books with this subject matter that do so are even more unusual.

The ongoing mythology of the series takes a huge step with very few words in this instalment – another huge strength of the writing is the author's ability to get a world of meaning, passion and anticipation into a few small sentences – as well as dealing with Ruth's issues, Charlie has his own family to consider. This thread of the tale was truly terrific, although of course it also made me mad as all heck that now I have to wait again. I'm really not good at waiting. I don't like it. It makes me grumpy.

All our well loved characters are back, including a brief cameo from my personal favourite "bad" guy – the interactions and conversations are electric as ever, the relationships solid and developing. I may take this opportunity to mention that I really hope that Mr Connolly might give us another novel somewhere in there that gives Louis and Angel their own tale of woe (see *The Reapers*) because these two marvellous men certainly deserve that and I'm sure there is a lot left unsaid for this pair.

Overall this was fantastic. I always think it cannot possibly hit me any harder but each time it does – beautifully written, literary genius and without doubt my favourite series in the history of the world ever. So highly recommended that highly recommended doesn't even cover it. If you have not read these yet you are missing something incredible. Don't do that. Life is too short.

Faith says

This is the 13th Charlie Parker book, but it is only the second one that I've read. I also read "The Wolf in Winter", the 12th book in the series. I'm sure that I would have benefited from having read more of the series, but I thought that this book worked fine as a standalone. Parker has rented a beach house in a small Maine town while he recuperates from serious injuries. However the private detective can't keep from getting involved in a mystery involving a dead body on the beach, a missing boy, a sadistic assassin, war criminals, neo Nazis and Parker's mostly invisible daughter (always referred to as "my dead daughter", which I found somewhat disconcerting). Parker also has a living six year old daughter Samantha who lives with her mother but visits him in Maine. I'm sure that more will be learned about Samantha in future books.

I like Parker and I enjoyed this complex story with a hint of the supernatural. The banter of Parker's colleagues was amusing, and I don't usually like banter. These books have a lighter touch than some humorless crime series. I may have appreciated the banter more because the narrator of the audio book, Jeff Harding, was very good.

I received a free copy of the e-book from the publisher, however I wound up borrowing and listening to the audiobook from the library.

Char says

Now Available in the U.S.!

I loved this book!

Charlie Parker is recovering from near fatal injuries and as such, is reflecting on his life and the decisions he has made. Rehabilitating at a house in Boreas, Maine he becomes interested in a body that washes up at a

nearby beach and so begins this story which I'll call Charlie and the Nazis.

The portions of the book that I loved best, (other than the always entertaining Angel, Louis and Fulci Brothers), were the parts regarding Charlie's daughters. Series followers are already familiar with Jennifer and Sam but this book reveals that Sam has a secret, a dangerous one, and I cannot wait to find out more about where it comes from and how it is to be used. Jennifer made a promise to Charlie in "The Wolf in Winter" and in this volume, she keeps her promise. Charlie's girls hold sway over his emotions and I think Connolly's writing shines brightest when dealing with Parker's feelings toward them.

In short, this is yet another hit from Mr. Connolly. We've got a damaged Charlie, two daughters, Nazis, Nazi hunters, concentration camp survivors and all the old standbys including Cambion and The Collector. Everything you love about this series is here, plus some.

A Song of Shadows receives my highest recommendation. To fans of truly excellent writing, crime thrillers, mysteries and horror, go get yourself some new Charlie Parker at the end of this month! You won't regret it. (Available in the U.S. September 29, 2015.)

*I received a free e-ARC of this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review. *

Jon Recluse says

After barely surviving an attempt on his life, Charlie Parker goes to ground in the small town of Boreas, Maine, to quietly recuperate off the grid. When his neighbor's young daughter Amanda comes to his aid when his strength fails him, Charlie is drawn to the girl and, even as his instincts tell him that something is troubling her mother Ruth, he befriends them both.

As always, his instincts prove correct.

When the body of an obsessed amateur Nazi hunter washes up on the beach, Charlie takes an interest, and finds himself following a web of death that reaches back to the final days of World War II, a mysterious "prison camp" called Lubsko....and the sole survivor of the evil lurked there....an evil that has also survived, and has set its sights on Ruth, Amanda.....and Charlie.

As clichéd as the material sounds, remember that this is John Connolly. This isn't your daddy's Nazi thriller. There are no mad, semi-immortal masterminds within these pages. These are elderly, broken, desperate men.....men who believe that they have outlived the onus of the crimes they committed during the war.....and are perfectly willing to embrace that evil again when their secrets are threatened.

And let us not forget that signature darkness that weaves through the entire series. There are revelations here.....and a warning that will chill you to the bone, and have you pacing the floors awaiting the next book. I know I will.

Highly recommended.

This was an eARC from Netgalley

Gerhard says

After the anaemic *The Wolf in Winter* – where John Connolly resorted to the risible authorial gimmick of leaving the reader unsure if Charlie Parker lives or dies – *A Song of Shadows* hit me like a bolt out of the

blue.

This is the strongest Parker novel in a long, long time, and probably the best after *The Killing Kind*. More importantly, it reinvigorates this long-running series. Book #13 sees Connolly hit a mother lode similar to that he mined in *Every Dead Thing*: a rich vein of terror, horror and existential angst that builds up to something far more than the sum of its parts.

Similar to *The Wrath of Angels*, Connolly chooses a historical backdrop on which to hang his tale. Here though the history lesson does not overwhelm the ongoing story of Parker's discovery of his true nature, and the end game towards all the disparate pieces are now grimly moving.

In focusing on the atrocities of the Third Reich in its concentration camps – and in particular at Lubsko, about which I knew nothing until I read this book – Connolly found a subject matter to ignite his anger.

A Song of Shadows is a very angry book, as well as being resolutely grim and dark. The theme of the Nazis and their moral culpability in the Holocaust is a perfect lodestone for the moral ambiguity embodied by Charlie Parker himself. (This is not to detract in any way from the horror of the events in the Second World War. Instead, Connolly is highly impassioned about the nature of good and evil, and there is much food for thought here as a result).

What is quite startling here is how Connolly embraces this duality of Parker, which is something he has hinted at before but always ended up skirting. I got the feeling, especially with *The Wolf in Winter*, that Connolly was balancing the commercial considerations of a highly successful (and profitable) series against his instinct as a writer to head into uncharted territory.

A Song of Shadows is a perfect marriage of these difficult elements. Connolly seems to have a renewed energy and urgency that translates into a cracking read that I devoured in two days. There are a couple of narrative sleights of hand that are breathtaking (and carried out with such deftness that I was strongly reminded how technically assured a writer Connolly can be).

The ending, is quite simply, jaw-dropping. (It does tie-in quite neatly with *The Burning Soul*, so this is definitely not an entry point for first-time Connolly readers). But what an assured and thrilling denouement to one of the best books in Connolly's oeuvre to date. Long live Charlie Parker and his many demons.

Nicholas Sparks says

I've been a fan of the Charlie Parker thrillers since the beginning; John Connolly works in a genre of one. They can be very dark and explore the sometimes blurry edges of right and wrong, but I'm a fan.

SUSAN *Nevertheless,she persisted* says

I am a huge fan of this author,his writing and this series. The writing is intelligent,well paced and the characters are always in character. Parker,the Fulci brothers,Louis and Angel...an amazing cast. This book is filled with twists,turns,and things otherworldly.

Charlie's is recuperating from a near fatal attempt on his life,in a small town in Maine. A body washes ashore and the games begin. Murder,Nazis,Nazi hunters....this book will grab you and not let up until the final

sentence.

A lot of the information and storyline is based on fact. Some of these facts are hard to digest and what makes them more unimaginable, our government was complicit.

Phrynn says

I have loved every book I have read by this author (okay I am a BIG fan) but this has to be the best yet. Just about every character who matters makes an appearance especially Louis and Angel who are personal favourites of mine. At number thirteen in the series you could be forgiven for thinking that Connolly might be running out of ideas but instead he has come up with a whole new scenario which promises even better things to come. And if you are a reader of this series you know I don't use the term "things" lightly. Charlie has a new purpose in life and as for Sam..... well read it and see. I absolutely cannot wait for number fourteen.

Zoeytron says

'We all trail our histories behind us. . .'

This was my first acquaintance with John Connolly's famous detective. Pleased to meet you, Charlie Parker, with your haunted eyes, and your unusual daughters with their otherness.

Great characters inhabit the shadows of *'this miasma of darkness. . .'* Cambion the leper, a sadistic torturer who has the tables turned on him as the disease itself eats him alive, even as he is gently tended to by a woman who reeks of cats, mothballs, cookies, and piss. The Collector, the Hunter, Nazis masquerading as benign old folks, and the Jigsaw Man all fit in here. It is an intricate plot that pays off nicely. Deal me in for more of Charlie Parker.

Paul Nelson says

A Song of Shadows by John Connolly 'You don't have to stay,' she told the dead daughter. 'I'm here now. I'll keep him safe.'

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there's a couple of extremely significant events regarding Charlie's family, specifically his daughters. Yes both of them, the start of an absolutely chilling relationship that adds another major plot line, not that this series is in dire need of more darkness and shadow but its more intrigue on top of everything else. Past friends like Epstein the rabbi and his beautiful guardian, The Collector and Cambion the Leper all make brief but substantial appearances, it's all here and those players are not even the primary source of danger.

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GOODREADS PLEASE STOP DELETING MY FUCKING REVIEWS

Karl says

After being shot at the end of the last book we re-join Parker trying to recover. This becomes difficult when a woman with deep dark secrets moves into the house next door to his new rental dwelling.

The story revolves around Charlie Parker investigating a case that has its origins in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War. Broken, but undeterred, private detective Charlie Parker faces the darkest of dark forces in a case with its roots in the second world war and a concentration camp unlike any

other.

Recovering from a near-fatal shooting and tormented by memories of a world beyond this one, Parker has retreated to the small Maine town of Boreas to recover. Angel and Louis make an appearance but are keeping a discrete if distant eye on him.

Beautifully written as always and a worthy addition to this wonderful ongoing series. Copies of A SONG OF SHADOWS are now in bookstores throughout Ireland, many signed and with CD's. The US edition is to be released September 29 without the CD.

This copy is signed by John Connolly and comes with a CD "A Soundtrack to the Novels of John Connolly V 5" I recall previously that "The Black Angel" also came with a CD. ALSO "The Unquiet" the 2008 Parker novel had "A Soundtrack To The Novels Of John Connolly, Volume II" in the book.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

Charlie Parker has through his lawyer Aimee Price rented a house in Boreas to spend some time away to recover from the ordeal that almost cost him his life in the last book. But soon darkness will fall upon the peaceful little town of Boreas and a dead body will wash ashore on the beach at Mason Point. The police think it's suicide, but Charlie Parker suspects something is amiss with the case. Also, his neighbor, a mother with and daughter also new to the town, seems to be hiding something. Why did she move to the town?

The **Charlie Parker series** is one of my favorite series and when I started to read this book I took my time reading it because I really wanted to prolong the reading experience. Usually, I try to read a book fast, but there are some books that I feel I don't want to rush.

Charlie Parker is recovering from the attack at his home that almost killed him. He has rented a house close to Brook House Clinic for rehabilitation. He has no inclination to investigate anything. He is just trying to get well, but faith has other plans and soon he must once again go against those who want to do harm. But he isn't alone, he has his old friends Angel and Louis by his side. Now he must face some real monster, monsters that for the last decades has been hiding in plain sight...

This is a dark story, but there are some lighter moments like the Fulci brothers making an appearance or the banter between Angel and Louis. Sweet moments between Charlie and his daughter Sam, who is much more like Charlie than he knows when it comes to the paranormal stuff surrounding him. And, here we have an aspect that I really like about this series, the paranormal part is what makes this series something a bit more special. The paranormal part is subtle and I love it. It's part of Charlie's life, his dead daughter and wife are still with him and I think it adds an extra flavor to the series. This could be an excellent series even without the paranormal part, but with it; it's even better I think.

I loved the book and I'm looking forward to reading the next one to see what Charlie Parker will take on after this.

I received this copy from Atria/Emily Bestler Books through Edelweiss in return for an honest review! Thank you!
