



# Dark Visions

*James Byron Huggins*

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## **Dark Visions** James Byron Huggins

Joe Mac was a legendary homicide detective until his vision was lost in the line of duty and he was forced into retirement. Now he lives a life of darkness, his only friend being a huge Raven that Joe Mac names "Poe."

But when Joe Mac's grandson is murdered by an unknown killer, Joe emerges from his self-imposed solitude to resurrect the skills of the detective he once was. And, although he is blind, Joe Mac begins to hunt down his tiny grandson's murderer.

Led in some dark way by Poe, Joe Mac relentlessly tracks a force that literally owns the darkness, uses the darkness, and belongs to the darkness. For the force he is tracking has fed upon this world for thousands of years, and has never known defeat. It kills like demons, disappears like ghosts, and leaves nothing alive. But Joe Mac is determined to follow this road to Hell no matter the cost. He will find whoever it was that so mercilessly killed his young grandson, and he will deliver justice ... even if it costs him his life.

Fearlessly following the clues, he tracks the murderers of his grandson into the deepest, most dangerous heart of ancient nightmares. And with each haunting step into that darkness, Joe Mac realizes that he has somehow challenged a power that has destroyed nations and conquered continents. And the death they have delivered to the Earth reaches back to the beginning of the world ...

It is a battle that will take Joe Mac to the edge of sanity and beyond ...

## **Dark Visions Details**

Date : Published July 31st 2018 by WildBlue Press

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Author : James Byron Huggins

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Genre : Fiction, Action, Mystery, Noir, Christian Fiction

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## From Reader Review Dark Visions for online ebook

### Anullekha Naveen says

A psychological thriller with a gripping plot that sure keeps you hooked to the book.

A blind ex- homicide detective, Joe Mac , is forced out of retirement when his little grandson is murdered in a barbaric way.

Joe is out to seek revenge and will stop at nothing.

Teaming up with Poe, a raven that is more human than avian and Jodi Strong, a rookie officer, the trio are out to seek an enemy that is evil in its most brutal form.

Alternating between history , rituals and sadistic practices that date back to many centuries & to its implications in a series of gripping murders at present, they unveil horror beyond imagination.

A great read with a nail biting finish.

I'm not going to give too much away. Just read the book. You sure won't be disappointed.

The author James Byron Huggins is a master craftsman and does not fail to keep the reader glued and guessing.

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### Eric Wilson says

I've waited for years for a new James Byron Huggins novel, and he returns with a vengeance. This book packs all the meaty punch of a Jason Bourne thriller, while using the slick pacing of a Dan Brown conspiracy story. This has heart, soul, and lots of excitement.

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### Norma says

( Format : Audiobook )

"Stupidity looks exactly like courage to a fool."

After being blinded several years before, legendary homicide detective, Joe Mac, retired, sold his house and went to live in a converted garage attached to his daughter's house. Then his grandson became the most recent victim of the Hangman, a mysterious serial killer who, for several years, had been murdering men, women and children, leaving their broken bodies hanging in a noose. No clues were left, no connections between the victims had been found, the teams of police and FBI agents were at a loss. So Joe rejoins the police again and, teamed with a young rookie detective, Jodi, joins the hunt.

There is a lot to applaud about this book, not least the fact that the main protagonist is blind yet, with other senses slightly enhanced and his own innate abilities to stay calm and listen, is still as able as his sighted companions in action. The characterisation is good, too, especially that of Jodi's change and development as the story progresses, with conversations which seemed plausible, inherently realistic, given the nature of the speakers. And then there is Poe, a raven, for this reader by far the most fascinating aspect of the book.

So much good going for it: even the basic premise is exciting. Only for the author apparently being unable to decide if this were a thriller or an horror story and repeating descriptions several times over of gruesome unpleasantnesses of Ancient Druids and other religious sects in the past. It became tedious rather than adding to the excitement. As the book progressed, too, this reader had to wonder at the essential silliness and lack of ability of people said to be so intelligent, all powerful and wealthy that they had survived triumphant for

millennia. Mmm, not much sign of that. Even the 'main man' and the one who had been leaking information, was all too easy to determine, sadly. And who, alone and with their almost dying breath and despite being too weak to move, decides not to shoot a perpetrator but instead take them in to face justice and a trial? Rubbish, simply prolonging the word count (like the repetitions previously).

Much of this negative impact is mitigated by Tom Lennon's excellent narration, his performance helping to make even the ridiculous seem plausible. Every character, male or female, is appropriately and individually voiced, the pace reflects the text and his reading is well intoned as well as clearly articulated and pleasant to hear. He carries the listener with him through the visceral excitements and confrontations to the very end.

I was fortunate in being freely gifted a complimentary copy of Dark Visions by the rights holder, at my request, via Audiobook Boom. Thank you. I so wanted to like this book, and did, initially, with it's innovative ideas and excellent cast list. But the heavy handed prolongation and attempts to further install a sense of horror by pointless repetitions ruined it for me and I finished only because of the fine narration. And wanting to know what happened to Poe. Such a pity. Would I recommend it? I honestly don't know.

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### **Bernard DeLeo says**

Intriguing new novel by my friend, James Byron Huggins. Excellent action detective story. Dark Visions teams a blind detective, a rookie female detective, and a huge Raven named Poe to end the horrific Hangman and Wicker Man murders. Joe Mac and Jodi Strong, battle their way with Poe's guidance, and an anthropology expert, Dr. Marvin Mason, to uncover a murderous sect of Druids, intent on resurrecting Stonehenge in New York City. The final race to rescue a young child from burning alive inside the Druid's Wicker Man inferno culminates in a defining battle of courage and final justice.

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### **Amber Machado says**

Lots of nail biting moments but definitely worth a read!

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### **Glen says**

I won this book in a goodreads drawing.

A serial killer has New York running scared. When the grandson of former homicide detective Joe Mac becomes a victim, it's the beginning of the end.

Even though Joe Mac is blind, he's still a brilliant detective, and has a raven named Poe looking after him. He enters the case, dragging a rookie detective in his wake and finds a deep, dark conspiracy thousands of years old.

Not too bad, but by the end of the book, all the characters seem to talk with the same cadence.

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## **Denna says**

First off, I need to say that James Byron Huggins is one of my favorite authors. He's one of the few that I actually keep track of, hoping for a new release. That being said, Dark Visions wasn't one of my favorites. The story is good and I did enjoy it, but it lacked the magic I found in Rora, Hunter, Cain and Leviathan.

Joe Mac is a retired homicide detective, having lost his sight in the line of duty. Basically living as a recluse, his only real friend is a huge raven named Poe. Though he is blind, when his young grandson is brutally killed, Joe uses his skills as a detective to help try to find the killer.

I enjoyed getting to know the blind detective Joe Mac and also Jodi Strong, the woman he is partnered with while trying to find this killer, and there is a mystical quality I've come to expect from Huggins' work where the raven is concerned. Though the raven definitely plays a part, I felt there could have been more. In Hunter, I cared as much for the wolf as I did the main character and I didn't gain this with the raven.

I think what I also missed in this story, what I craved, was a closer look inside the mind of the killer—as crazy as some of them could be in the other stories. I wanted more insight into the Druids involved, their motives. I missed being right inside the antagonist's head. Joe Mac, Jodi, and some of the other characters could only guess and it left me wanting more.

Every reader looks for a little something different in a story. I think those who enjoy detective murder mysteries will like this. There are no real dull areas, giving us plenty of action along with twists and turns to keep one guessing to the end. I can't wait to see what this author comes up with next.

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## **walkingforthe love of books says**

I want to say, thank you so much, to the publishing company, WildBlue Press, for giving me the opportunity to read this book, free, in an exchange for an honest review.

Joe Mac was a legendary homicide detective until his vision was lost in the line of duty and he was forced into retirement. Now he lives a life of darkness, his only friend being a huge Raven that Joe Mac names "Poe."

Joe Mac's grandson is murdered by an unknown killer, Joe emerges from his self-imposed solitude to resurrect the skills of the detective he once was and, although he is blind, Joe Mac begins to hunt down his tiny grandson's murderer.

That was part of the synopsis.

Joe Mac, he is the most experienced homicide detective, who is blind and works with his side kick, Jodi. Jodi, an inspiring new comer, who really pulls her weight at being a rookie detective. Together, these two try to crack down on massive murders from a cult of ancient times/beliefs, with a little help of Poe, the raven, who follows and befriends Joe Mac and Jodi.

Where. To. Begin.... WOW. This is some book, James Byron Huggins, his style was different to what I've read before, it centres mainly on lots of talking dialogue of two characters, with a throw back of questions and answers being slung at each other. I felt like a fly on a wall just listening in on their conversation. Cleverly written, because, by using this method, I found out a whole lot of information on how the crimes

were committed. I particularly loved the way James Byron Huggins used Poe, the Raven, I was intrigued on what kind of bird it was, which actually, was cleverly woven into the story as facts on Ravens, which I knew nothing about and now have a new respect for.

This book comes highly recommended by me. If you like detective stories, or TV programmes of same, then this is a must read, plus, if you are an author/writer, you could use this as inspiration or learning tool, as it's quite remarkable. Only warning I will give, is, there are quite a few shooting scenes and the ending is sad.

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## Sumit RK says

Joe Mac was a legendary homicide detective of his time until he lost his vision in the line of duty and was forced into retirement. Now he lives a lonely life with only a raven as his companion.

But when Joe Mac's grandson is murdered by a serial killer, things change forever. The serial killer has claimed 24 victims so far and leaves no clue or clear pattern. Joe is now forced to emerge from his retirement to hunt down the killer. With a younger cop to help him and with the Raven as his companion, will Joe Mac be able to overcome all the odds and hunt down those who mercilessly killed his young grandson... even if it costs him his life?

The closest way to describe this book is *The Da Vinci Code* meets *The Bone Collector* (remember the Denzel Washington movie). As a concept, *Dark Visions* is brilliant. Not only it involves hunting of a serial killer but also discovering clues from myths & historical legends to uncover the entire plot. As Joe Mac and his partner Jodi begin to investigate the crime, they realise that these killings may have a even sinister motive than earlier imagined, with its roots in history and mythology. Joe Mac is blind and retired but hasn't lost his abilities (with other senses enhanced) and Jodi, a rookie detective, is inexperienced but competent. With the mysterious Raven (named Poe), this makes a great mystery solving team.

The first half of the book is thrilling. The discovery of clues are perfectly balanced with the many action scenes. The innovative ideas, the excellent characters and the fast paced story makes it a real page turner. The story slows down a notch in the second half. Most of the later half is about planning for the final showdown and there are long conversations and many more fighting sequences (a few of those could have been trimmed down without affecting the storyline in a big way). The conversations often felt repetitive without taking the story forward. Then there are some parts which feel implausible. (view spoiler) Even the discovery of the killer felt predictable. Overall I feel this book is difficult to rate because the concept and the first half of the book were really good. The second half of the book feels disappointing because this story had the potential to be so much more but overall the story is still immensely readable.

As for the plot and writing style, *Dark Visions* is fast paced & exciting with many twists and turns right till the end. There are no real dull areas and those who enjoy detective stories will enjoy this one. 3.5/5

**Many thanks to the publishers WildBlue Press, the author James Byron Huggins and NetGalley for the ARC.**

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## Linda Strong says

Joe Mac was a celebrated homicide detective until an accident in the line of duty took his eyesight. Now he

lives in his daughter's barn with only his raven, Poe for company. If you think Joe Mac is a little strange, Poe is almost a human in bird form.

When Joe Mac's grandson is murdered, he teams up with Detective Jodi Strong. Even though he lost his eyesight, he didn't lose his abilities as a detective. It says a lot that Strong is willing to work with a blind man to help her solve her first homicide since becoming a detective.

What they discover while tediously working through the few leads they have, they run smack into a cult that has been in existence for centuries .. and killing people for the last 24 years. Men, women, old, young, babies, children ... there seems to be no rhyme nor reason for these killings. And the killings are exceptionally brutal.

Fearlessly following the clues, Mac and Strong track the murderers of his grandson into the deepest, most dangerous heart of ancient nightmares.

There are lots of nail biting moments in this highly suspenseful novel. It is well written with unique, stand-out characters. Joe Mac and Jodi Strong would make wonderful series characters. He's retired but hasn't lost his abilities and Jodi, a rookie detective, is more than willing to listen to Mac and learn. They make a solid team. I love the addition of Poe, a giant raven who seems almost human in his protection of Mac.

Many thanks to the author / WildBlue Press / Netgalley / Edelweiss for the advanced digital copy of this crime fiction. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

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## **Cats of Ulthar says**

Review: DARK VISIONS by James Byron Huggins

An electrifying thriller, frightening in its implacability, DARK VISIONS commences with the killing of a young boy, the grandson of a retired blind detective, a murder which is only the most current in a four-year run. Neither NYPD nor the New York City FBI office have a clue: no DNA, no identifiable pattern. The killer might as well be a ghost.

But choosing as a victim this particular young boy is a serious mistake. His grandfather, Joe Mac Baker, was, and still is, an exceptional detective, a kind of contemporary Sherlock Holmes crossed with the dedication and fervour of Rambo. Paired up with Joe Mac is brand-new detective Jodie Strong, who caught the call on the boy's death on her last day in uniform. Together, they unravel a plot with both historical and metaphysical implications, one so bizarre that it is unbelievable, while all the while someone higher up is circumventing their progress and continually setting them up to die.

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## **Mariam says**

The book is fairly decent but I couldn't vibe with it well enough that I almost even forced myself to read this book so I can finish it. It's filled with many repetition and it gave me the feels of a detective show from the 1950's with the way everyone spoke. The whole book could appeal to those looking for a mystery book that has a twist to an old style of writing (and by old style I mean the conversations the characters had).

However, this book was a refreshing read to me as I don't read much of mystery books because they're not truly a genre I quite enjoy reading. Though if you're someone who likes this genre, I do suggest for you to give this book a go! A lot of people seem to like it so don't let one mediocre review get in the way of you trying out this book!

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### **Ray Cooke says**

Dark Visions. Is a must read dark & gripping thriller. I rate it 5\* and in the top 3 books I have read/listened to this year.

Gripping from the first pages right thru to the last sentence. Beautifully written and crafted.

Tom Lennons narration adds to the tension and makes it impossible to put down.

I was given a free copy of this audiobook at my own request, and voluntarily leave this review.

For lovers of detection and thriller novels

This audiobook will make a perfect gift for the holidays.

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### **Claudia says**

If you read Dark Visions you are going to want to learn the authenticity of the portrayal of a raven's behavior and intelligence. Well, I've done the research for you. Ravens are indeed reported to be as intelligent as dolphins and chimpanzees. They can mock human speech as well as other environmental sounds, and they do problem solve. They even display empathy. In Dark Visions the raven, Poe, is more friend and protector than pet to Joe Mac Blake. It is suggested that Poe has a personal connection to and mission from God.

After reading a couple of chapters of Dark Visions I got online to double check that this novel was actually categorized as Christian fiction, which it was. As such, I feel the need to alert readers that it does contain some profanity and that both the name of God and Jesus are at times used carelessly as exclamations. I know that there has been much discussion on various Christian reader social media pages about the use of such language in books labeled as Christian fiction, and just wanted readers to be aware as to be able to make decisions based on their prayerful perspectives.

As to the plot and writing style, Dark Visions is well titled, exciting, fast paced, and has believable dialogue. Joe Mac Blake is a retired NYPD detective who was blinded in the line of duty. He sets out with rookie Detective Jodi Strong to find a serial killer who has included Joe Mac's grandson among his victims. Evidence points to a member of a group of Druids as the prime suspect. Their investigation takes them into the dark underworld of the Druid culture and into a world of danger.

I struggle with rating this book due to the careless use of holy names. I was not terribly bothered by the profanity. If it were not for the misuse of holy names, I would readily give it five stars. I thank NetGalley and Wildblue Press for providing me with a copy of Dark Visions in exchange for an honest opinion. I was under no obligation to provide a positive review and received no monetary compensation.

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### **Sue Plant says**

would like to thank netgalley and the publisher for letting me read this amazing book

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move over stephen king and dean koontz theres a new author in town....

people are being killed for no reason and found before sunset or just after,they suffered violent deaths...why nobody knows...

a blind retired policeman grandson is killed and he wants in on the action

a newbie detective takes him on and together they hunt this murderer....

could not put this book down, this author is now one of my favourites

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