



This Is Life

Seth Harwood

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Jack Palms is more interested in tuning up his vintage Mustang than starring in action films these days. Along with his failed marriage and plenty of bad habits, Jack abandoned his acting career three years ago and life's just the way Jack wants it: boring.

But picking up where *Jack Wakes Up* left off, Jack now finds himself in the middle of a whodunit in the seedy red-light district of San Francisco's North Beach. Young girls, shipped as merchandise from Balkan countries and sold to city heavyweights, are turning up dead and no one knows why. And closer to home, a crooked cop steps out of Jack's past and into his backyard, taking potshots from the bushes at midnight. Sergeant Mills Hopkins, SFPD, thinks someone big is responsible for the bodies and the bullet holes. And if Jack is going to find out who's pulling the triggers, he'll have to forget about the quiet life and act more like an action hero.

This Is Life Details

Date : Published February 19th 2013 by Thomas & Mercer (first published June 3rd 2007)

ISBN : 9781611097870

Author : Seth Harwood

Format : Paperback 334 pages

Genre : Mystery, Crime, Fiction

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From Reader Review This Is Life for online ebook

Dan Pope says

More Jack Palms. Does that make me happy? Need I say five stars? Looking forward to the next installment.

Sonja says

love seth harwood books

Kimberly Ewertz says

This Is Life was my first read of the author, Seth Harwood, and by the time I finished it I wanted MORE!!! It was exciting, mysterious, violent, and it captures the reader's attention and doesn't let go.

I think one of the best compliments I can give about this book is that I honestly didn't know what would happen next. The author keeps the reader guessing, a great treat for any reader.

I highly recommend This Is Life, and I highly recommend the author, Seth Harwood.

Maria Elena says

Great story. With plenty of action and drama!

Jeanne says

Fun series

Not a cozy mystery yet funny with involved plot and fleshed out characters Jack palms and sidekick are a formidable team

BigJohn says

Really fun book. Plot wise, I think it's superior to the first outing, but it's full of great characters that exist alongside some cliched characters. Jack Palms is back from his month chaperoning the Czechs across country, and comes back to San Francisco to relax and move on with his life.

Unfortunately, in his absence, the crime lords Jack pissed off in Book One are not about to forget about Jack and what he's done to mess up their operation. Jack barely has time to shower and take a brief nap before his world explodes with a new, yet familiar fury. He finds himself once again dodging bullets and getting swept up in a hurricane of sex and lies, but no videotape. The scope is grander in this story, including cross-jurisdictional disputes between SFPD, Walnut Creek PD and the FBI.

Strap yourself in for another fun installment of the Jack Palms crime series!

Elizabeth A. says

“It doesn’t matter how you got here, because you in it.” – Freeman

Ex-action movie star Jack Palms seems to find himself “in it” quite a bit. When we last saw Jack in series opener *Jack Wakes Up*, he had barely managed to extricate himself from between a rock and a hard place in the middle of a Bay Area drug war.

As we catch up with Jack in *This Is Life*, he has just returned home after a long cross country motorcycle trip he used to clear his head and get back on track. Unfortunately for Jack, his attempt to pursue a low key life is about to be derailed once again. While standing in his living room on the night of his homecoming contemplating the charred remains of his bed that awaited him upon his return, someone takes a shot at Jack through his patio door. He gives chase, but is only able to catch a glimpse of the shooter’s car as it speeds away.

Jack heads to SFPD headquarters the following morning to report the incident to his frenemy Sergeant Mills Hopkins, but instead of taking his report Hopkins recruits Jack to look into the killing of an SFPD officer. Turns out the officer was involved in questionable activity, and someone high up in SFPD bureaucracy doesn’t seem to want the crime solved and is hampering the investigation. How other than a cover-up to explain an official report of “suicide” for a corpse whose head was nearly obliterated by what was obviously a .50 caliber anti-tank gun based on the other holes that riddle the vehicle? This doesn’t sit well with Hopkins, who wants Jack to use his hard earned recent experience of how to work the angles between warring factions to get to the bottom of things.

Upon accompanying Hopkins to the scene of the officer’s murder, Jack is shocked to discover the body sitting behind the wheel of the same car he saw speeding away from his house. Further complicating things, the body of a young woman whose throat was cut is in the back seat of the car, though the lack of blood clearly indicates the woman was killed elsewhere. Who was she, where was she killed, how was the officer involved, and how is Jack supposed to solve a crime that people at the highest level of the SFPD don’t want solved?

Enlisting the help of friend and former NFL lineman Freeman Jones, Jack begins an investigation that soon uncovers a high-stakes sex ring run by Alexi Akakievich, a Russian drug dealer who has weaseled his way into the upper echelons of San Francisco’s political and business communities. Jack isn’t the only one looking into things, however, and soon runs afoul of the FBI when he inadvertently blunders into their ongoing investigation. So much for the simple life, as Jack once again must do the best acting of his life in order to save his life.

Yet despite his best efforts – and a lot of bullets and bodies – Jack finds himself in a precarious position at the end of *This Is Life*, with not all questions answered or loose ends wrapped up.

Tena says

Action packed and entertaining. I felt a little lost once in a while because I haven't read the other Jack Palms books, but it wasn't anything that kept me from finishing the book. I'm definitely game to read more, and I

enjoyed getting to find out how Jane Gannon met Jack.

William says

Seth Harwood has created a fantastic character in Jack Palms, and another full of action novel. With great shady characters, and a really good story. Make this latest a great read..

Josh says

Slightly less apprehensive in the face of danger, Jack is forced to play a hardened hand and recreate his character portrayal of a movie tough guy in order to bring an end to police and political corruption. An explosive opening stanza showed promise that this instalment was to follow-on from the action packed 'Jack Wakes Up' – however, while the guns blazed, the protagonist's light dimmed somewhat in my opinion. Unfortunately I failed to connect with the former accidental hero turned FBI and local cop go-to. Operating outside the law to solve crime in a quasi PI manner didn't yield the same allure to the initial series instalment. Luckily, Jack's cohorts in Freeman and Hopkins return in a different capacity to what we've previously experienced to spice the plot and maintain the distinct sense of continuity to the series.

Jack aside, 'This Is Life' is a tight story intrinsically linked with the previous action packed escapades of 'Jack Wakes Up' with a nod towards further exploration of the character and the colourful cast. The pacing and overall delivery lends itself towards a quick read – a sort of McDonalds for the mind; consumable, instantly satisfying and caters to a given purpose, however not as memorable as its predecessor.

This is the sort of novel Harwood had to write in order to develop his protagonist to where he ultimately wants him – a hard man with whom the law go to when justice is best served cold. Despite my low rating, I look forward to the reading the third instalment as the picture of Jack is edging closer to realising a PI type hero more so than a strung-out B-grade actor. 2.5 stars.

Ryan says

This was my first real exposure to Harwood's work in audio form - despite his making his name for himself as a podcaster, I read the first book in print before checking out the podcast of this one.

It was an interesting experience, going from print to audio - Harwood uses a distinctive first-person-present voice throughout the Palms books, and it felt a little awkward at first due to it. I got over it eventually - Harwood's sense of humour and great story pacing skills overcome it easily, but for the first little bit it feels like wearing shoes on the wrong foot.

Plotwise, this book deals with the fallout of the first book: Jack comes back to San Francisco and has to deal with the Russian mobsters that he crossed in the first book, and the sex slave ring they've established in SF.

Mxyzptlk says

With Amazon imprint Thomas & Mercer's recent re-release of Seth Harwood's This is Life (A Jack Palms Novel,) I thought I'd go back and check out the original podcast version from the CrimeWAV website. This is the same place I've enjoyed the original Palms novel Jack Wakes Up along with the superb spinoff/prequel Young Junius (also re-released on Thomas & Mercer.)

These and much more are still available as free downloads off from Seth's website (sethharwood.com) and CrimeWAV.com. These podcasts give a glimpse of the author's writing process as he uses early drafts of the novels which evolve from the process and include feedback from the listeners - which I find makes for a very interesting experience.

For those not familiar with the series, Jack Palms is a once famous action movie star whose one hit movie Shake 'em Down was big enough to earn him occasional recognition, but apparently not big enough to secure him any further movie deals / sequels and hence leading to an eventual downward spiral all too common and familiar in the eventual lives of many celebrities. The irony is Jack finds himself surrounded in real life by the same drugs, guns, and gangsters that he was once surrounded by on the big screen, having the line often blurred for him between his real life personae and that of the character he once played and is most known for. For those who enjoyed Jack Wakes Up, This is Life will certainly not disappoint.

I enjoy listening to these in their rawer format via the podcasts on the website. Part of the fun is hearing Seth Harwood's own comments and input as he reads the stories in episode format. This is Life also featured guest speakers giving "the story so far" in between episodes and special guests given the opportunity to provide the voices for a couple key characters. I plan on eventually reading / listening to the final published versions as I am intrigued to see how the podcasting of the novels in the early stages benefits the end stage of these releases.

Also if you're not familiar with the CrimeWAV podcast, be sure to check it out - recent episodes have featured crime stories written and read by authors including Jed Ayres, Richie Narvaez, and Frank Wheeler Jr. This is Life will also be available soon in a revised audiobook edition through Amazon so if you have plenty of choices if you want to check out this great series.

harlen l hoover says

To much blood and Gore

To much blood and Gore

average story line. to much killing shooting with to little story the plot was just ok.Hard for me to recommend it

Jodi says

I really enjoy Seth's sense of humor and writing style. It makes me want to read (or listen to) more of his works.

Hriday says

The usual potboiler dishing out the regular fare of murder, whodunit, gore, sex and violence.

Timm Gillick says

I loved this book. Non-stop action, over the top characters, deception, blood, death, mayhem, Russian mobs, movie stars, NFL stars... The only thing missing was a kitchen sink!

Jack Palms, one hit wonder movie star, has fallen on hard times of his own doing -- career in toilet, ex-wife, addictions -- and has decided to help some of his former dealer buddies to make some quick cash. What he doesn't expect is to upset some of the competition, and what they're willing to do to retaliate against Jack.

What happens is a thrill ride that doesn't let up from the opening chapter where Jack gets shot at in his own house, chases the shooter to the streets, loses him, then gets called by his police buddy Mills Hopkins to assist on a murder case. The victims are a young girl with her throat cut wide open, and the guy who shot at Jack in his own house! And the shooter turns out to be a cop! WHOA!

From there, shootouts, car chases, rescues, big honking sniper rifles, Russian mafia, FBI, dirty cops, more bodies, and more action than should be able to be contained in a book of this length!

Can't wait to dive into the next Jack Palms book. I AM A PALMS DADDY!

Crystal Chm says

Beautiful mindless entertainment can be found in this book, but only after you read the 1st book in the series, Jack Wakes Up. I found the 2nd book here to be grittier than the 1st, with a thinner plot, but still enjoyable. As is typical of the author's style, the violent tone is balanced by how cartoon-ish the violence is. Another reason for liking the book is the snappy dialogue and one liners.

Highly recommended for a book to read on the beach, if the beach reader likes a book that is grisly, dark, and fast paced.

Jason says

You knocked it out of the park Seth! I loved Jack Wakes Up and now I loved This Is Life! So grim, so gritty... High-octane excitement and some wicked twists! Can't wait to listen to book 3 and catch up with our crazy Czech homies! Thanks yo, from a new Palms Daddy!

Karen Mossman says

Brilliant!

THIS IS LIFE marks the second coming of my favorite new pulp fiction hero, Jack Palms. In this tale, he's back in San Francisco, rousting up trouble with a whole new band of miscreants chasing him down. This picks up right where JACK WAKES UP left off, so newbies might have a few questions, but Harwood does a great job of blending in all the answers in their time. I really liked the Czech characters, who only show up in the second half of this one, but they were worth the wait!

Mark says

You don't know Jack, until Jack Palms drags you through San Francisco from the inside out. Jack is back in Seth Harwood's THIS IS LIFE with Freeman, the Czechs, crooked cops, sex slaves, and of course--the '65 Mustang fastback. Jack Palms novels pack more punch than Jack Daniels straight up, and go down easier than a Jack in the Box burrito after an all night bender. Do this book. 5 stars.
