



Beckon

Tom Pawlik

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Some things weren't meant to be discovered. Three people are each drawn to the small town of Beckon, Wyoming. A young anthropologist researches a Native American legend and makes a terrifying discovery. An ex-cop investigating her cousin's disappearance finds herself in grave peril. And an aging businessman is lured by the promise of a miracle. One by one they discover the town's ghastly secret. The only question is . . . will any of them make it out alive?

Beckon Details

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Author : Tom Pawlik

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From Reader Review Beckon for online ebook

Trinity Rose says

I've never read any books by Tom Pawlik, but now have another favorite author. This book Beckon is just incredible and bizarre that I will read all books I can get my hands on from Tom Pawlik.

Beckon is the name of a town that not very many people know about. In this book three people either stumble or are invited into Beckon. What they find there is so weird you won't believe it, but won't be able to stop reading this fantastic book.

Tom Pawlik has such an imagination and the plot to this book is just incredible. You won't be bored for a moment reading this book. The twists and turns will keep you glued to your seat and up late into the night reading Beckon, but I don't know if you want to read this book at night.

If you like Ted Dekker or Stephen King you will love books by Tom Pawlik. This book is a psychological thriller. After reading you won't want to be alone in the dark and the sunlight never looked so good.

Highly recommended for all of you readers of thrilling suspense.

Thanks to Tyndale House Publishers for providing this book for review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255

Lisa Johnson says

Title: Beckon

Author: Tom Pawlik

Year: 2012

Pages: 416

Publisher: Tyndale Publishers

Note: I received a complimentary copy from the publisher for an honest review.

Grab hold of the arm on your couch before you even open the book cover! At first I wasn't sure what I was reading at all. During the first few chapters, I was reminded of the movie Journey to the Center of the Earth. I kept reading on as the plot was thickening and different genres of writing were included. What kinds of genres? Well, science fiction, mystery, and suspense type genres. The author definitely takes the reader on one wild and crazy ride, making it hard to discern the plot.

As you continue down the path of reading, more characters are introduced. The scenes are changing as well as questions rising faster than you can read. The story begins with a dad who is saying good-bye to his son before embarking on a journey to study ancient people. The father has been mocked by colleagues for the premises published in his professional writings. After a decade of being gone, we find that Jack has decided to take up the path of his father's study in hopes of discovering what happened to his dad as well as to exonerate him. Jack's father was an anthropologist. Jack grew up without a mother, but was raised by a loving aunt.

Jack isn't the only one looking for answers, so is a woman named Elina. Having been a daughter of a murder victim, she has become a cop. Her decision to search for answers proves to be more dangerous than any other decision she has ever made. Then, the reader is introduced to George. As we continue down the path of discovery, we see George is quite successful and married though bares a heavy burden. Like all who find themselves at the end of their rope, he is searching for a miracle for his wife. What cost must George pay in order to secure the hope he no longer has? The villain in the story sounds like someone we might know--you

know, the type who sees a chance to take advantage of someone's heartache placing before them... I can't tell you or that would ruin it.

Finally, we come to the last chapters of the book. Here we see the warfare that is raging all through the book come to a climax. Many characters are lost, hurt or are locked up for future experiments maybe? No, something more sinister is in the works far worse than anyone can imagine. The story is filled with twists, turns, action, and surprises. Though at first I wasn't sure I could even finish the book, I then found I couldn't put it down! Beckon is definitely a unique story. I was glad I had an opportunity to read it. For me, the book rates a 4-star as it is not something I would have chosen, but found it to have great story telling!

Nissa Annakindt says

"Aw, darn!" I thought when I looked up the description of this book, featured on the Christian Science Fiction and Fantasy blog tour. "It's one of those suspense/thriller books we have to read since there is not enough Christian sci-fi available." And that and the too-high Kindle price were almost enough to put me off from buying the book. But since I wanted something new to read and the upcoming Charlene Harris book wasn't out yet, I bought it anyway.

And was I ever glad! Forget what you've been told. 'Beckon' is sci-fi. It's very much like classic Earth-based sci-fi in the old pulps (I've been reading some of those in free ebook form from manybooks.net). The creepy caves in the early part of the story could well have been caves on another planet.

The idea of a method to prolong human life indefinitely, and the consequences of it, are also sci-fi fare. Pawlik handles the theme well.

The Christian bits are not intrusive or preachy. There are characters that happen to be Christians and act like it. Others turn to God and prayer in reaction to some of the threats they are facing. Readers who don't share the Christian faith won't find the Christian material extensive enough to be off-putting.

Pawlik takes certain risks in his storytelling. He starts us off with one character, the Indiana Jones-like Jack Kendrick (who is a black man). He leaves Jack in great peril to take up with a new viewpoint character, Elina Gutierrez, a cop looking for her missing cousin. He then leaves her in peril, and we get a third viewpoint character, George Wilcox. After a bit of following George, the three stories come together.

The risk in this is that the reader will not follow the new characters. I've read a book or two that shifts back and forth between two characters, in which I did not care for the second character and his story and, on re-reads, I simply skip those chapters. Pawlik leaves his initial character be for a lot longer than one chapter, and yet the adventure is so compelling I kept on going through the stories of Elina and George.

Catholic concerns: As this is a fast-paced adventure story there is not a lot of time for theological issues to be raised, and so there are no doctrines put forth that, from a Catholic point of view, would be considered in error.

There is also no specific mention of Catholics, and so no chance that something might be said to which Catholics might take exception. The Latina character, Elina, has a father who is said to be a 'Christian'. In this case, we might read 'Christian' as 'possibly Catholic'.

Please don't take this 'Catholic concerns' section as a recommendation that Catholics ought read no fiction that contains other than pure Catholic doctrine. I myself read fiction by Evangelicals, LDS Christians, Lutherans, Jews, Pagans and secularists. I give this just as points of information for the curious reader.

Sarah Sawyer says

The lives of three people collide in the town of Beckon, each drawn there for a different but life changing reason.

The story opens with Jack, a young anthropologist who wants to find what happened to his father who disappeared when Jack was just nine. Teamed with his best friend and a Native American guide, they begin a search in the caves near Beckon, Wyoming.

Elina—an ex-cop—is searching for her missing cousin, and finds much more than she bargained for. But it's her renewed and steadfast faith in God that brings things to a head in the end.

George arrives in Beckon on the lure of a cure for his beloved wife's Alzheimer's. At seventy-three, he still has plenty of life left in him to handle the truth of what really goes on with the "cure."

This book is a page turner, one of those that kept me up past my fairly set bedtime. I'm not a huge sci-fi reader, but this book felt normal enough to have me contemplating how this could actually happen.

Real characters, real drama, real action, real danger—Tom Pawlik combined all these things to make an excellent read. As a disclaimer for milder readers such as myself: There's a bit of goriness which I generally avoid in reading or movies, but nothing I couldn't skim over if I didn't want to imagine the images too vividly.

Overall, a great thriller with themes of faith, family, and the realities of immortality.

For Him,
Sarah Elisabeth

Tyndale House Publishers provided me with a complimentary copy of this book

W. Lattimore says

Pawlik is definitely one of the Kings of Weird. This was an engrossing read. I'm a nighttime reader, and this book was quite the nightly bedtime story.

Amber says

Beckon is a mind-bending tale of a small, hidden, and out of the way Wyoming town that boasts either a wondrous miracle that could truly benefit all of mankind a thousand times over or holds a truly malevolent evil that would destroy all of mankind. The true and complete answer to this question comes in a three dimensional view of the secret that this small town is hiding. The meticulous and thorough method in which

Tom Pawlik intricately weaves three distinct perspectives and views of the same story into one fluid journey is downright beautiful and showcases his finely-tuned talent.

This three part journey which ends in the complete unveiling of this town's secret involves the convergence of an anthropologist, an LA cop, and a wealthy engineer and this wife to this remote Wyoming town. Each person is searching from their own very unique path for a critical answer to a burning question that involves the life of a close family member. In the end each of their journeys are just as important and equally essential in piecing this mystery together. No one person is less important than another, and they each must work together in the end in order to set things right.

The characters that we meet and walk along side during this story have their flaws and their driving obsessions, but in their core they are running scared searching for something beyond the immediate desperately desired answer to the question that they have come to this town in search of. In the midst of each of their struggles, they figure out what it is that they are missing and gain strength and encouragement from it that helps them along the way.

As the story progresses we see that their hearts are in the right place, but they are nonetheless guided by a deep-seated selfishness that they have to see and overcome by themselves. Once this selfishness is identified and removed, only then are they truly able to work together in order to help each other in the moment of their greatest need.

The struggles that they battled through while based on events from the imaginative mind of an amazing storyteller mimic what we face in our lives every day. We have to face numerous problems that no matter the cause have to be dealt with. We find that time after time, we can't fight them all on our own. We need the encouragement, the assistance, and the steadfast confidence that we are strong enough to make it through this from each other. Above all, however; we need our faith to ultimately get us through each of our trials. While family and friends are a strong base that we need to keep around us, our foundation has to be built on the most solid thing that we have - our faith in God.

I was wonderfully surprised by the depth of detail and limitless imagination flowing within the pages of Beckon. I am very intrigued by the style and method of how Pawlik's writing doesn't just capture your attention, but he also captures your heart even when you don't realize what's happening. He quietly and stealthily brings you into the story and begins to pull on and then own your heart strings in the process. His tender and sensitive attention to the human condition is considerable, and it will have readers of all levels coming back for more. I was immediately swept away into this heart-pounding thriller, and I am eager to immerse myself into the other stories that this author has written.

Matt says

Not sure what I was expecting, but it did not disappoint. Did I mention that I like short chapters?

Faye says

A chilling tale that asks the question, "If you could live virtually forever, would you? And at what cost?"

Jack, Elina, George, and Miriam all find themselves in Beckon, Wyoming. Chilling events and mysterious rituals are plentiful, but are they just a cover for an unspeakable evil?

Beckon was a bit of a slow for me, and at first I worried that maybe this wasn't my type of book, but I was soon proved wrong. No sooner had the thought run through my head then the book really took off! And after that I was turning pages with lightning speed, hanging on each page trying to figure out what would happen next. Because I had to know!

If I was trying to describe this tale I would say that it was like an Indiana Jones tale, with a Dorian Grey twist. Compelling adventure, that will send your heart pounding and the gears of your brain spinning. An adventure that will satisfy even the most hard to please. I think what I like most was how it subtly asked deep questions about life, and living, and how nothing can compare to eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Overall a thrilling, wild ride of a read. There were scenes that were in my mind quite violent, but Mr. Pawlik described them in a way that gave me the complete picture yet at the same time weren't terribly explicit. This is a book that I would highly recommend to suspense readers. Thank you!

I received this book from the publisher through CSFF in exchange for an honest review.

Greg Dill says

Overall a good read. Unpredictable and quite creative. It seemed like a mix between a Ted Dekker, James Rollins, and Dean Koontz novel. Action, mystery, darkness, with a little bit of inspiration. With a smattering of Christian overtones, but not too much to be cheesy. Pawlik does a very good job of interjecting a Christian message of love and hope without the silly Bible thumping that comes in "Christian" novels. I was really enjoying how the story started out as an adventure into a cave and tunnels, complete with mysterious creatures and all. But it took a different turn after a 1/4 way through (no spoiler) and it seemed the storyline changed quite a bit. And, from that point on my interest waned a bit, but not enough to stop reading, though with less enthusiasm. It had a good ending. I've really enjoyed Pawlik's writings and look forward to reading more.

Crystal says

Due to the gruesome descriptions and subject matter, I found this book to be a bit unsettling. The plot was good and the story line strong but I found it to be a bit dark. I also did not understand where or how the "things" came to be where they were.

Charity says

Sometimes in reviewing books, you find some really good ones. And then other times you run into a book that is just somewhat different. It is still good and a well written thriller, but the story is just out there. That is the case with this book here, Beckon, by Tom Pawlik. I normally do not read fantasy or sci-fi type stories. I hadn't even realized this was somewhat like that until I got partway into the story. I finished the book and it was well written, but I just want to warn you, this is a very different book.

MY REVIEW-Tom Pawlik is an author I had never heard of before. But when I saw the plot I thought it sounded interesting. I love a good mystery or suspense story and this one sounded like it would be neat. So I plunged into the book. It opens just fine and I got ready for a good mystery story about where the young

mans father disappeared to, etc. But after that, it got kind of strange. These two young men find a guide to take them searching for the Soul Eater. A legend among the indians that they think might be true.

In this book you have people who have lived thousands of years without being discovered, people who drink a liquid from a spider that makes them live hundreds of years, giant spiders, death, murder, and tons of mystery. Now don't get me wrong, it is interesting. I read it through in one day. But I couldn't get past all the amazing things. I felt like I had stepped into Journey to the Center of the Earth. For anyone who has read that book, remember the giant creatures, huge mushrooms, etc? That is what this somewhat felt like, except it was in a dark manner. Several people die throughout the book and not in a nice way.

So, if you like a book that has mystery but not realistic, check this one out. I enjoyed reading it, just so long as I remembered it wasn't true. Highly interesting novel though!

I received a copy of this book for review through the Tyndale Blog Network. I did not receive any monetary compensation. All thoughts are 100% mine.

Katie says

First posted on my blog, Legacy of a Writer.

Oh. My Word.

Okay, this book officially freaked me out!

Before I say anything else about this book, be forewarned that if you are squeamish about creepy-crawlies (like me!) then this book is going to have an even bigger impact on you! Not in a bad way, mind you...only that you're probably going to pretty jumpy during the reading of Beckon. I know I sure was! (There is a hilarious story about my run-in with a fly while reading this book...but I'll forgo telling you, since this IS a review. :-)

I had no clue what I was getting into when I picked up Beckon. The synopsis was very vague and, really, all I knew was that it was a suspense (which is why I decided to give it a try). Boy, is it a suspense alright! It only took a few chapters for the plot to get very suspenseful, and the intense action only continues to mount throughout this 400 page book.

Tom Pawlik has really done a fabulous job on this story plot. A few times the writing felt more like 'telling' then 'showing', but with all that action and suspense I barely noticed it. I will be honest and say I had my doubts about Beckon. I'd never read anything by Pawlik before and wasn't sure I would enjoy it. Boy, was I wrong!

While Beckon does require you to stretch your imagination a little, I don't think it is totally far-fetched. I mean, aren't scientists discovering new animals/species still today?? So, as I said, it's not a very big stretch. Reminded me a bit of Ted Dekker and Frank Peretti's books. I will certainly be keeping my eye out for more books by Pawlik in the future. This author has my attention!

Rebecca LuElla says

The Story. Jack Kendrick wants to find out what happened to his missing archaeologist father so that he can rehabilitate his legacy. He finds a clue pointing to his dad's last known destination, an Indian reservation in Wyoming. He talks his best friend Rudy into a road trip and heads west. They learn helpful information from an Indian legend and follow a guide into a cave that leads to a system of tunnels where they encounter horror and death.

Elina Gutierrez is a suspended LAPD cop. When she learns that her cousin is missing, she determines to do whatever it takes to find him. She knows she shouldn't, but she sets up a one-officer stakeout and follows a van transporting immigrant workers to supposed out-of-state jobs. But rather than going to Nevada as they'd been told, the van leads her into Wyoming.

George Wilcox is at his wit's end because his beloved wife is dying a horrible death—first losing her memories and her very personality. When he's contacted by someone in Wyoming promising him a cure, he eagerly—though not without some skepticism—packs Miriam into the car and drives north. To the town of Beckon.

Yes, all three of these story threads weave together in the little backwater town whose nearest neighbors are the N'watu, the people of legend. Something deadly is going on in Beckon. Or is it something miraculous?

Strengths. Author Tom Pawlik is an outstanding writer. His descriptions are vivid, his story concept unique. He's organized the book into four distinct sections, from three different points of view and in reverse chronological order. It's not your everyday kind of book!

Mr. Pawlik has also created believable characters, each with a specific need that drives them to act. This in turn creates tension and pushes the story forward. Add in danger and suspense and the story becomes gripping.

The story raises significant questions—ones I believe to be key in our present-day culture. Central is the matter of the value of life. Are there any “throw away” people?

In my mind, this issue of necessity includes life in the womb. Are these little lives less important than the big lives of those outside the womb? Is it moral to sacrifice those little lives for the betterment of big lives?

Mr. Pawlik doesn't just raise questions—he gives faces, and storylines, to people on both sides. Suddenly the clear-cut answers seem a little murkier.

At this point one of the characters who is a Christian steps up and does something that gives some answers for anyone thinking about the issues. Note, this character does not preach a sermon or even argue the points. She simply does something consistent with the Bible without saying that's what she's doing.

Which actually brings me to the next part of the review.

Weaknesses. In many ways, the act of nobility I referred to in the last section would have been perfect as part of the climax. But the story continued for some time after this pivotal event. From my perspective, the big question was answered—whose worldview would win out? The events after that point, then, didn't carry the same significance, I didn't think. They were a bit of fluff, if you can call horrific events “fluff.”

The other area of weakness is one I share as a writer—not presenting characters in a way that allows readers to connect with them. Of course Beckon is not a character-driven novel, and readers were pulled along by the tension, the suspense, the conflict between good and evil even if they didn't feel particularly attached to the characters. It was a thrill ride, an adventure. At times all you could do was hold on tight and see where you ended up.

But ...

Part of me thinks the story would be that much stronger if the reader cared more deeply for these people. They seemed believable, surely. They had real wants, serious dilemmas, emotional and spiritual crises to go along with the physical disasters they faced. Readers should have loved them, cheered them on, cared deeply about their choices. If we had, this book would have raced to the top of the Best Book lists, I'm fairly confident.

Recommendation. I'm not inclined to read thriller type books, but after having read *Vanish*, Mr. Pawlik's Christy Award winning debut novel, I knew I would read whatever he wrote. Beckon did not dissuade me from that position. Yes, there were horrific events, but there was also hope and help and sacrifice.

I highly recommend Beckon to adults who love the creepy, the bone-chilling, the fear-inspiring, and to readers who want to consider the issues of life and immortality. It's a good story filled with tension and intrigue and packaged in a unique structure that enhances the reading experience.

Kathleen (Kat) Smith says

Welcome to Beckon. You're not here by chance.

Just what would you give to live forever? Money? Security? Your loved ones?

In the town of Beckon, no one ever leaves of their own free will. There is a dark, sinister secret hidden in the mountains and caves. One that has existed since the beginning of time. One that seeks to devour any that wind up in the belly of the mountain.

Ancient legends called them Shadow People, other people call them murderers and killers and still others worship them and what they can provide.

In the latest supernatural Christian suspense thriller, Beckon takes the reader into a four part journey in this novel by Tom Pawlik through the eyes of three characters, Jack, Elina, and George who happen upon the town of Beckon for very different reasons but each will meet at a unique crossroads.

Jack is going in search of his father, an anthropologist named David who went missing and has never come home. While searching through his father's desk, Jack locates a brown envelope that may provide the clues no one has been able to uncover in the hills of Wyoming. He takes along an Indian guide and US Army Ranger, Ben Graywolf along with his best friend Rudy to search for the missing ancient civilization of the Caieche Indians. He receives a warning from an old man named Running Bear that they seek to tell them about the Caieche Indians and the Shadow People, that "If you go...death will find you there." Death does in fact find them there in the darkness.

Elina Gutierrez is an LA County police officer who is on leave and searching for her cousin Javier, who has disappeared. A mysterious white van roaming the neighborhoods and streets in Las Vegas promising jobs to the illegals that gather on the street corners in search of work and money. Only when Javier didn't return, Elina believes that there is something going on with this roaming van. When she follows it one day, it takes her into the hills of Wyoming and what she finds there in the dark woods will call upon more than just her police training if she expects to survive.

George Wilcox is about to lose his best friend and wife to Alzheimer's. There still remains no cure and

George struggles to find a way to reunite his wife to her former life. When an offer from Thomas Vale arrives promising him the ultimate cure, he immediately wastes no time in driving them both to Beckon, Wyoming. What he learns is that this miracle drug does more than just heal whatever ails you, and the price is worth almost anything George has to offer.

I received Beckon by Tom Pawlik compliments of Christian Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Tours for my honest review. There is something to be said for things that go bump and click in the dark. I didn't see this one coming but it truly is a must read for anyone that LOVES a great suspense thriller with a Sci-Fi twist to it. I love how the author wove these three different but intricate story lines together to keep the plot moving along and to see where it culminates is worth reading every single page. This book alone will make me second guess ever going into a dark cave again. Well written, the characters are believable and have you rooting for them in the end. I rate this one a 5 out of 5 stars. I personally feel his books rate right up there with Travis Thrasher and Mike Dellosso and can't wait to read more!

Pathway Midland says

Come. And live forever.

Sound interesting? I picked up this book, and literally couldn't put it down for two days. This thriller is written by Tom Pawlik, who won the Christy Award for his earlier book Vanish. Beckon tells a story from three different viewpoints. The first is from the standpoint of a young, eager archaeologist that comes to the town of Beckon in search of his father, who disappeared years ago. The second is a former Los Angeles cop named Elina who comes to Beckon when his cousin goes missing. The third is an elderly entrepreneur who plans to use his vast fortune to cure his wife's illness. All three of these characters get much more than they bargained for in the little town of Beckon, which is nothing like it seems. This book was interesting because while it was exciting and action-packed, it also explored deep concepts like human life and immortality. If you don't like bugs, don't read this book. There are plenty of those. I thought this book was expertly written and it definitely held my attention until the very last page. If you're up for a heavy dose of suspense, danger, and adventure, give Beckon a shot. You will not be disappointed.

--Caleb

Torie says

It was definitely a very odd book, almost like reading someones nightmare. I didn't really like it, I thought it was kinda dumb.

Wendy Hines says

Jack Kendrick father disappeared twelve years ago, and yet he searches. Elina Gutierrez, a police officer, is also searching. A cousin went to Beckon for a job prospect and disappeared. Then there is George Wilcox. He goes to Beckon for a different reason - he was told the cure for his wife's alzheimer's could be found there.

Three different people, three strangers, all in the small town of Beckon where the suspense and chills don't stop. Those that come to Beckon don't leave, at least not alive. As the three of them get pulled deeper and

deeper into the the town's secrets, they learn of a great evil. But who of them will survive to tell the tale?

Beckon is a taut, suspense driven novel that will have you up late burning the midnight oil, gripped in the story. With excellent writing, creating a world you can envision, complex and likable characters and a darkness that will give you chills, Beckon is a must read for any suspense fan!!

Glenn says

3.5 Stars... Good story, but lots of unanswered questions... Limited character development when trying to understand the dynamics between two lead characters...

TAMMY CUEVAS says

BECKON by Tom Pawlik

List Price: 12.99
ISBN: 978-1-4143-3873-6
Binding: Softcover
Release: April 2012

People are missing. Jack Kendrick, a 21-year old anthropologist, is searching for his father. Elina Gutierrez, on administrative leave from LAPD, is searching for her cousin. But missing persons are only the tip of the iceberg in this suspenseful tale of supernatural evil.

Jack Kendrick's last memory of his father was when he was nine years old. His father, an anthropologist at the University of Chicago, was leaving to go out West to research a legend of an ancient subterranean civilization. His father never returned. Upon graduating with a degree in anthropology, Jack enlists the help of his friend Rudy to go out West to look for answers regarding his father's disappearance. Elina Gutierrez, on leave from LAPD for shooting an innocent man while chasing a suspect, has come to Wyoming to search for her missing cousin. Javier was last seen entering a white van whose driver promised work in Las Vegas. Elina has tracked the van to Beckon, Wyoming. George has brought his wife Miriam to Beckon, hoping for a medical miracle. Their paths converge in a place of unspeakable horror.

Because I don't believe in ruining books for other readers with "spoiler alerts", I won't discuss the plot any further. Suffice it to say that is a gripping horror story that will hold the reader's interest right up until the last page. Having been an avid reader my entire life, I am admittedly a picky reviewer. I do not give compliments lightly. But after reading this novel, I can truthfully say that Tom Pawlik is on the level of Ted Dekker and Stephen King. Authors such as Pawlik and Dekker are giving long overdue credibility to the genre of Christian fiction.

If using the familiar 1-5 star rating, this novel would definitely deserve at least a 7.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from the publisher through the Tyndale Blogger Network book review bloggers program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR,

Part 255 : “Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.”
