



Damned Lies

Dennis Liggio

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Damned Lies are absurd tales told by a snarky narrator that doesn't believe truth should get in the way of a good story. Damned Lies are the wild recollections of his exciting and entirely unlikely life. Within the pages of this series you'll find mad science, ghosts, zombies, giant robots, cursed swords, clones, epic confrontations, clumsy violence, cultists, unanswered questions, bemused footnotes, good friends, sworn enemies, hidden references, the secret of the universe, and at least one very pissed off Lovecraftian god. If you're the right kind of strange individual, this is exactly the series you've been waiting for!

Damned Lies

The book that started it all!

Damned Lies is the true story of things that never happened. It is a fictional memoir of fantastic events. It is a chronicle of self-cloning, of adventure, of magic, of bare-fisted hobo boxing tournaments, of zombies, and more. It's the autobiography of a wild summer adventure out beyond the fields we know. It's the secret of what's hidden in a government bunker, it's the story of helping a nun with a crossbow hunt a vampire, it's the explanation of why you can't have that death ray you really wanted. It's a cautionary tale of just why cloning yourself is a really terrible idea.

Damned Lies is a big fish story for those who don't fish. It's a shaggy dog story for cat lovers. It's the scifi fantasy humor memoir we'll all wish we dictated on our deathbed. It's why we can't have nice things.

Damned Lies Strike Back

Damned Lies Strike Back follows in the great tradition of sequels in that it is bigger, bolder, and dripping with franchise potential. Like a good sequel, it answers all the unanswered questions of the original (except for the ones it doesn't). It is exactly the sequel this world needs.

This time around, our intrepid hero and friends battle the evil apocalyptic plans of his homicidal clone and a dangerous cult. At the same time he is facing his clone in the present day, he recounts the story of his first year in college where he formed a mystery gang to stop the nefarious plot of evil college professors. It all leads to a climactic sword fight and then a desperate epic battle against a true evil that we all know well...

Damned Lies of the Dead 3D

Damned Lies of the Dead 3D is not the zombie novel we need, but it's the zombie novel we deserve. In 1995, Austin, Texas was nearly wiped out by a zombie outbreak. This fact has been long suppressed, but the truth cannot be silenced. Now there is a firsthand account from our intrepid hero of just what happened... and how he survived. Only the dead know the truth...

It's grindhouse, it's horror, it's how humor novel characters deal with death in the inevitable third book in the series. And it has zombies. Everyone loves zombies, right?

Damned Lies Details

Date : Published (first published January 2nd 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Dennis Liggio

Format :

Genre : Humor, Funny

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From Reader Review Damned Lies for online ebook

Zofia says

I received "Damned Lies - Things That Never Happened And a Couple of Things That Did" by Dennis Liggio for free through Goodreads, First Reads. This is one fantasy-filled, crazy fun story! It starts out with our narrator on a blind date and morphs into another world of creating a clone; of riding the rails and getting immersed into a secret world of hobo boxing; of getting "saved" by a crazy spiritualist in a walking house; hitching rides only to discover government secrets--the list goes on. If a story could take a far-out acid trip, this is what it would be! I had a great time reading this book and I look forward to the next installment. The narrator and I have some unfinished business to attend to. Kudos to Dennis Liggio on his way-out imagination and great story telling.

Joanne Myers says

Finally Managed To Finish

Started reading this sometimes during 2016, but gave up because I wasn't really feeling it. Picked it back up as part of my book clubs April challenge - read a book you've previously started but never finished. It was an interesting story, a young man clones himself so he can have more spare time but is that clone evil?!?!? I still struggled with it, hence my rating.

Anne says

Weird, quirky, and geeky as Hell, Damned Lies had me laughing out loud more than once. Liggio combines absurdist humour and the picaresque in a manner reminiscent of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Don't get me wrong; this novel does have its flaws but overall it was a very fun read.

The premise of the novel is referenced in the title: the author is bed-ridden after a traffic accident and decides to spend his newly freed time writing his memoirs. Whether due to embellishment on his part or a recent concussion, what emerges is a strangely supernatural ramble through the worlds of fantasy, sci-fi, and horror fiction. Ominous births, crazy dates, and metafictional brothers are all introduced and dismissed within the first fifth of the novel, giving you a taste of what's to come. Damned Lies primarily focuses on a bizarre summer journey, which takes place the summer after the protagonist's high school graduation, and the machinations of the clone he creates to stand in for him. As you may have guessed by now, this is not a novel that takes itself seriously.

As usual, I'll start with the good: this novel is most definitely a product of the internet. If you regularly frequent sites like TV Tropes, 4chan, or Reddit, you're already familiar with the sarcastic style that Liggio adopts. It's what is probably best defined as pastiche, and refers to a style that lovingly imitates even as it mocks a given genre or text. Many of the staples of Geek culture are here: the zombie apocalypse scenario, the anime-style mech warrior, unexplained encounters with insanity and the supernatural. If you are a denizen of the net, you will probably like this book.

Of course, the downside of online content is also reflected: you get short bites of everything but large

helpings of nothing. Damned Lies is by nature a rambling narrative, and there are times when this means that the narrative seems incomplete, skipping from one story line to another without fully explaining what has happened to the supporting characters. If you enjoy a novel of chance encounters with weirdness, then this is precisely the novel for you. If, on the other hand, you dislike leaving subplots unfinished you may want to brace yourself. Damned Lies often abandons a subplot just as you're getting to enjoy a setting or set of characters, and with the exception of those characters presented in the frame narrative, none are ever really returned to. This also means that you may leave one highly enjoyable narrative story line to be thrust into a tedious one (for me, this was the hobo boxing chapters).

But wait! I said I'd discuss the good before the bad. This novel appeals to my fetish for paratext: the author includes a smattering of footnotes, usually offering sarcastic commentary on the text itself. This is no House of Leaves level of paratext, mind you, but seeing footnotes pop up here was encouraging. I've often wondered why e-book publishers don't make better use of paratext given how easy they are to access when reading a novel on a Kindle. It is one of the few ways that digital books have an advantage over traditionally published novels, and in my opinion more authors should take advantage of it, either to add commentary, as happens here, or simply to screw with the reader introduce additional levels of narration as happens in HoL.

One problem that may not be a problem is that the protagonist remains unnamed throughout the novel. I'm sure that this was intentional, and is probably done ironically (intent on memorializing his own life, the protagonist ends up fictionalizing the majority of it and fails to even state his name. Maybe it's the footnotes talking, or my inner English student, but I got a strong "channelling Byron" vibe from aspects of this novel. Unfortunately I cannot recall whether Byron ever names himself as the narrator of Don Juan or Childe Harold, but to the best of my memory the answer is no. So it may be that Liggio is doing this ironically, or that it's some shout out to a past master of the picaresque, or that it's simply a happy accident. In any case, it may be read as a wise decision. Unfortunately, it also seems out of character for the narrator himself. He seems like the sort of fellow who would at least give us an internet-style pseudonym (probably with a few pages description of why he chose the pseudonym and how it's far more representative of his character than his "birth name"). The protagonist is full of himself, to say the least, and while his is a hilarious, generally non-threatening level of narcissism, he doesn't exactly come across as the type to leave his accomplishments unclaimed, whether they be real or fictionalized.

Unfortunately, the biggest problem of all was copy editing! I hate coming across books that need copy editing, because it's such a tiny problem and yet it has such a substantial influence on the way the book is perceived. In this case, the issue was usually bad grammar or the use of words that were outright wrong in context. To use a particularly noteworthy example:

"From some well deep within the caverns of my being, *sometimes* screamed in defiance, a howl that rose from those *depth* and out through my being." [Emphasis added]

It's a tongue-in-cheek novel, so the effect isn't as devastating as it would have been had the tone been entirely serious, but these little errors still detract from the work's overall presentation. I nabbed this copy of the book from Story Cartel, so it is theoretically possible that these errors have been fixed in the published copy of the novel, but if not, they're really something that should be addressed. The internet is notorious for its nitpickers and its grammar Nazis. You don't want to turn your target audience against you with a few ill-chosen words.

Overall Rating: 4/5

Read it if: You're a self-proclaimed geek looking for a modern satire.

Skip it if: You're looking for a single, serious, sustained narrative and/or you think that sarcastic nerdy fiction should stay on obscure internet forums.

Don Sloan says

I loved this book from the start. *Damned Lies: Things That Never Happened to Me, and a Couple Things That Did* is a cautionary tale involving, as the description notes: "mad science, ghosts, zombies, giant robots, cursed swords, epic confrontations, clumsy violence, cultists, unanswered questions, bemused footnotes, good friends, sworn enemies, hidden references, the secret of the universe, and at least one very pissed-off Lovecraftian God."

It's the unlikely story of a New York City teenager who successfully clones himself to get out of a boring job and travel a bit during the summer after his high school graduation. Problems ensue when the clone decides it wants a life of its own.

But wait. I'm getting way ahead of the real story, which is about the misadventures that befall the narrator, whose name never quite enters into things. It's not important. We, as readers, are much more interested in his long stint as a bare knuckles hobo fighter, his brief interlude with a stranger who transports him to a parallel universe to fight an evil being who has left his mark on the narrator, and the woman he almost escapes with except for one small problem: she's dead.

He begins hitchhiking and runs across a vampire-killing nun, a jet-propelled semi-tractor trailer, and three-hundred-foot tall robots, created for the cold war, but never used.

The breadth of author Dennis Liggio's far-ranging imagination is staggering. He weaves an impossible tale and yet makes it all very plausible. There is great writing here and memorable turns of phrase: "Higher than a penthouse on Park Place;" "finding gaps, like a spaceship in an asteroid field;" and finally: "I'm sure there could have been a spoiled breakfast sandwich created from their intermingling fumes."

Liggio creates believable characters I very much cared about. Some die, some live; the reader is never sure from one moment to the next what the fate of each character is going to be. Indeed, the book's only fault lies in not knowing what ultimately became of the vampire-killing nun, or the turbocharged truck driver, or even the philandering clone (that's one of the better scenarios, but you'll just have to read about it yourself.)

I found myself laughing out loud at some of the irreverent humor and Liggio's sharp-edged wit and sarcasm seldom misses the mark, if you don't mind a constantly wisecracking smart-ass as the lead character. Personally, I loved it.

Damned Lies is the first of a series of books by Liggio, all published originally in print and (I assume) only recently made available online. If you've got \$3.99 to spare and just want some good, old-fashioned escapist fiction, with a bit of a sci-fi twist, download a copy. You'll be glad you did.

I give *Damned Lies* a solid five stars.

Julian Orozco, Jr. says

Crazy read

Crazy reading with this one. I liked it very much. Dennis sure has a great imagination. Switching the story around from fantasy to fantasy. The writer also blended one story to the next very well. I would like to see this book made into a movie or a limited series on AMC or SYFY or FXX. It can be a tongue in cheek horror movie or series with each little fantasy it's own episode. Read this book, you'll like it.

Jason says

Casually stroll through something like a dozen different genres with the cynical slacker protagonist of the "Damned Lies" series, and you might learn something. But I doubt it.

Mostly you'll encounter a whirlwind of weird, with all enough violence, reality-bending and mind-f*cking for any rabid genre fiction fan. I especially enjoyed the tangent into Carlos Castaneda territory. Oh, and there jokes and references and riffs on tropes. It's a road trip into a meta-mash of beyond-the-fourth-wall, post-irony adventure.

All that, and our hero's madcap memoirs are housed in a frame story that I expect will pay off in future volumes. So it's got that going for it.
