



Grave Peril

Jim Butcher

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Harry Dresden - Wizard

Lost Items Found. Paranormal Investigations. Consulting. Advice. Reasonable Rates. No Love Potions, Endless Purses, or Other Entertainment.

Harry Dresden has faced some pretty terrifying foes during his career. Giant scorpions. Oversexed vampires. Psychotic werewolves. It comes with the territory when you're the only professional wizard in the Chicago-area phone book.

But in all Harry's years of supernatural sleuthing, he's never faced anything like this: The spirit world has gone postal. All over Chicago, ghosts are causing trouble - and not just of the door-slamming, boo-shouting variety. These ghosts are tormented, violent, and deadly. Someone - or *something* - is purposely stirring them up to wreak unearthly havoc. But why? And why do so many of the victims have ties to Harry? If Harry doesn't figure it out soon, he could wind up a ghost himself....

Grave Peril Details

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Author : Jim Butcher

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From Reader Review Grave Peril for online ebook

Philip says

2.5ish stars.

An improvement over the last book, but still not quite making good on the promising potential that's supposed to be there.

I definitely like this better than Fool Moon. I feel like it flows more naturally... Or maybe the story itself is just more interesting? I mean, it isn't great and I tend to prefer series that are more serialized than procedural as this one is but that's just personal preference. The central plot here introduces just another freak of the week. I do appreciate the introduction of at least a few major status quo changes and some plot lines that Butcher can start to thread throughout the series.

To be perfectly honest, I don't think these books are particularly well written. Some of the dialogue is awful. Butcher should only be allowed to put Harry on the brink of death so many times. It was like 12 in this book alone. It would be hilarious to play a drinking game while reading. Every time Harry is convinced he's going to die; every time Harry says "Hell's bells!"; every time a ridiculously over-sexualized woman is introduced (double if Harry comments on her breasts).

I think the characters are mainly idiots and make stupid choices for no discernible reasons. Harry still doesn't feel genuine to me. He's a stock concept: sarcastic, wannabe-hard-boiled-gumshoe who cracks jokes and spouts off catchphrases on cue; misogynistic but fancies himself a gentleman. I have no idea what motivates him to make certain dumb decisions other than that we're supposed to just accept at face value that he's a noble, self-sacrificing dude even though there are no previous indicators to suggest this. Peter David did this character so much better with Jamie Madrox in X-Factor, Vol. 1: The Longest Night.

Why am I still reading this series, then? I guess I kind of like it in spite of everything? It's fun and easy and still just barely good enough to make me think it will get better. And James Marsters is a great audiobook narrator. Hopefully it gets better...

Ginger says

Much better then the first two! I'm cheering for Harry Dresden again!

Lauren says

Grave Peril

3 Stars

Many have stated that **Grave Peril** is the turning point in the series for the better. After considering the plot and the characters, I must confess that I found **Fool Moon** to be far more entertaining.

Don't get me wrong. Harry and his quirks are very endearing but a number of issues irritated me in this installment. First, Murphy barely makes an appearance and the absence of a strong willed, take no prisoners,

female character detracts from the overall effect of the story.

Second, the criticism surrounding Harry's chauvinism finally makes sense. In the first two books, his attitude toward women comes across as gallant and even chivalrous, but the chauvinism is front and center in this one as Harry fixates on the breasts and luscious curves of virtually every female character - is this really necessary?

Third, while the basic plot is compelling and the action scenes exciting, the execution is repetitive. How many times must Harry battle the Nightmare before he defeats it? How many times must he get round the machinations of his fairy Godmother? How many times must he be exposed to the lustful effects of vampire venom? How many times must his powers fail him precisely when he needs them the most? Come on already, get some new material.

Finally, Harry constantly blames himself for the choices others make that get them into trouble. While this overdeveloped sense of guilt may have its place in the portrayal of Harry's internal struggle with his own conscience, it starts to grate on the nerves after a while.

On a more positive note, the secondary characters both old and new are very engaging. Michael, a Knight of the Cross, constitutes an intriguing counterpoint to Harry's irreligious personality, and the manner in which Butcher depicts the power of Christian artifacts adds another layer of complexity to the world building. That said, Michael is a little too self-righteous and condescending for my tastes.

There are also some poignant moments between Harry and his reporter girlfriend, Susan Rodriguez, although her misguided Lois Lane routine is getting old and she has never really appealed to me as Harry's love interest.

The most interesting characters, however, are Lea, Harry's rather scary fairy Godmother, who serves as a cautionary tale about what happens when one makes ill advised bargains with the fae, and Thomas, the morally ambiguous vampire who plays a pivotal role in Harry's conflict with the various villains in the story.

All in all, the world building is strong, the story has potential and the unanswered questions are interesting enough to keep on with the series.

Casey says

Hey Dresden Files,

Listen. I know my trusted friends set us up, and they have really good taste and usually know what I like, but it's just not going to work out between us. I like awesome, interesting female characters, and while I will give you that Murphy is awesome, the rest aren't cutting it for me. (Never mind that every time a female character DOES show up, no matter how dire the peril, Harry makes sure to describe the precise way whatever she's wearing cups her breasts. If she is, in fact, wearing that much clothing to begin with.)

And, you know, everyone's been telling me I should just wait it out with you. That the books that come later are much better and SO worth it, but frankly, I heard you have a kid, and a vampire ex-girlfriend in the refrigerator, and that's just not part of my 5-year plan. I'm sure that somewhere out there is an amazing reader who loves you for who you are - 300 pages of a main character who has worse days than Jack Bauer, constantly finding that LAST OUNCE of strength to fight, and then another ounce, and one more ounce, and an ounce in the back pocket you were holding onto for the penultimate chapter.

So, you know, it's not you; it's me. I'm just not jiving to what you're offering. We can still stay friends, though, because I've heard your friend Codex Alera is kind of cool, and I wouldn't mind hanging out with him maybe.

And if anyone tells you that this is because I've already been hanging out with a different wizard named Harry, you leave that sweet British boy out of this, Dresden.

Liam Degan says

1 Star: ☆

Sigh I wrote out a pretty long review for this book, but then I went to submit it and Goodreads crashed on me, and I lost it -_- . I seriously need to start writing my reviews in a word document. But ANYWAYS, that all just means that my rambling, ranty review from before has now become even MORE ranty and rambling and lacking order (and probably has typos), so enjoy ;]. I was originally going to give this book two stars, but quite honestly, there really isn't anything I liked about this book. At all. So one star it is.

Where do I even begin? Basically, everything about the way Butcher writes pisses me off. And you know what pissed me off the most? Take a look at these three quotes, and see if you might possibly be able to figure it out:

Exhibit A: *"A subtle motion of her back thrust out her young, firm breasts, so that their tips pressed visibly against the fabric."*

Exhibit B: *"It clung to the curves of her body, showed the perfection of her breasts, their tips clearly showing through the silken fabric."*

Exhibit C: *"She had a short, tight skirt make out of them, and more petals cupped her breasts like delicate hands"*

Exhibit D (BONUS): *"Kelly sidled up to Michael, her breasts thrust forward, straining the sheer fabric"*

There's probably at least another two dozen quotes I could reference, these are just a few that I picked out. I'm not kidding when I say this. Every. Single. Time. That a woman (and ONLY WOMEN) appears on these pages, Butcher apparently thinks it's necessary to give us commentary about every curve of her body, in a super weird way. Like.... he can't just give a basic description of their clothes and appearance – nope. He describes them almost entirely, for THE ENTIRE BOOK, in terms of how their breasts appear under their clothes.

If that sounds weird, it's because it is. Even weirder is the fact that he particularly seems to focus on nipples? (WHY ??????????????) And it's even worse when you have to constantly be reading about it throughout the entire book. Literally, I was on CHAPTER FOUR and was getting a weird vibe about it, when he used this description for a girl who was trying to seduce him (OH LOL ALSO apparently every girl on the planet just WANTS Harry): "Nipple erection on command – now that's method acting"....

Are you kidding me? It's painful – no, *excruciating* to read. Harry could be LYING IN A POOL OF HIS OWN BLOOD, and STILL, Butcher thinks this is a great time to talk about some female character's t-shirt.

In book two he literally couldn't stop writing about the hair on the back of his neck, which was bad enough (feel free to check out my review of Fool Moon), and I guess in this book he decided to focus his writing in on something else, only to make it a million times worse by objectifying literally every girl who shows up in the story. Not only is it bad writing – it's just a bad way to write about women, period.

This is bad, but I can usually still enjoy a book if I learn to just ignore the elements of the writing I don't like. I honestly legit had **so many problems** with the storyline though.

First off, we are introduced to Michael, who apparently is super tight with Harry and they have completed a bunch of jobs together.... Yet never appears, even in passing reference, in either of the two books that precede this one.

This is fine. I can handle that.

But the biggest problem I have is that the ENTIRE PLOT of this book was based on job/mission/takedown (or whatever you want to call it – they killed a demon) that Harry did with Michael, and this mission (again) is not in any of the prior books. All of the twists and turns, the development of the story arc, and even the development of Harry himself **is rooted in an event that we never see happen.**

Why didn't Butcher just write a separate book about THAT mission, which was apparently so pivotal for Harry and the series? I don't know. Probably because it would have sucked as badly as this book did.

Everything just felt like it was slapped together. We move from ghosts, to demons, to Sex Vampires (*eye roll*), to Harry's Fairy Godmother (another super weird and completely useless element of the story... felt like it was thrown in for convenience), through a myriad of plots and subplots that were just not that good. It was predictable and annoying to read.

I'm not trying to be a hater, and if you like these books then I'm happy for you haha. They just completely are not for me. At best they're mediocre, and at worst they're just bad books with bad writing, and Jim Butcher has some seriously bad writing habits that he needs to take care of.

That's my rant for the day ;].

Happy reading =].

Apatt says

I rarely feel the urge to read books in the “urban fantasy” subgenre. An awful lot of them seem to be “paranormal romances” which are anathema to me. I think I have only read a few urban fantasies, American Gods, China Miéville's Kraken, and Clive Barker's classic Weaveworld spring to mind. The Dresden Files series has quite a reputation though, it has a rabid fan base and it is often recommended in SF/F online forums. However, even fans of the series tend to agree that the first couple of books in the series are not so great, and the series really pick up in hook #3, *Grave Peril*. I can't speak for book #2, but I did read the first book of the series, *Storm Front*, and I was not impressed. Still, if a series is enormously popular and it deserves a second chance, though probably not a third one, so I skipped book #2, *Fool Moon*.

A brief synopsis: Someone is causing an imbalance between our world and the spirit world causing a huge increase in paranormal activities. As a result, one of Harry Dresden's friends has been driven mad, and another one in a coma. In order to save his friends Harry and a few friends have to battle ghosts, demons, *ghosts of demons*, and more vampires than you can shake a garlic bread at.

Another reason I seldom read urban fantasy is that—for me—it requires even more suspension of disbelief than the standard “sword & sorcery” fantasy. The setting is “our world” but with a magical component welded on, so the wizardry and monstrosities going on seem just a little ridiculous. I think this is the advantage of sci-fi, we live in a scientific world so even when the science is made-up (or just plain wrong) the fiction often has a ring of plausibility.

Having said that, I have to admit I was pretty much sold on *Grave Peril* from the battle with a ghost a few pages in. It starts with a wonderfully creepy atmosphere and sudden escalation into a magical battle that is so kinetic and intense I forgot how ludicrous the whole premise is. In order to get the most out of the book, I decided to commit to the nonsense and just go along on Jim Butcher's wild ride. It does help that Butcher is very good at his chosen field, the internal logic or “magic system” that he employs is consistent and believable within the setting he creates. Also, the pacing of the book is so fast that my habitual disbelief has no time to surface.

Then there is the characterization.

“But I’m a sucker for a lady in distress. I always have been. It’s a weak point in my character, a streak of chivalry a mile wide and twice as deep.”

I have had enough of anti-heroes, but a flawed hero with his heart in the right place is someone I can get behind. His sidekick Michael Carpenter, a “Knight of the Cross”, is also very interesting. If he was the protagonist of the series, it would probably have fallen under the “Christian fiction” label.

“He’s a righteous man.”

“He seemed nice enough to me.”

“No, not self-righteous. Righteous. The real deal. He’s honest, loyal, faithful. He lives his ideals. It gives him power.”

The pacing of the book is quite relentless and it almost never slows down to take a breather. Harry faces one crisis after another and *almost* dies every time, and more often than not he survives by coming up with outlandish solutions that sometimes feel like *deus ex machina*. The continuous battling does become a little repetitious by the end of the book but never actually boring, thanks to Jim Butcher's narrative skills. If I say “turn your brain off and enjoy this book” it would sound like a backhanded compliment that implies the book is stupid. It maybe silly, but it is certainly not stupid. Jim Butcher put a lot of thoughts into his world building, characterization and plotting, but it seems like he has done all the heavy lifting and the reader does not need to make any real effort to follow the story.

By the end of the book, I felt quite satisfied and look forward to reading many more of Harry Dresden's ridiculous adventures.

Worldbuilding Quotes:

These are examples of Jim Butcher's elaborate world building rather than passages of literary beauty (of which there is none, it's not that kind of book).

“Not a house,” I said. “A home. There’s a difference.” “So what about Victor Sells’s place? I hear you took him on, right?” I shook my head. “He’d screwed up his threshold. He was running his business out of it, using the place for dark ceremonies. It wasn’t a home anymore.”

In the circles of the supernatural community, an Old World code of conduct still ruled. When you have a

problem, you settle it face to face, within the circle.

Working magic directly on a human body is difficult. It's very difficult. Conjuring up forces, like my shield, or elemental manifestations like the fire or wind is a snap compared to the complexity and power required to change someone's hair a different color—or to cause the cells on either side of an injury to fuse back together, closing it."

Funny Quotes:

"Dead before the sun rises," I said. "Stars, Bob, why don't you just go all the way over the melodramatic edge and tell me that I'm going to be sleeping with the fishes?" "I'm not sure that much of you would be left," Bob said,

"Well," Thomas said. "I'd like to see this. I've never seen an external transformation before. Do proceed, madame." He waved his hand impatiently. "Dog him, already!"

(There are many more of course).

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Buddy read April 20th on Buddies Books and Baubles with Jessica, Ashley, Lege, Steven, Sh3lly & oOSarahOo *they is a little behind but still here*, and Jenny as out official stalker this time.

Everyone says just wait they get better. Everyone says by the end of book 3 you will see....This is one of those times that **EVERYONE** was right.

Before this book I was really sorta thinking what's all the hype. I mean I liked them well enough but I really preferred two other series that were similar Charming and Hounded...now Harry might be pulling ahead of at least Hounded (Charming still holds a special spot in my UF loving heart).

Why is Harry pulling ahead? Well it could be the addition of some great new characters. Bigger badder baddies and a tragic star-crossed romance. I actually didn't care about the romance so much until the VERY end but the other stuff was fantastic.

Who are these fantastic side characters?

? **Michael ?** – THE FIST OF GOD - is a fantastic addition. Everything he does is good and moral and he has a **magic sword** *no not that kind ladies get your minds out of the gutter he is married* It is an actual sword that he fights for God with. AMAZING.

_____ hand touched Michael's steel-clad arm—and erupted into sudden, white flame, as brief and violent as a stroke of lightning. She screamed, a piercing wail, and fell back from him to the ground. She lay there, curled helplessly around her blackened hand, struggling to get enough breath back to scream. Kyle flew to her side.

I looked at Michael and blinked. "Wow," I said. "Color me impressed."

Michael looked vaguely embarrassed. "It happens like that sometimes," he said, apologetically.

Lea - Harry's Faery Godmother, who wants to get the rest of his soul and turn him into part of her pack of dogs. She is one of the new bigger badder baddies I mentioned and she is the nice one. Which reminds me NEVER MAKE A DEAL WITH THE FAE...have we learned nothing. No good can come from it. **She is**

beautiful and deadly and ready to treat Harry like a dog....literally

?**Thomas?** - Member of the White vampire court and a good liar to boot. Is he a friend and ally or is he another trap waiting to happen. Currently it might be a little unclear. He is fun though and another great addition.

“Because you can trust me,” he(Thomas) said. “I want to help you.”

I snorted. “Why the hell should I believe you?”

“You shouldn’t,” he said. “Don’t. I’m a good liar. One of the best. I’m not asking you to believe me. Believe the circumstances. We have a common interest.”

? **BOB ?** - Okay technically Bob isn’t new but he is my favorite side character and he gets the best lines. Every time he is on page my highlighter goes a little crazy. I’m so happy to see that he keeps up that witty dialogue and propensity for romance novels and sex in this book as well.

“You want work, we make a deal. I want to do a ridealong the next time Susan comes over.”

I snorted at him. “Hell’s bells, Bob, don’t you ever think about anything besides sex? No. I’m not letting you into my head while I’m with Susan.”

The skull spat out an oath. “There should be a union. We could renegotiate my contract.”

And finally ? **Charity ?** – Eight month pregnant wife to THE FIST OF GOD....Micheal. I loved her immediately the first time she lit into Harry. Okay so she doesn’t get a big part in this book but I can already tell she will be downright amazing in future books. Plus she and Michael have an amazing beginning story...At least I think it is amazing since **He slayed a fire-breathing dragon to save her**

Okay there are a few more very interesting characters that get a little page time including Ferro a dragon in human form, Mavra, of the Black Court of Vampires and a walking Nightmare. Really there is a lot going on.

The story was better plotted out this time and I found myself much more drawn into it. Harry is still that bumbling guy that can’t seem to catch a break and when one thing goes wrong they all go wrong. There was a new obstacle around every corner and he caused plenty of trouble that will have many repercussions going into the next book.

Normally I’d be all over the romance and what happened in the end with that...but maybe it is because I know there are 15 books out already I’m trying not to get too attached or maybe it is because I really love Murphy and think she is the long term play *I have no idea if she is or isn’t and I don’t read any of the blurbs cuz I want it to be a surprised so don’t tell me I want to keep my ship as long as possible.* I didn’t really connect with Susan until the very end of this book and thought that is a great way to take the story. I love/hate it all at the same time. Like I’m supposed to.

So lets just recap....Harry in this book manages to get in deep trouble with:

- ✓ God – Or the Fist of God - Micheal
- ✓ At least one court of vampires but probably 2 of them
- ✓ The Wizard Council
- ✓ His girlfriend – Susan
- ✓ Some ghosts
- ✓ A Walking Nightmare
- ✓ His Faery Godmother
- ✓ And Charity...*I’d be the most afraid of Charity*

Sure some of it he gets out of...but that is a lot of trouble so I expect that the majority of it lingers. This series is definitely looking up.

Will M. says

The spirit world has gone postal over Chicago, and ghosts are causing havoc. Tormented, violent, and deadly ghosts that only Harry Dresden can stop. First thing he needs to do before stopping the madness would be to find the one causing it.

The first two novels were good, but this third one was even better. Dresden should be likable by now, and so should the other recurring main characters. Michael was a great addition to the team. I'm not sure if he's in it for the long run, but the Harry-Michael team was a very fun read.

The plot thickens in this novel because Butcher gave it more depth. A lot of plot twists here and there, and more magic. As an UF novel with a wizard as the main character, magic should be copious. It was copious in this novel, and I finally saw what Harry could do with his powers. I was complaining then that the author didn't focus on that, but this novel was not a let down.

In the first and second novels, the author introduced the Giant scorpions, Oversexed vampires, and Psychotic werewolves. To be honest I wanted the scorpions to make their reappearance, but necessary for the plot, we got the oversexed vampires. I wasn't shocked that Bianca made a reappearance because by now you should know that Harry had unfinished business with her. The vampires here were a bit violent, and I liked them a bit. A little more violence and that would be perfect.

The main antagonist here would be the ghosts, but Butcher introduced 2 main villains. I don't want to spoil so let's just say both the main villains were violent and fun to read. The ending was a bit cheesy, but not enough to annoy me.

4.5/5 stars. I liked this better than the first one. Amazing characters and the plot improved a lot. Time to continue on with the rest of the series.

Heidi The Hippie Reader says

[My one complaint is that my favorite character, Murphy, doesn't figure as largely into this plot as she did in the last book.

HFK says

Re-audiobook experience.

In my first review for *The Dresden Files* I threatened to send my underwear collection to Jim Butcher as a heavy fangirl thank you for creating something so mindblowing than our boy Harry. This caused one fellow reviewer to speculate that perhaps I did not go through with my threats as Butcher never blogged about receiving a collection of quality lingerie. This is something I gotta agree with. My delicates would without a

doubt be something to write about, which is why I probably did not live up to my words. Maybe.

And as much I still think Butcher is worthy of many more underwear collections with his wonderful, imaginative world building that makes me want to dedicate a lot of my precious reading time to him, the real reason why I always come back so quickly, not to mention me actually re-reading something, is the fantastic narration of James Marsters.

Marsters has to be a God of Narrators. The way he develops through each book, bringing our boy Harry to life with his laid back, sexy, casual, friend-to-friend style is remarkable. He does his job so well, he becomes Harry. He is Harry, there is no Spike left in him. This is the role of which I shall remember him.

However, all this brings an important question to the surface. If Butcher (hypothetically speaking) is, in fact, the new and proud owner of my lace beauties, what is one to send to Mr. Marsters as a thank you for his excellent, heart dropping performance?

XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says

● **Jim Butcher How Could You Do This To Me Buddy Read (JBHCYDTTMBR™)** with my slightly unhinged MacHalo Freaks wife/sister/aunt Shelly ●

Who are you and WHAT THE BLOODY FISH have you done with **Formerly Awesome Happy Dresden (FAHD™)?!**

Was this really written by the same author as books 1 and 2 in this series? It sure doesn't seem like it. I started thinking about **DNFing** it around the 20% mark, and it's nothing short of a miracle that I eventually made it to the last page. **Skimming rocks.**

You're lucky, my Little Barnacles, because no matter how much I want to, I don't have time to write a **never-ending rant** about this one. So I'll just cut the crap and tell you why this series went from **Oooh Yeah I Want More Land (OYIWML™)** to **I don't Give a Damn What Happens Next Territory (IDGaDWHNT™)**:

X Because the writing is **sub-par.**

X Because it feels like the book was written **20 years ago**, not in 2008.

X Because the plot is **boring.** And **dull.** And **uninteresting.**

X Because everytime Harry said "Hell's bells" I eyerolled my little self to death and felt like **smashing my Kindle** against the nearest wall.

X Because this book made me feel like I'd **missed an instalment** in the series.

X Because **blah blah blah and blah** killed the story.

✘ **Because** I cannot stand Michael, Charity, their freaking **righteousness**, and incessant, exasperating, ever-moralizing **religious speeches**. And where the hell did these two come from, anyway?

✘ **Because** this story is so uninspired not even **Bob the Ever-Awesome Skull** managed to save it from a 2-star rating.

✘ **And because** I get **seriously pissed off** when someone kidnaps one of my ~~hot sex slaves~~ book boyfriends and replaces him with a **pathetic, boring, sobbing** copy.

» **And the moral** of this Crappy Non-Review is (CNR™): **Harry Dresden, you are dismissed**. I hereby release you from my high security harem. Please do not come back until you are your **previously awesome little self** again.

∖ **Book 1: Storm Front** ★★★★★

∖ **Book 2: Fool Moon** ★★★★★

Jessica ✨ ⇒ **Silverbow** ⇒ ✨ **Rabid Reads-no-more says**

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

BR with my peeps at: Buddies Books and Baubles

Specifically: Robin (Bridge Four) , Jenny , Lila , and Steven

3.5 stars

GRAVE PERIL was a kind of awkward installment.

A year has passed since the end of FOOL MOON, and in the interim, not only have Harry and Susan stayed together and are now in a committed relationship, but at some point Harry and our favorite officers of law enforcement have taken down a Bad Guy sorcerer who was using a demon, teenagers, drugs, orgies, and did I mention, a DEMON, to wreak various havocs in Chicago, the latter continually brought up in vague references . . .

And that vaguely referenced takedown is the source of *this book's* plot.

But we weren't there for that takedown, so it feels like we're missing something; that the “vague references” are vague b/c we already have the 411, and more detailed explanations aren't necessary . . . Even though I knew, I KNEW, that, *no*, I had *not* accidentally skipped an installment, I found myself constantly wanting to check and *make sure* (*whispers* *again*).

Beyond that I had a (gaping) handful of other small issues, beginning with the fact that I don't like ghosts.

That's part of why I'm not much for steampunk: the Victorian obsession with contacting the dead is often inseparable from the gadgetry. And the concept of malicious spirits that are strong enough to physically harm

the living . . . is rather horrific. Mostly b/c I can't get past the "dead" part. I mean, what do you do when your attacker can't be killed or stopped. . . b/c ALREADY DEAD?! Like Harry himself says:

There should be some kind of rule against needing to kill anything more than once.

If there's a Winchester handy, then well and good, but I don't have a Sam or a Dean in my back pocket (mores the pity).

I'm not much for vampires either. Oh, there are versions that I like well enough, but in truth they're merely at the top of the "Dead Things" list. And *these* vampires . . . if someone told me the colloquialism "bat shit crazy" had its origins in this series . . . I would believe them. Entirely.

Then there's Michael . . .

Michael is the illusive true Man of God. Were he a real man, I would not be surprised if he "*walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*" Like Enoch.

Which can be uncomfortable, but mostly it's dull. And hard to like. Everything is very black and white to Michael, who is demonstrably disappointed in Harry for beating his Faerie Godmother at her own game (that would be manipulation of words and intent, aka *tricking*), when the alternative is to allow her to *literally* own him . . . By the end, he was easier to deal with, but I'm honestly not sure if that's b/c he toned it down, or b/c I really liked his wife, which made me like him more by default.

It's also starting to irritate me how little consistency there is to Harry's abilities.

A pattern seems to be forming: x happens, leaving Harry practically powerless, then y happens, not only re-energizing him, but giving him a surplus of power as well. Furthermore, many of the times Harry's been depleted, he somehow manages to "dig a little deeper" and accomplish the same kinds of things he'd be able to do were he *not* depleted. There's always some searing pain that accompanies these feats, presumably to account for the power surge in the midst of weakness, but as Harry seems to recover from his injuries at a remarkable rate, it feels like smoke and mirrors. (<-----HA!)

I'm not saying Harry should never encounter obstacles that inhibit his ability to wizard. BUT. If it continues to happen in every, single book . . . *frowns*

ALSO, Harry says, "Hell's bells," twenty-eight times.

So I had a LOT of problems with this book. BUT . . . I still enjoyed it. B/c no matter what plot point or character issues I had, I immensely enjoy Butcher's writing. When he's not being a gross boy (b/c GORE. Yes!)--do *not* ask, I refuse to relive it, but I will say this: if you've already read this book, the fork in the WTF? button should have *special* meaning--he's created an immensely engaging character in Harry, and between his amazing feats of wizardry and, yes, his adorkableness, I find myself able to stamp down the less-than-thrilling aspects of his story.

Plus now there are also interesting plot developments and new characters to counter the mounting exasperation. Like Thomas. I friggin' LOVE Thomas. Speaking of Thomas, this is an example of the excellent writing that holds me in thrall:

The first sound to ring out was neither gunshot nor battle cry, but rich, silvery laughter. It

drifted up, masculine, somehow merry and mocking, bubbling and scornful all at once. I squinted down through the lights, to see Thomas, posed like some bizarre post-chrysalis incarnation of Errol Flynn, one foot up on the stairs, hand braced, his other hand on the crystalline hilt of his sword. His head was thrown back, every lean line of muscle on him displayed with the casual disregard of skilled effort.

Bob is also a consistent source of hilarity, AND there was a (view spoiler)

So clearly it wasn't all, or even mostly, bad, and with SUMMER KNIGHT, the almost universally acknowledged game changer up next, there's no way I'm stopping now. I'll keep you posted.

My other reviews for this series:

Storm Front (The Dresden Files, #1)

Fool Moon (The Dresden Files, #2)

Summer Knight (The Dresden Files, #4) by Jim Butcher

? Sh3lly - Grumpy Name-Changing Wanderer ? says

Things I'd rather do than read this book:

- 1) Clean the toilet.
- 2) Listen to Justin Bieber.
- 3) Read the dictionary in a language I'm not fluent in.
- 4) Watch a political debate.
- 5) Sit in rush hour traffic.
- 6) Stare at the TV while Netflix buffers over and over.
- 7) Watch Keeping Up With the Kardashians.
- 8) Eat plain unsalted rice cakes for lunch every day for a month.

I just can't do it anymore. I recently DNF'd another book called Deadly Curiosities. I don't know which is worse.

It's not that there's anything *wrong* with this book. It's just there isn't really anything *right* about it either. *In my view.*

- I typically don't like ghost stories, so there's that.
- I don't like religious fanaticism, and one of the main supporting characters in this is one, so there's that.
- This feels like it was written a long time ago, with the goofy things Harry says.

Don't you say it again! ... Hell's Bells!

I know it's just me, but also, I think it's kind of cheesy how the non-physical realm is called the *Nevernever*.

I just don't think this series is for me. This is the third one I've tried. No one can say I didn't try. This one is even worse than the first two. I at least made it to the end of those !

Everyone says it gets better. There has **nevernever**, okay only *ever ever* one time, been a series that actually did get better as it went along and that was The Hollows series by Kim Harrison.

Anyways, almost everyone else loves this series. It's just me. I read books wrong all the time. I'm throwing the towel in on this one.

Buddy Read Fail!

This will be a buddy read with several groups in June 2016: 1) Sarah and the MacHalo group, 2) The Saucy Wenches, and 3) Buddies Books and Baubles (better late than never, as I originally missed this one WAY back in April of last year).

Justin says

Good ol' Harry Dresden is at it again, only this time the werewolves have been replaced with ghosts and vampires. Yep, ghosts... and vampires. Still not really sure why the vampires needed to be around, especially those siblings. Wow.

The book starts out well with Harry and a new character named Michael, who is this crazy broadsword wielding priest, tracking down a ghost in the newborn wing of a hospital. It was a little different than the previous books in that it really jumps right in, that guy Michael is there all of a sudden, and it skips right on into the action. Even with all the weird ghostly stuff, Butcher maintains a sense of humor and never seems to take his writing or his books too seriously. I mean, the other bizarro world is called the Nevernever and the thing they are fighting against is the Nightmare. He's not very good at naming things.

So yeah, Michael is there, and he becomes a main character all of a sudden even though he just showed up. Murphy kinda takes a back seat here. Susan bounces in a little bit. Where the book excels though is when it hits on Harry's backstory and introduces characters and events from his past. It seems to be teasing more information to be explored in future books, and I'm interested to see where it goes, to say the most. Just interested. Hopefully it's cool.

The book is better than Fool Moon, but it suffers from many of the same issues as well. Butcher once again tries to tell too many stories at once, and it all just becomes a big cluster. It's like one of those roller coasters you ride as a kid where the hills aren't very big so you just kinda go up and down over and over. It's fun, but not as thrilling as the big adult roller coasters you're too short to ride. I'm not sure where I'm going with this. I've got to find a better illustration than the roller coaster. I've played that out.

But it's true. There are like these mini stories where things build up and then fizzle out and then another thing will happen and then resolve but then something else wasn't ever finished so it pops back up until the end

which is less satisfying than the middle somehow. Also, the thing Harry is after would have been much, much better if it had been given a prequel book of some sort. He kept alluding to this event that never happened in the other books so you really don't know or care much about it or the person behind it. Oh well. Harry also is always able to just wrap things up too easily. Makes his enemies seem really weak and not that threatening at all.

I'm gonna keep rolling! These are great ways to kill some time without having to think too much. They are a nice little escape, and at some point I hear they get better. The bar isn't too high yet so we shall see what happens.

Ivan says

I had lot of fun and rating could have been higher if not for ending, specially for one cheesy moment and ending of story arc that followed. One thing I hate the most is when things reset to status quo instead of moving forward.
