



Risen Gods

J.F. Penn , J. Thorn

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“It doesn’t matter what you believe. The time is here regardless, and they are coming. After so long, the gods are rising again.”

Ben Henare turned away from the gods of his ancestors to follow his own path, choosing the modern world over myths of demons and monsters.

But when New Zealand is shaken by earthquakes and dark powers are released, Ben must fight his way north through ice caves and oceans, battling the evil god Whiro and the creatures of the earth and sky.

Lucy Champion is a trainee doctor, a rational scientist with no belief in demons. When her parents are killed and her sister is threatened, Lucy is tasked with carrying an ancient talisman north to where the oceans meet. But both human and supernatural foes stand in her way.

As the people they love are threatened and New Zealand begins to crumble, can Ben and Lucy find each other again and save the country from the wrath of the Risen Gods?

Risen Gods is a fast-paced, urban fantasy adventure set in Aotearoa/New Zealand, rich with Maori mythology of gods and goddesses, demons and devils. If you enjoy supernatural thrillers, download a sample or buy now.

From New York Times and USA Today bestselling supernatural thriller author J.F.Penn, and dark fantasy author, J. Thorn, comes a stand-alone novel of demons, monsters, and Risen Gods.

Risen Gods Details

Date : Published November 23rd 2015

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From Reader Review *Risen Gods* for online ebook

Marbea E. Logan says

Very fast-paced sequences, but very full of information and suspense. The drama and the action was exhilarating. I can't tell what year this book was set in or if this was more mystical fantasy than romantic suspense. This book has great moments, and exciting worldly elements.

Melissa Hayden says

The story is a journey for Ben and Lucy to find each other again after being separated along with stopping the gods from destroying the humans that have lived here for ages. They never told each other they loved the other, but in the wake of the disasters they realize it. They also know they need to survive and save their families, or what's left of their families, too.

****FULL REVIEW****

*This audiobook was provided by the author, narrator, or publisher at no cost in exchange for an unbiased review courtesy of AudiobookBlast dot com, at my request.

Ben and Lucy are out on dinghies having fun racing with the wind in their hair and sails. Suddenly the air chills and dark clouds roll in, bringing a tidal wave with it. Ben speaks a prayer when separated from Lucy in their rush to return to shore. The protection chant to the god of the sea changes his view, and he sees beyond the wave to a terrible, starving tentacle monster inside the towering wave rushing to New Brighton. New Zealand is rocked by a tidal wave, earthquakes and after shocks, and volcano eruptions as unnatural things take over. It doesn't matter what the people believe, the gods are coming. Ben's grandfather wants to make a journey to the ancient ice, where the veil between the worlds is thin, to offer the gods a talisman handed down for generations. With the smoke demons attacking, Ben makes the trip on his own. Lucy is given her own protection pendant and makes the journey to save her sister, and the land.

In the beginning I felt as though the narrator was a bit emotionless in his voicing of the story. When we get news clips sharing the devastation with 'viewers' and information about New Zealand and it's natural events of earthquakes and such, C.T.'s voice fits for them. C.T. does do different voice tones and softness for each character when they speak, different from the story line. The audio was clear and clean sounding.

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The story dives into the magic of the Maori people of New Zealand. We get to see quickly the enchantment of the prayers when used, and the creatures that are present. There is a connection between the people and to nature, we get to see this with Ben and his Grandfather. Grandfather tells the humans have abused the land of the gods, and they are coming to reclaim it. Grandfather is an Elder of the local tribe and close to the land. Ben knew the Maori believed in many gods and creatures but never believed in them.

We get most of the story from Ben and Lucy's POV. Seeing what is happening and the evils through their

eyes. We do get moments from a few others that give us a view on broader things people do in a time of chaos and also a view on our two characters.

I didn't feel as I got close to the characters in this story. With being a shorter story, it felt as though the story focused on the events happening and not the characters connecting to the reader. Maybe that's something with the audio, but it fell short on that end for me.

I have read a few New Zealand based books with Maori beliefs and legends and enjoyed them. For some reason I wasn't drawn into this book as I thought I'd be. Was it the narration? Was it the writing and style? I'm not sure. Maybe both. It didn't feel as though the characters were expanded and given a chance for us to relate to them. I think it might have been the writing in that token.

Icy Sedgwick says

Disclaimer: I received this book in exchange for an honest review.

I'm involved with the academic community around New Zealand Studies and as I'm also a longtime fan of J. F. Penn's writing, I was curious to see how Risen Gods might pan out. It certainly involves the madcap pacing and desperation of her ARKANE series, although here relocated to New Zealand during a series of natural disasters provoked by the return of angry Maori gods.

Using mythology in fiction provides its own interesting challenges, and for civilisations like the Vikings, the Egyptians or even the Mayans, it's often just a case of populating your fiction with the relevant deities. Christianity itself often ends up being used, through its myriad occult artefacts, and host of angels and demons. But using the gods of an existing culture that people still participate in is a little more tricky, because you don't want to risk oversimplifying the myths, or using the stories in an offensive way.

I think for the large part that Penn and Thorn have managed to sidestep that here, including a glossary of terms and trying to treat the myths with reverence and sensitivity, but part of me did wonder exactly why ancient gods would choose the two individuals that they did. There's an interesting subtext throughout the novel in the sense that Penn and Thorn underline the closer relationship between the land and the Maori, and the disconnect between other cultures and nature, and there's a certain degree of 'warning' here, but obviously it's fiction so it's not really appropriate to delve into the socioeconomic factors that lead to that breakdown between humans and the land!

It is a good read, cracking along at a fair pace, and they don't exactly skimp on the horror, either. Some of encounters with the risen gods might benefit from some suspense - would a storm REALLY rise that quickly? would it not be better to inject some menace by having it build up more slowly? - but on the whole it kept me turning the pages (in a Kindle sense of the term) and I certainly enjoyed it. Its location in New Zealand and engagement with Maori beliefs made it an unusual and original take on the 'quest' narrative, and it serves as a good introduction to both authors.

Steve says

I'm a big fan of J.F. Penn's ARKANE series, so I was eager to try give this book a shot. I won't go as far as to

say I was disappointed, but this story lacked a lot of detail and felt rushed to me. I still enjoyed it, but I would have loved some additional character development and a more complete story.

Lise h. Foley says

Risen Gods

I enjoyed Risen God's.the book was very entertaining, the plot moved right along and was believable.the characters were very realistic and likable.

Kai says

Risen Gods is a great supernatural thriller. Ben Henare and Lucy Champion are two best friends living in New Zealand. Both have grew up together. Ben is from a Maori heritage while Lucy is Western. Lucy is enjoying her vacation from medical school with Ben. When a tsunami separated Ben and Lucy, both hoped to regroup back on land without realizing that the ancient gods of Maori have awoken and are very angry of how the native islanders have mistreated their land. The gods needed to be appease.

Ben has grown up with his grandfather's teaching of heritage. Ben has never believed that the ancients gods of Maori are true. When the evil god Whiro has taken his grandfather, Ben has to make the journey north. Ben is assisted by Gina, a Westerner to make the journey north.

Lucy returned home in search of her family. The tsunami has taken her parents but her sister Amber survived the natural disaster. With Amber, Lucy searched for a Red Cross shelter. With the rumbling of the volcano, Amber became separated from her. Lucy searched for Amber and stumbled upon a Maori named Rangi. With Rangi's help, Lucy is reunited with her sister. However, having been warned by an old woman, Lucy has to go north with Rangi to make an offering to appease the gods from destroying the island.

What I love about this story is the myth and history of the Moari culture. I love the background description of New Zealand and how the myth is interwoven into the story. I love the element of how the gods are angry with the people of not respecting and taking care of the land when they decide to slumber and woken up of how the land is abused by the people. This is the reflection of how we can be so selfish and careless in destroying nature (hence the Greenhouse effects).

Another thing I love about the story is that it shows how human nature is. While there are decent people who help each other in a natural disaster, there are also people who profit for their own gains.

This story has so many elements presented. When the readers read and analyze the story, it is the true reflections of human nature. The storyline is predictable but the story truly captures the readers' attention. I couldn't put the book down because I want to take the journey with Ben and Lucy knowing that Ben and Lucy would be able to save New Zealand from the gods.

The narrator, C.J. McAllister does a good job. He does give life to the characters but the narration voice and the broadcast voice sounds the same. It is a fact stating voice that doesn't give the listeners a feel for the story except through the characters. His pronunciation of the Maori language is excellent. It gives that native

feeling to the story.

I was given this ebook by the author in exchange of an honest review. I was not compensated or influence in any way for writing this review.

Diana in SC says

An action-packed thrill ride!

I initially bought the ebook, and then I won a free copy of the audiobook from one of the authors in return for an honest review. This review focuses on the audiobook.

First, I want to comment on the narration. The narrator did a good, solid performance with really good pacing and excellent pronunciation of unusual Maori words. He has a pleasant, slightly gravelly voice. I have one minor complaint that when he is not doing characters' voices he sometimes sounds a too clinical and slightly monotone as if he is reading the nightly news. He does not attempt any New Zealand accents (he sounds American all the time), but I was fine with that. He is as good at women's voices as he is with men's, and he differentiates various characters' voices well. In addition, the production was almost always very good. However, once in a while, I can tell there are one-sentence-long sections that I can tell were recorded later in a different location that has an unpleasant echo.

This book is an imaginative thrill ride that I loved. It is a natural disaster story mixed with thrilling action and fascinating fantasy based on the religion of the Maori, the native New Zealand culture. If, like me, you love Neil Gaiman's "American Gods", then try this action-packed novella-length story of several people trying to save New Zealand after the sleeping Gods rise up and cause all kinds of natural disasters. There are earthquakes, a tsunami, volcanic eruptions, and storms! It is also a cool travelog of all the most famous places in New Zealand from Auckland all the way to the far northern tip. Unlike crappy action movies, the action in this book makes sense, and the characters' escapes from death sound plausible to me.

FYI, there are no sex scenes, but I would rate it PG-13 or R because of some bloody injuries and some occasional chilling violence. Thankfully, there are no love triangles and very little romance. This is a highly enjoyable fantasy novella and audiobook. I have told all of my finds who like fantasy that they really need to try it.

Lonnie Trout says

Great

Takes off like a train and doesn't let up. Reading this makes me want to visit now...I've been to the Hawaiian islands and these must be even more pristine. The Maori myths are a nice fulcrum around which to write a nice little novel with some godly mayhem and destruction.

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J. Rose says

I am a big fan of Joanna Penn's podcast and non-fiction author work, and I wanted to read some of her fiction as well. In combination with J. Thorn, the two have written a fast-paced, richly imagined plot in a world gone crazy with just about every disaster happening at once. I loved this!

Toni Osborne says

It took time and a couple of books before I became a fan of Ms. Penn, now I easily can say I am one of her faithful readers that simply can get enough of her dark fantasy adventures.

Set against the backdrop of Aotearoa, New Zealand, "Risen Gods" is rich with myth and history of the island. It opens with Ben and Lucy are out sailing when a tidal waves strikes the coast and the two lovebirds are separated in the chaotic aftermath. New Zealand is rocked by earthquakes and aftershocks, volcanos are erupting, the country is turned upside down, people are dead and those who are not believe the gods are

coming.... Chaos everywhere, smoke demons are attacking, octopuses (octopi)are grabbing people, some escape and some fall and are eaten up....and as we follow Ben and Lucy journeys on their separate route we see the evil through their eyes. The dual protagonists battle supernatural and human evils to save those they love from destruction by the gods and find each other again.....

This very captivating story is coloured with Maori beliefs and legends and is well- done and extremely visual. I was such a riveting, macabre and mythical experience that I couldn't put this book down and read it in no time. The author's knowledge of history, mythology and archaeology and the country's culture shine through her words. A great amount of researched went into this book no doubt. I also like the characterization Ben and Lucy are realistic in their approach and the secondary cast, good and bad are excellent players.

This is an excellent read.

I was given a copy of this book by Ms. Penn for an honest and unbiased review.

scott a. smith says

Great read

Great read. The story line did not leave any gaps. Interesting story. I will recommend the Author and the book to my family and friends

Janell Michaels says

Such a cool read! Natural disasters, gods rising from the deep, two heroes on a journey to save humanity...what's not to love?

Set in New Zealand, this thriller covers the story of angry, ancient gods rising to destroy mankind. The book opens with an exhilarating, fun scene that got me immersed instantly...and then disaster hits.

I enjoyed the fast pacing and loved the rich depiction of the setting and culture. So many times I could picture this as a big screen movie! My only niggle was that the end of the book wrapped up a little quick for my tastes, but that's usually a sign that I liked the characters enough that I'm not ready to leave them yet.

Kate M. Colby says

Risen Gods follows two main characters, Ben and Lucy, as they navigate the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in New Zealand. While at first, it seems like a normal natural disaster, Ben and Lucy soon realize that it's actually *supernatural*. The ancient gods have awoken, and they're ready to take back their land.

The action begins in the first chapter and doesn't let up throughout the novel. Ben and Lucy are separated and thrust into different journeys, where they must face the devastation caused by the earthquake, learn the truth

about the disaster, and attempt to save New Zealand with the help of unlikely allies. The various obstacles and twists kept me guessing, as every time Ben or Lucy made progress, something else stood in their way. While I enjoyed the fast pacing, once the end came, it seemed to come very quickly and without as much resistance as the rest of the book. It was still satisfying, but not what I was expecting.

My favorite aspect of this novel is how it grappled with two central themes. First, the authors did a fantastic job of weaving in New Zealand mythology (I learned so much without feeling like I'd read a textbook), and showing the tension between modernity and folklore. Second, the authors encapsulated the best and worst of human nature. Some people offered help and compassion after the tragedy, while others took advantage of weaker individuals in the worst possible ways. This theme gave the novel a gritty realism that many authors are afraid to touch.

Last, I should note that I listened to the audiobook version. Though I would have preferred a New Zealand narrator, I do understand that the authors probably chose an American to make listening easier for the majority of their audience (myself included). The narrator held my interest, was articulate, and did a good job with both male and female voices (so often I think male narrators make women sound silly).

TL;DR: *Risen Gods* is a supernatural thriller in which the characters attempt to survive and save New Zealand after a divinely caused earthquake. Fast-paced and action-packed, it holds modernity and folklore, as well as human goodness and evil, in perfect tension. One hell of a fun ride, with an articulate narrator to boot.

Diana Johnson says

A huge shout out to J.F. Penn and J. Thorn for their brilliant collaboration! Absolutely Five Star Material!

I was completely pulled in to this amazing mystical world!

As the story unfolds an unlikely pair are doing what they both love the most, sailing on the ocean that has been their playground since they met at the age of 9. Here they've always been equals despite their different stations in life. Ben suddenly feels a cold breeze and Lucy notices a huge tidal wave touching the horizon, they both turn to try to outrun the wave and make it alive to shore becoming separated!

A BBC World New Report is detailing the devastation wrought by the massive earthquake, causing a tsunami and destroying Christchurch. The report also tells of several more earthquakes affecting much of the south and of phone images and video showing many dead and wounded!

Neither Ben or Lucy knows if the other has survived!

Ben Henare, a descendant of the ancient Maori spent the majority of his life listening to the tales told to him from his grandfather Tamati, an elder with the tribal Moko Tattoos; the black lines across his face depicting the ancient paths. He is now aware that perhaps the tales were closer to the truth than he could ever have imagined!

Lucy Champion, a Pekeha, her family one of the first white settlers in New Zealand has somehow become someone that the gods have chosen for a very special purpose!

The journey towards appeasing the Risen Gods is fraught with danger, possibly death, and they both need to make it to save mankind!

Risen Gods will take you an unbelievable journey! Magical, mystical and filled with tales of the Time Before and the goddesses and gods who claim the land as theirs! A Captivating story, gripping from the first page to the last!

