



Hellhound

Nancy Holzner

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They call it Deadtown: the city's quarantined section for its inhuman and undead residents. Most humans stay far from its borders—but Victory Vaughn, Boston's only professional demon slayer, isn't exactly human...

Boston's zombies have suddenly become inexplicably violent—horror movie-style—resulting in a catastrophic all-out battle against humans. More troubling to Vicky is that she's had dreams and visions of herself fighting alongside the demons. At least, she hopes they're just visions—otherwise, that puts her on the front lines of the wrong side of the war.

Vicky's not surprised to discover that Pryce, her demi-demon cousin and loathed adversary, is behind the outbreak of the zombie plague, having formed an unholy pact with the Old Ones. Now, as the violence escalates and alliances shift, Vicky knows she's the only one who can stop the plague. Unless the pack of hellhounds on her trail finds her first.

Hellhound Details

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Author : Nancy Holzner

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From Reader Review Hellhound for online ebook

Sherri says

Hellhound was an OK read for me; whether it was just the time in my life I was reading it or the story I can't say, but Hellhound resolved a major previous storyline while opening up the series for a new (and intriguing) direction.

I've always enjoyed Victory and her demon chasing ways, but I wanted a bit more from Hellhound than what it delivered. Her hunky werewolf boyfriend Kane was only briefly presented and maybe I missed his soothing presence on Victory.

I'll still continue with the series as I want to see if the series will take a new direction (like I hope) or not. If not, that may be the last of the series for me as the series has become a bit stagnant for me.

Erin *Proud Book Hoarder* says

Besides the first book in the series, this is my favorite sequel of the group. While the first was unique and addictive, the follow-ups have been a little hit and miss. Thankfully the fifth book regains a lot of the charm and heart of the series. Vicky is back in Boston where she belongs, but this time instead of battling demons in other people's dreams, she's disturbed by the visions in her own.

The politics with the city's zombies is interesting enough, but the ending with two long-standing demonic villains is where the book won the most brownie points. Actually most of the series plotlines are tied up in this book, with a new one rearing its head for the sixth and last one. The series has a usual mix of vampires, werewolves, and zombies but the author does it all differently. The shapeshifters are banned to a three day a month camp, which Vicky is able to get out of soon since she's a special and invented type of a shifter called the Cerdorrian. Vampires play a small role outside of comedic relief of her Shakespeare doted roommate. Zombies are done completely differently – they are humans with emotions, thoughts and traits, victim of a virus that randomly transformed who it chose to.

She and Kane have overcome a lot of their relationship issues and finally they have a strong connection that doesn't feel as wobbly and uncertain. There's that pesky agreement he made with the wicked hag to overcome, but it is resolved in a well-done manner. I was done with the uncertainty so it's nice they admit their feelings more in force and have reached that other layer of bonding.

The aunt still overdoes the "child" in dialogue but she has become less obnoxious. Pacing wasn't non-stop but it was mainly well-done and the writing as always is clever with humor doses injected in between the dark tension that's well crafted.

An underrated series that kept up the steam and uniqueness of the series. There's a tiny cliffhanger feeling with a development of a certain Goddess, but it's awesome anyway.

Jeff says

Like the rest of the Deadtown series, it reads like a full chapter into a much larger novel. And without giving anything away, I can say that this novel is at the end of its current storyline. But not the end of the story itself before Nancy Holzner starts a new epic storyline. Taking running ideas and stories from the previous novels, its easy to see that she has so many more stories to tell. That's the good thing.

Upon reading the introduction to the novel at the beginning, Holzner says that the novel was written during a trying period in her families life as her husband was hospitalized. So she did has a few things on her plate beside finishing this current novel. Though it doesn't show in her writing of it. Its not easy to try to concentrate on what your supposed to do when there are other things the universe hurls at you. I commend her.

Where ever the next installment brings Vicky, Mab, Kane and the others, I know that I'll be right there along for the ride.

Jen (That's What I'm Talking About) says

My Rating: 4 stars: Enjoyed - recommend (B+)

Originally posted at That's What I'm Talking About

Book purchased with own funds.

Ah... the long awaited follow up to Darklands has finally arrived. Hellhound opens a couple of weeks after the dramatic conclusion of Darklands, which brought us two major events. First – Vicky’s deceased father has returned from the dead, inhabiting the body of the white falcon of Hellsmoor, a magical bird that Mallt-y-Nos, aka the Night Hag or Mistress of the Hounds, wants badly. And second – Vicky’s love, werewolf Kane, is bound to the Night Hag and will become one of her hellhounds at the next full moon (and every full moon for a year). These two events have a tremendous impact on demon-slayer Vicky Vaughn, causing her much grief as feels she must decide between her dad and her boyfriend – saving the life of only one.

Hellhound opens with Boston homicide detective (and casual friend) Daniel Costello calling Vicky with news that a zombie attacked and killed three humans outside of Deadtown. For those not familiar with Ms. Holzner’s fascinating world, there was a plague several years ago that caused the death and subsequent reanimation of several humans, creating in essence zombies. Deadtown is a section of Boston that is gated and under guard where zombies and other (now out of the closet) paranormals are required to live. Zombies are, by and large, the same peaceful people they were before the plague. Vicky is brought in as a consultant because the attack bares much resemblance to an event involving the Morfran (a sort of demon, events happened in Hellforged, book 2). Soon Vicky is piecing together bits that imply both of her nemeses (her powerful cousin, Pryce, and the demon known as the Destroyer) are heavily involved.

As I look back over my notes for Hellhound, I realize that a lot happens during the progress of this book. Luckily Ms. Holzner finds ways to remind readers of key actions from previous books without it coming across as info dumping or repetitive. Things are coming together for the final showdown between good and evil. The question remains – will Vicky fight alongside her family and friends for good, or will her demon mark and the Destroyer finally win over her soul? Progress is most certainly made on this front, but the sways back and forth are larger and stronger. One thing that has changed about Vicky since the last book is

that the Destroyer seems to have a more powerful influence over her. She experiences the need to kill, hurt, and maim with the slightest provocation. Her temper is quick to flare, and she finds herself wanting to destroy those things she holds most dear. This places a darker tone over the entire story, although there are still moments of humor, mostly from her own personal demon that she's nicknamed Butterfly and Vicky's one-time apprentice, zombie Tina.

With how things ended after the last book, I was expecting more Kane and Vicky right from the start. The pair has some serious issues to work out, but instead, we find Vicky avoiding Kane. I was disappointed in Vicky's inaction and worried (once again) that something "stupid" would cause problems between the couple. Although Ms. Holzner takes a little while bringing the pair together for some much needed alone time, it was worth the wait. Once again I am NOT disappointed by Kane; rather I am completely enamored by him and his love for Vicky. (You'd think by now I'd stop fretting over this!) While the Deadtown series does NOT fall in the romance genre, I feel that Ms. Holzner's treatment of Kane and Vicky's relationship is touching and intimate. She allows both characters to be challenged and grow through their mutual love.

Vicky is a multifaceted character that I've come to adore. She's learning that she can't save her friends and family by trying to take on her demons alone. Her development and growth is rewarding to watch over the course of the series and especially in this book. Aunt Mab returns to Boston to help guide and teach Vicky. The pair has a long history, with Mab as the stern teacher, but this time it almost feels like Mab is preparing to pass the torch on to Vicky. There is a strong sense of maturing and transition, which gives added depth to the characters and storyline. In addition, we see more of Vicky's "normal" family rolling with the changes coming down – one of which is the sudden appearance of Vicky's dad ten years after his death (and in the body of a bird!). These moments of personal time give heart to the book and series, making it all the more richer and enjoyable.

As much as I adore the personal time Vicky shares with the reader, it's the ongoing battles Vicky faces each book that keep me glued to the pages. This time around Vicky is struggling to save the denizens of Deadtown, especially the zombies, from Pryce and his unknown plans. Unfortunately, these plans have created a lot of unrest and suspicion among the paranormal residents. The civil unease and certain human's bigotry create an edge to the story with a social injustice message. This also makes things a little more difficult for Vicky as she attempts to figure out what is going on. There is also the more immediate battle with the Night Hag over the white falcon and using Kane as a hellhound. The Night Hag will not stop until she uses Kane to destroy Vicky, creating some tense moments for all involved.

As events culminate, the action is more intense and Vicky must make decisions that will ultimately impact not only those she loves, but pretty much the entire world. I'd like to say she's still the same girl in her heart that we met all those books ago, but much as happened to Vicky and the tug between good and bad has strained her. However, she still can waffle back and forth with the best of them! The final scenes aren't as horrific as others have been in the past, but the outcome is significant, and I did enjoy the battle. Although, I was a little disappointed with the way a certain event unfolded (keeping it spoiler free!), I am happy with the overall outcome and the climatic scenes in general.

Overall, I enjoyed Hellhound, with its tender and poignant personal moments intermingled among the action-filled storylines. The book gives the strong impression that is setting the stage for one more showdown, and the author has confirmed that the next book will be the last in the Deadtown series. Even though there was conclusion in the hellhound/Night Hag story, I felt the overall story-arc involving the missing zombies, the Destroyer, and the others was left open with unanswered questions (therefore giving it the feeling it is a set up for the next book). I am excited to find out what will become of one of my favorite heroines, Vicky Vaughn.

Veronica says

The Deadtown series has always been a solidly entertaining series for me and one that I consider to be vastly underrated. It has an interesting mix of the more usual supernatural stuff like vampires, werewolves, and zombies, but tosses it up with a healthy dose of Welsh mythology. It also has a thoroughly likeable heroine in Victory (Vicky) Vaughn. If you like and enjoy the Walker Papers series by C.E. Murphy then I think you'd enjoy this series as well. Much like Joanne Walker, Vicky is not the type of heroine who thinks she's all that and a bag of chips. Vicky doesn't especially want to be saddled with the responsibility of saving the world but her being a Cerdorrian shapeshifter means that she is uniquely situated to help when ancient, Welsh demons start possessing the local zombie population. In a genre that is heavily populated by heroines who feel an overwhelming need to be hostile with everyone they meet just to prove how tough and independent they are, Vicky just quietly does what needs to be done. Of course, that's easier said than done now that the demon mark she carries causes her anger to flare over the most innocuous of things. But even with her new anger management issues, Vicky is still far more civil to others than many of her genre counterparts.

And when you have such a down-to-earth, likeable heroine, she deserves a well matched love interest. This book continues to solidify the relationship between Vicky and her handsome attorney boyfriend – who also happens to be a werewolf – Alexander Kane. I have always appreciated that this series didn't sink to the love triangle level and instead allowed Vicky and Kane to figure out their relationship on their own. Their issues stem from who they are as individuals rather than being from manufactured drama from third parties. Vicky and Kane are adults and conduct themselves as such. There is no game playing and no tit for tat when one inadvertently hurts the other. Vicky and Kane were headed for some dark times at the end of the last book and this book certainly tests who they are as individuals as well as who they are together.

Another thing that I've appreciated from this series is how it handles the tensions between "norms" (non-supernatural humans) and the various paranormal races, who are all required to live in a walled off section of Boston known as Designated Area 1, aka Deadtown. Deadtown residents are allowed to leave the area if they work in the regular parts of Boston and if they have the proper papers and identifications to do so. The fact that the local zombie population is being possessed and driven to commit horrendous acts causes quite a negative spike in interspecies relations. I would have liked it if even more had been done with this aspect of the story but I can at least appreciate that an effort at demonstrating prejudicial behaviors and attitudes was made.

I will admit that the ending seemed a bit rushed and there were some relationship issues I thought could have used some more page space but overall I enjoyed the story. The pacing was mostly good and while I don't love all the characters equally, they all bring something important to the story and to Vicky's life. The author has stated that series will close out at six books so I look forward to reading about Vicky's final adventure next year. There was no cliffhanger ending with this book but some plot threads were definitely left open.

Ami says

[After the last book, Vicky's father returns to the human world in form of white falcon -- which, according to a prophecy, will have a significant role in the war against demon. Meanwhile, Kane who agrees to serve

Night Hag as her hellhound will probably be ordered to kill Vicky on the night of the full moon -- when he is forcefully turned into hellhound -- except if Vicky returns the white falcon to Night Hag. And zombies in Deadtown has b

Tonya says

Meh. I had hoped for more originality but the series is following the same tracks other paranormal series have.

'Look at me I am just an average person with a couple powers' turns into a 'Look at me I'm awesome and have bunches of new powers that just appeared!'

I can't even bring myself to write a full review. Vicky is fast becoming another lackluster heroine in a slew of lackluster heroines.

Jennie Wallace says

Well this book was definitely better than the last! It kept my interest until the very end. That's always good. The series has finally peeked which leaves me wanting to come back for more.

I was starting to have my doubts and getting bored with everything that was going on. It seemed like everything just kept repeating itself. I was so sick of hearing about Pryce. I don't know why, but he just bored the shit out of me. I almost gave up on this series.

I'm glad I didn't, Hellhound has a lot of excitement I've been craving from this author. I'm looking forward to the next book.

Bibliofiendlm says

Only a few weeks have passed for Vicky and the events of Darklands. Her beloved, Kane, is still beholden to the Night Hag, which is draining him a bit at a time. Vicky is fighting the increasing rage she feels since she's once again connected to the Destroyer via demon mark. And, of course there's the new adjustment that her long thought dead father is now a mystical, talking white falcon!

When Boston's zombies become violent, Vicky is called in as a consultant and quickly learns that her cousin, Pryce, has even more nefarious plans as part of his partnership with The Destroyer. He plans to release a staggering amount of the zombie plague into the population and bring back the Old Ones to wreak havoc in the human realm. Adding another confusing layer of complication, Vicky receives visions of herself fighting alongside demons. Determined to stay on the right side of the coming war, Vicky once again aligns herself with her Aunt Mab to protect the city and those she loves. All she has to do is bring down her enemies, save the day and not get torn to bits by a pack of hellhounds in the process. There are some surprising twists and turns as Vicky's true destiny is revealed and has major consequences for the series finale, Firestorm.

Full review here: <http://tinyurl.com/pvmjg5j>

Melliane says

4.5/5

Mon avis en Français

My English review

And here is the new volume of the adventures of Victory, and it is a great pleasure to get back into a story I really enjoy. Admittedly, Deadtown has everything to make a very good urban fantasy series: some creatures of all kinds, an explosive heroine, a villain with evil plans and a plot we can only love.

Vicky no longer knows where to stand at the beginning of the novel. I must say she has to manage with all the consequences of the previous volumes. In fact, her relationship with Kane is not looking good and she does not know how to face him now that he has made ??a pact to become a hellhound for over a year, something that will break them both. However, the only way to avoid this, would be to exchange the freedom of Kane with the hawk in which the spirit of her father now resides. An untenable choice, she does not want to choose and do not share with anyone this news. All this is difficult enough, but when Pryce decides it's his time as well, everything is completely explosive. Indeed, he is surrounded by allies stronger than we would have thought who want to conquer the world and defeat our demons slayer. To do this, what a better way than to try to infect zombies with Morfran, so they will then be invincible and can kill as many people as they want before destroying their host. Vicky is determined to stop this and find a solution to all the problems that constantly haunt her. Because yes, there is always more, and now the book reveals her that she will fight in the near future alongside demons, something that terrifies her completely. But of course, she will not be alone to face all these new events and Mab will visit Deadtown to support her and to tell her that she is the future lady and she must accept her new role, something that Vicky doesn't believe in. Yeah, so you now understand that a lot of things happen in this new novel that Nancy Holzner presents here.

It's very difficult for Vicky to learn from her mistakes. Since the previous book, I thought she would understand she had to share a little more the weight she carries on her shoulders every day, especially seeing what others can do for her. But not at all, despite her efforts, she remains determined to go all alone, which often ends with terrible consequences. I admit it's a little frustrating sometimes to see the situations in which she manages to be. Yet she will also learn a lot here and I think she now understands what she should do. Her relationship with Kane was heartbroken at the beginning of the novel when I saw that the two of them weren't able to understand to really understand what was happening, but it does not prevent them to love each other deeply. Moreover, they form a great team together, ready to face anything. Vicky 's life will completely change here, either in relation to the prophecies, her own abilities or even with her family, but everything was really exciting! Many new things are initiated here, others are resolved but we still have a lot of questions that I'm sure it will be explained in the next novel, or at least in part. Big changes are announced and Nancy presents here a large number of revelations for the future. The story also has no dead time, and I was completely blown away by the plot.

This is again a super good novel and I had a great time. A series to read!

Suz says

4 to 4.5 stars

This installment in the series saw a lot of significant changes for Vicky (the protag). In addition to seeing what is probably closure with the Night Hag story line and possibly with the Pryce story line, the preparations for war are really ramping up and in that process the demands on Vicky are quite literally over taking her.

There was a new twist in this book that will inevitably change the way the confrontations have been heading, and several characters and relationships took big leaps forward. I find it exciting and can't wait to see how Holzner is going to carry this forward.

Sharon says

This is book #5 in a fabulous urban fantasy series. Jumping in now probably isn't the best thing to do. Holzner does a great job of recapping the last book for those of us who have waited a year for this one, but there is also some basic series arc and world building information given that will help those rebels who don't care when they jump into a series. I won't give any spoilers for this book, but I might talk about things that happened in the past 4 so if you don't want the series spoiled grab the one you want to start with and go read while the rest of us talk.

Kane *sigh* can you be any more perfect? I think not! The man is flawless. He proves to Vicky how much he loves her over and over. Even when she does stupid things like keep secrets to protect him. She is still full of self-doubt and makes some real big mistakes in Hellhound, but by the end she is finally getting it. Kane and those close to her have her back and she can trust them.

The night hag is holding one hell of a grudge against Vicky and she plans on using Kane for payback. As if that wasn't enough on her plate her aunt shows up and drops a bomb about Vicky's destiny. The cheeky Eidolon demon, Butterfly, that lives in her gut and looks like a giant maggot, wants to be friends. Can demons be "good"? Butterfly is opening up a whole new dilemma for Vicky. Her dad is a falcon and the Hellion Difethwr is back helping her cousin Pryce and the old ones try to bring demons into the human realm and burn our playhouse down! They have also been experimenting on the zombies of Deadtown. And then there is a goddess who has her sights set on Vicky.

The next book is going to be interesting. The story has taken a new turn and Vicky must decide between the demon she knows and the goddess she doesn't. Vicky's life has changed forever and the next book will show us the consequences of her choices.

Nice solid edition to the series to transition into a new series arc. If you are looking for a rock solid urban fantasy with skillful world building and a nice mix of drama and humor then give this one a try.

Some of my favorite quotes:

“Still, it would be dark soon, the time when demons are free to enter in the human plane, and you never know when one might materialize in your face, waving its claws and spewing its sulfur-and-brimstone halitosis.”

“If you’ve ever gotten a dirty look from a zombie, chances are it took...oh, about a week before the possibility of a good night’s sleep returned.”

“It was impossible to read *The Book of Utter Darkness* like a normal book. For one thing, it was written in the language of Hell--a language forbidden to anyone outside the infernal regions. Google translate doesn’t do Hellish to English.”

“That mark raged with fire that raced up my arm. It ignited my heart, my brain. There would be death—and I would bring it.”

4.5 “rubbery neon pink” Sheep

<http://www.ismellsheep.com/2013/12/bo...>

Bookmom says

Vicky has a lot on her shoulders and she’s not sharing the burden with anyone. The last book ended with an ultimatum from the Night Hag. She must hand over the white falcon of Hellsmoor or Kane will be one of her hellhounds every full moon for the next year. But her father’s spirit is in the falcon. Who is she supposed to sacrifice? She’s also asked to consult for the police when zombies start going nuts and killing humans. Pryce is once again stirring up trouble and the Destroyer is causing Vicky more problems by increasing her desire to slaughter as he wants her to join him.

There’s plenty going on in both actions and with Vicky’s emotions which take you along for the ride. Mab makes a trip to Boston to help Vicky deal with something she doesn’t want to accept and it will be interesting to see how that plays out in the future.

As usual, the writing is good and the story moves along at a good clip. We’re given a conclusion on a couple of things, making me believe the author is moving closer to wrapping up the series.

Jenn says

I enjoyed this one for the most part. I liked that some things were resolved, but we did get some whole new issues to deal with.

Keikii Eats Books says

To read more reviews in this series and others, check out keikii eats books!

87 points/100 (4 ½ stars/5)

The zombies of Deadtown have suddenly turned murderously violent, leading to lockdown and restrictions of movement. More important to Vicky is the new visions of herself turning to the other side, and fighting for the demons.

I'm glad to report that Hellhound is a lot better read than Darklands. It has a solid plot that knows where it is going without any side adventures. The people aren't written as bad. It is, however, mostly just buildup for the final book in the series. Doesn't make it bad, it just makes you really want to start the last book so we can love that too.

There are two main plots of the book. The primary plot that it should focus on (though it doesn't always) is the plot where zombies are randomly becoming violent and killing humans. This, once again, sparks political tensions between the humans and the paranormals - mostly the zombies. Deadtown is essentially a really large jail that people can petition to be let out of occasionally, and it shows. Obviously, from what we have seen, it is the Morfran demons making the zombies do all of this. Not really anything we haven't seen before.

The second plotline for Hellhound, and the one that gets more attention, is the bargain with Mallt y Nos. Vicky was put in a hard place when Mallt y Nos makes the bargain that for the white falcon, for her father, she can free her boyfriend from a year's worth of servitude and pain. Obviously this means that Mab is back from Wales - and it looks like she is here to stay. That really is too bad, because Mab makes each part of the story so much easier, like a cheater.

The best thing about this book is that all the relationship bullshit, all the family bullshit, they're all starting to resolve themselves. The tensions are gone, the name calling the infighting... it is working its way to healthy instead of unhealthy. Unbelievable how much better a book is when I'm not having to deal with unnecessary drama.

I hate to bring it up again and again, but it is true every time. The ending is so quick there is nearly whiplash between problem and solution. And every solution is always wrapped up so easily. There is always some last moment "ah ha this is the way where everything is solved perfectly!" for the problem of the book. I suppose it doesn't make it unreadable, I just feels like it cheapens the ending of every book.

Onwards to the finale!
