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Game: The Sequel To "I Hunt Killers"



Book Information

Series: I Hunt Killers

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up-The Hat-Dog killer is on the loose in New York City, and Detective Hughes convinces 17-year-old Jazz Dent to fly in from Lobo's Nod and help solve the case. In *I Hunt Killers* (Little, Brown, 2012), Jazz helped police capture the Impressionist, a copy-cat killer mimicking the infamous sociopath, Billy Dent-Jazz's own father. In this episode, a series of murders in peaceful Brooklyn neighborhoods is occurring with gruesome similarities, including disemboweled victims who are also cut with images of either a dog or a hat. To compound the suspense, Billy has broken out of prison and may or may not be at the heart of this new reign of terror, testing his son's ability to piece together a new "game." Chilling random chapters from the killer's point of view allow readers to know things that Jazz has yet to figure out. The teen's internal dialogue often questions whether he really has "good guy" genes or has inherited his father's dark side, just waiting to present itself. His nerdy best friend, Howie, and girlfriend, Connie, keep him grounded in the real world that includes caring for an unpredictable grandmother with Alzheimer's disease. While Jazz is a well-developed, endearing character with a conscience, this dark psychological thriller will appeal to fans of television's Dexter Morgan, but with its focus on killing, sociopathic behavior, and sexual violence, it's best for mature high school readers.-Vicki Reutter, Cazenovia High School, NY

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Starred Review Billy Dent, the serial killer introduced in *I Hunt Killers* (2012), is on the loose. But the timing of his escape means he can't be behind the 14 murders attributed to New York City's Hat-Dog Killer, so nicknamed because of the alternating symbols he carves into his victims' flesh. Jazz Dent, 17, is called upon by the NYPD to offer insight only the son of a serial killer can provide, and he quickly assesses that Hat-Dog is playing some sort of game. But what are the rules? When finally revealed, the game seems slap-yourself-on-the-forehead obvious yet orchestrated so cunningly that rare indeed will be the reader who figures it out early. Along the way, Lyga pulls off two neat tricks. First, he inverts the usual YA goal to lose one's virginity, with Jazz terrified that giving into desires will be the "ignition moment" that sparks bloodlust. Second, Lyga continues to navigate that thinnest of tightropes: a hero we root for even as he manipulates people as ruthlessly as his pop. A parallel plot starring Jazz's girlfriend does include some unlikely clue-solving and plenty of are-you-nuts?! behavior. Even so, you can't deny Lyga's ambition to craft the most serious (and bloodiest) crime series yet for teen readers. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** With ABC Family about to swing into production on a *I Hunt Killers* TV show, interest in this series, already significant, will stack up faster than a pile of bodies. Grades 10-12. --Kraus, Daniel --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Holy. Crud. What just happened? I feel like I just stepped out of a horror movie. OH WAIT. I kinda did, but it was a BOOK, not a movie. Dear lawd, what an insane ride of awesome this book was. It was 10 times more gruesome and intense than *I Hunt Killers*, with double the nail-biting moments. I cannot express how friggin great Barry Lyga is at writing a serial killer. It is both ridiculously eerie and insanely awesome. Mad skillz, yo. So this installment in the series has Jazz still questioning his grip on humanity. He's still struggling with the fact that he is the son of Billy Dent, serial killer extraordinaire, and that Billy has molded him throughout childhood to be his prodigy. Billy is in Jazz's head constantly, which, let's face it, is enough to drive anyone bat-s*** crazy. But now, new thoughts are crowding in, as Jazz is having intense dreams with nondescript sexual innuendo. These sexual urges are bothering him in his waking hours, as well, because the line between sex and killing is a murky one. It is a line that Jazz is desperately afraid to cross. It doesn't make it any easier that he is an adolescent male with a beautiful, spunky girlfriend who is more than ready to love him long time. Jazz's grandma, the spawn creator of Billy himself, is off the chain. Well, more so than the last book, which is hard to believe. She has truly lost the last marble in her schizophrenic head. It's so bad that Jazz is afraid to leave her alone. He does not want social services involved

again, especially after what happened with the last social worker. He is 17 and would like to spend his last year of adolescence out of a foster care situation. When Jazz is asked to come in on a case in NYC (yea, how realistic is this?), he calls on good ol boy, Howie, to come care for his grandmother. Howie is a GEM. I have no words for the awesome this character is. He is the comic relief in a series full of gore, crime and creepy ass situations.. I ADORE HIM. Meanwhile, Connie is doing some sleuthing of her own, trying so hard to assist Jazz in this "game" he has found himself caught up in. She was acting like a typical teenager, feeling invincible and brave. I wanted to shaker her numerous times but I honestly couldn't find it in myself to be angry at her for her decisions. She loves Jazz and wants to help. And she's a teenager. It's just part of the ole developmental nature of her age to be a flaming idiot. And of course, Dear Old Dad is always part of the scheme, regardless if he's just in Jazz's head or his neighborhood. Conversations with Billy are creeeeeeeeeeepy to the max. The ending! *flails* Did anyone see that coming? AND WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT CHARACTER? Or should I say, CHARACTERS???? A cliffhanger from the bowels of Hell, people.

If I thought the first book in this series was something special, something dark, and twisted, and yet oh so addicting, it didn't prepare me for what this installment held. The first book had nothing on this one. This second installment proved to be every bit as delicious, dangerous, horrifying, and yet still humorous enough to make us turn the pages and demand more. It truly is a series unlike any other that I have read. Terrifying, creepy, strange, mysterious, captivating, compelling, and about a million other adjectives I could name, all packed into a story that was not only riveting but so good that I had a hard time putting down and had to stay up until the wee hours of the morning reading until I got to the very last page. A series that you will want to have all three books on hand for because you will want to pick one up right after the other. Yeah, it really is that good, that dark, and that thrilling. It will make your heart pound, your pulse jump and have you looking over your shoulder a time or two just because.

Holy unrepentant serial killers, Batman! If you thought book 1 was creeptastic, this book is going to knock your socks off. And maybe remove your intestines. And your eyeballs. *shivers* Book 1 ended with Jazz feeling like he was starting to fit in - that he'd found his calling with the skills Billy had given him as he was growing up. Book 2 finds Jazz not quite there yet. He doesn't trust himself enough to believe that he's not going to go bad and end up snapping and killing those around him. His mantra of People Matter is still running through his head. He feels guilt over Billy's escape and now he's having dreams that rattle him to his core. Guys, as dark as book 1 was, this book ups the

ante. The murders that Jazz steps in to help on are brutal. The things that he sees, the way he processes information, his understanding of a killer's mind ... it's chilling. Jazz is this wonderfully complex character who just draws you in with his fears and his analytical mind. His ability to manipulate is creepy. His fear that there's a trigger buried somewhere in his psyche... with the way that Billy planned ahead, it could SO EASILY be true. Things are revealed this time around that look HUGE. Connie and Howie are more than just supporting players, they're finding things out. They understand Jazz better than he thinks they do. They know that there are times when the only thing holding him together is the fact that they're there to support him. (And also, Howie's pickup lines are made of PURE AWESOME!) AND THE ENDING! I'm going to be DYING (not literally, although I'm sure Billy could arrange that) until book 3 comes out! SO MANY THINGS! I've got my fangirl flail on for this series and I want to wallow in all the Jazz and crew that I can possibly wallow in. Yes, it's THAT good. -Kelly @ Reading the Paranormal

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